

**'There is Something About Cattle':
Towards an Economic History of the Beef
Industry in Colonial Zimbabwe, with Special
Reference to the Role of the State, 1939-1980.**

Nhamo Wellington Samasuwo

Thesis presented for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in the Department of History

University of Cape Town

February 2 000

The copyright of this thesis vests in the author. No quotation from it or information derived from it is to be published without full acknowledgement of the source. The thesis is to be used for private study or non-commercial research purposes only.

Published by the University of Cape Town (UCT) in terms of the non-exclusive license granted to UCT by the author.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES.....	iii
ABBREVIATIONS.....	vii
ABSTRACT.....	ix
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	xi
INTRODUCTION.....	1
CHAPTER ONE:	
1. The Experience of a Latecomer: A Survey of the Background, Origins and Early History of the Beef Industry, 1890-1938	11
CHAPTER TWO:	
2. The Beef Industry during the Second World War, 1939-1945.....	54
CHAPTER THREE:	
3. The Beef Industry in Post-war Southern Rhodesia, 1946-1956.....	78
CHAPTER FOUR:	
4. Federal Policy and the Southern Rhodesian Beef Industry, 1957-1964	127
CHAPTER FIVE:	
5. The Calamity of 'cowboy' Independence: the Beef Industry in the early years of UDI, 1965-1971	170
CHAPTER SIX:	
6. Colonialism at the Ritual altar?: The Beef Industry during the Second Chimurenga, 1972-1980	200
CHAPTER SEVEN:	
7. Conclusion	244
 SELECTED	
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	248

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1.1: European-owned Pure-bred Cattle, (Selected Years).....	20
Table 1.2: Estimated Cattle Holdings in S. Rhodesia, 1901-1941 (000 head)	28
Table 1.3: Cattle Exports to the Union of South Africa, 1916-1922.....	29
Table 1.4: Market Distribution of S. Rhodesian Cattle Exports, 1925-1927.....	30
Table 1.5: African Districts and Number of Cattle Under Quarantine, 1931-1940.....	41
Table 1.6: Private Company-owned Ranches in S. Rhodesia, 1920s-1930s.....	47
Table 1.7: Family-owned Ranches in S. Rhodesia, 1920s-1930s.....	48
Table 1.8: European-owned Cattle Classified by Principal Groups, 1926-1935.....	48
Table 2.1: Beef Exports and Local Consumption in S. Rhodesia, 1938-1945.....	60
Table 2.2: Number of African-owned Cattle Bought by the CSC at Destocking Sales, 1942-1951.....	68
Table 2.3: European-owned Herds, by Grade, 1939-1945.....	68
Table 2.4: Number of Grazer Cattle Leased to European Ranchers 39-1945.....	69
Table 2.5: European/White-owned Herds, by Size 1939-1945.....	70
Table 2.6: Calving Rates of White-owned Herds, 1939-1945.....	70
Table 2.7: National Slaughtering, 1939-1945 (000 head-calves included).....	71
Table 2.8: Cost of Beef at CSC's Meat Works in Price Per lb., 1938-1941	71
Table 2.9: Running Costs in the White Capitalist Ranching Sector, 1939-1942.....	72

Table 2.10: Number of Cattle and Rates of Increase/Decrease, 1936-1946.....	74
Table 2.11: Prices Paid By the CSC, 1945.....	76
Table 3.1: Beef Exports and Local Consumption in Post-war S. Rhodesia, 1946-1953.....	81
Table 3.2: Calving Rates for White-owned Herds, 1939-1952.....	82
Table 3.3: National Slaughtering and Mortality, 1946-1952.....	83
Table 3.4: Districts Not Subject to Destocking, 1947.....	88
Table 3.5: Districts Subject to Destocking, 1947.....	89
Table 3.6: Estimated Consumption Versus Number of Cattle Slaughtered, 1946 and 1952.....	91
Table 3.7: Authorised Cattle Purchase Prices, 1948/1950 (sh. per 100 lb. c.d.w).....	94
Table 3.8: White-owned Cattle by Grade, 1946-1955.....	97
Table 3.9: White-owned Herds by Size, 1946-1955.....	98
Table 3.10: Number of White-owned and African-owned Cattle in the Federation, 1953-1956.....	107
Table 3.11: Percentage of Rationing, By Grade of Beef, 1955.....	110
Table 4.1: Average Real Income Per Active White Capitalist Farmer, 1954-1964.....	130
Table 4.2: Producers Prices in the Capitalist Agricultural Sector, 1960/61-1964/65.....	130
Table 4.3: Percentage Annual Rate of Increase in Cattle Numbers Expressed As a Percentage of Previous Year's Figures, 1957-1963.....	132
Table 4.4: Analysis by Type of Farm.....	133
Table 4.5: Analysis by Size of European-owned Herds.....	134
Table 4.6: Area Planted to Fodder, Pasture, Groundnuts and Cotton, 1956-1960.....	135
Table 4.7: Average Prices Payable to Cattle Producers In	

Terms of the Agreement Between the Federal Government and RNFU, 1st. April 1959.....	136
Table 4.8: Federal Imports and Exports of Beef, 1956-1962.....	137
Table 4.9: CSC's Disposals of Beef in the Federation, 1952-1963.....	138
Table 4.10: CSC's Exports By Country or Destination, 1952-1963 (short tons)	139
Table 4.11: Gross Value of European-owned Production and African Sales, S. Rhodesia, 1954-1962.....	139
Table 4.12: Number of Cows and Calves in White-owned Herds in S. Rhodesia, 1957-1963.....	141
Table 4.13: Calving and Mortality Rates in S. Rhodesia, 1956-1963.....	141
Table 4.14: Relative profitability of beef grades to the CSC, 1961/62, (All Values in Sh. per 100 lb c.d.w).....	147
Table 4.15: Grade Percentage and Number of Cattle Slaughtered by the CSC and Private Butchers, 1954-1963.....	148
Table 4.16: Auction Excess Paid at Government Organised Auction Sales, 1963.....	149
Table 4.17: Percentage of Cattle Bought by the CSC and Private Buyers at the Average Guaranteed Floor Price at Government Organised Auction sales, 1962.....	149
Table 4.18: Number of European and African-owned Cattle in the Federation, 1957-1963.....	151
Table 4.19: Disposals of African-owned Cattle, 1953-1963.....	152
Table 4.20: Withdrawals As a Percentage of Cattle-owned Offered at Government Organised Auction Sales, 1959-1964.....	160
Table 4.21: Withdrawals at African Cattle Sales as a Percentage of the Total Numbers of Cattle Offered for Sale by Principal Grades, 1957-1963.....	161
Table 4.22: Total of Native Development Fund Levy and Average Price per Beast Received by African producers After Deduction of Levy and Other Marketing Charges, 1953-1963.....	165
Table 4.23: Amount of Land Inside Known Tsetse-fly Belts and Pattern of Distribution Between Africans and	

Europeans in S. Rhodesia, 1931 and 1963.....	167
Table 5.1: Rhodesian Beef Exports By Destination, Mass and Value, 1970-1975.....	176
Table 5.2: Amount of Beef Airlifted in Violation of Sanctions, 1971-1974 (000 tons).....	179
Table 5.3: Size and Provincial Distribution of the Large Scale Beef Herd, 1965-1971.....	187
Table 5.4: Contribution of Major Agricultural Commodities to Total Value of Primary Agricultural Production, 1965-1971.....	189
Table 5.5: Movement of the Maize/Beef Price Ratio, 1965-1971.....	189
Table 5.6: National Cattle Population, 1965-1971.....	191
Table 5.7: Structure of the Commercial Sector Beef Herd, 1965-1971.....	192
Table 5.8: Agricultural Debt in the Capitalist Sector, 1965-1972.....	194
Table 6.1: Livestock Theft Summary by Agricultural Province, April-December, 1979.....	211
Table 6.2: Total Number of Dip Tanks Not in Use by Province, 1979.....	220
Table 6.3: Number of Cattle in the African Cattle Sector and Recorded Sales, 1972-1980.....	223
Table 6.4: Disparities Between the CSC's Average Producer Prices and Average Wholesale Prices.....	237
Table 6.5: Provincial Distribution of the Large Scale Sector Beef Herd, 1975-1979.....	239
Table 6.6: National Cattle Herds, 1972-1979.....	240
Table 6.7: Percentage Change in Herd Composition/Structure in the Large Scale Sector, 1974-1979.....	241

ABBREVIATIONS

1. Organisations/ Terms/ Titles

AFC	Agricultural Finance Corporation
AKP	Average Knockdown Price
AGFP	Average Guaranteed Floor Price
AAE	Average Auction Excess
AMA/AMC	Agricultural Marketing Authority/Council
APA	African Purchase Area
<u>BBC</u>	<u>British Broadcasting Corporation</u>
<u>BC</u>	<u>Bulawayo Chronicle</u>
BFS	Breeder Finance Scheme
CCPA	Commercial Cattle Producers Association
CSC	Cold Storage Commission
CNC	Chief Native Commissioner
c.d.w	Cold Dressed Weight
FAQ	Fair Average Quality
GAQ	Good Average Quality
JOC	Joint Operations Command
MP	Member of Parliament
NAD	Native Affairs Department
NR	Northern Rhodesia
NLHA	Native Land Husbandry Act
PV	Protected Village
Rhod. 'B'	Rhodesia's Best
RF	Rhodesia Front
<u>RH</u>	<u>Rhodesia Herald</u>
RNFU	Rhodesia National Farmers Union
RCPA	Rhodesia Cattle Producers Associated
TTL	Tribal Trust Land (Communal Areas)
ZANU	Zimbabwe African National Union
ZAPU	Zimbabwe African Peoples' Union
ZNLA	Zimbabwe National Liberation Army
ZIPRA	Zimbabwe Peoples Revolutionary Army
<u>ZPV</u>	<u>Zimbabwe Peoples' Voice</u>

2. Currencies

pounds stg	=	<i>pounds sterling</i> (equivalent to British Pound)
sh.	=	shilling (One pound stg = 20s)
d	=	pence (1s = 12d)
R\$	=	Rhodesian dollar = approx. half a pound stg.
c	=	cent (R\$ = 100 cents)

3. Measurements

lb.	=	pound weight
kg	=	kilogram = 2.2 lbs
ha	=	hectare = 2.5 acres
tons	=	tonnes = 1 ton = 1016.05 kg
gmt	=	greenwich meridian time

ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the historical evolution of the beef industry in colonial Zimbabwe in the period between 1939-1980 with special reference to the role of the State. It analyses how the State's statutory marketing and pricing policies helped to develop the industry from its infancy to a stage where it became not just a major food producer but also an important earner of foreign currency for the country. Three major objectives inspired this study: first, to fill in a yawning gap in the post-war colonial economic, social and political historiography of Zimbabwe and to highlight the centrality of cattle to this; secondly, to make a contribution to the history of the country's food industry and, thirdly, to critically examine how the development of the beef industry affected the economic, social and political well-being of both Africans and white settlers and their relations with the State during what was, arguably the most eventful period in the country's colonial history.

The thesis is divided into six chapters, all of which follow the known chronological contours of colonial Zimbabwean historiography, i.e the period before the Second World War, 1890-1938; Second World War, 1939-1945; Post-war years, 1946-1953; Federal period, 1954-1964; UDI and the Second Chimurenga, 1965-1980. Chapter One gives a historical background to the whole study and analyses the origins, growth and factors which governed the development of the beef industry since the establishment of colonialism in the 1890s up to 1938. Chapter Two examines the impact of the Second World War on the beef industry's development, while Chapter Three examines the economic impact of post-war economic growth on the industry's capacity to satisfy increased domestic demand for beef. Chapter Four explores the strengths and weaknesses of Federal State policy in enabling the country to achieve self-sufficiency in beef. Chapter Five explores the impact of economic sanctions and the process of agrarian diversification on the industry's development during the first six years of UDI. Chapter Six is the last one in this study and examines the economic impact of the Second Chimurenga or War of Liberation on the industry from 1972-1980.

Since the subject of cattle is one that transcends a whole spectrum of different disciplines which may include, among others, agriculture, economics, history and politics, the study tries to avoid the obvious pitfalls of looking at the subject by strictly or rigidly utilising a single methodological criteria or conceptual underpinning. However, the study places special emphasis on economic and historical factors which were of crucial or central importance in determining development and change in the country's cattle industry over a period of four decades. While employing a materialist approach as the main tool of critical analysis, the study does not ignore the significance of the dialectical interplay between economic factors and purely scientific ideas, especially since the former ultimately helps to determine the latter. The sources for this study are drawn mainly from files, commission of inquiry reports, books, pamphlets, journal articles and various periodicals which include newspapers and magazines deposited at the National Archives of Zimbabwe, Ministry of Agriculture and Lands (Zimbabwe), Central Statistical Office Library (Zimbabwe), University of Zimbabwe Library, Parliament Library of Zimbabwe, University of Cape Town Library and South African Library. Oral interviews were also utilized, especially in unearthing some valuable information on the economic impact of the Second Chimurenga War.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This thesis was generously supported by foundations, institutions and their intermediaries. The Mellon Foundation provided the 'cattle money' by way of a generous scholarship grant to study at the University of Cape Town. The window for this invaluable opportunity was provided by the Department of Economic History at the University of Zimbabwe, to which I was attached as a Graduate Teaching Assistant, in conjunction with the Department of History at the University of Cape Town. I tapped heavily on the generous financial support of the Department of History at UCT, Harry Oppenheimer Centre for African Studies and the Swiss Africa Award. The Centre for African Studies and the History Department offered me several Graduate Teaching Assitantships and a Research Assistantship. I would like to thank Professor Mahmood Mamdani, A C Jordan Chair of the Harry Oppenheimer Centre for African Studies; Professor Bill Nasson, Head of History Department and Professor Ian Phimister, Supervisor, for making all this possible. Mrs M. Mangwende and Mrs Zimba of the Economic History Department at the University of Zimbabwe, Janet Dewal of the Department of History at UCT, along with many members of staff at the UCT Post-Graduate Scholarships Office, National Archives of Zimbabwe, University of Zimbabwe Library, Ministry of Agriculture and Lands and Central Statistical Libraries of the Republic of Zimbabwe, South African Library, University of Cape Town Library, were all extremely helpful and co-operative.

Institutions pay the bills and people do the work. In particular, the pursuit of historical knowledge through all its painful twists and turns is a particularly daunting task. In consequence, since work on this thesis began in 1995, an incredible burden was borne by supervisors, colleagues, friends and family. Special mention goes to my first supervisor, Professor Ian Phimister whose vision can pierce the mists of historical obscurity better than most of ours. Those who have had the privilege to work with him know his magisterial attention to detail. He is both an honest reader and a historian one is ever likely to encounter; his comments were models of clarity and professionalism. Through his excellent supervision, I was able to avoid many self-

indulgent interpretations or unnecessary errors. I will forever be grateful to my second supervisor, Professor Bill Nasson, who in Professor Phimister's absence, was no doubt the best man for the job. In his able hands, I was always able to find my coordinates, stay on course and remain focused. The two supervisors did a brilliant job and I take full responsibility for any weaknesses in this thesis. Special mention goes to Dr A. S. Mlambo, a true friend, fellow academic and brilliant scholar. He, along with Dr E. S. Pangeti, were always very supportive and accomodative during my visists to Zimbabwe.

My debts to friends and family have since positively grown out of all proportion. Three special friends eased me through the lonely and sometimes difficult times in Cape Town. They include Linda Mgobozi and fellow compatriots, James Muzondidya and Lashias Ncube, who all became family to me. Throughout my period of study, I made enormous demands on them which sometimes tested our friendship to the limit. In ways too numerous to mention, they made valiant efforts to save me from myself. Thanks to them I will never know how it feels not to have supportive friends. I will not forget my father 'Old Jack' and my mother, 'Mai Vevakomana' Grace-Nyengedzai Samasuwo for all their prayers, emotional support, warmth, words of wisdom, and encouragement. I made extraordinary demands on my brothers and sisters who include: Teurai, Mashoko, Chiratidzo, Simbarashe, Takura, Rufaro and Kudzai. They have all not been as lucky as I am, yet they have remained selfless and steadfastly supportive. With the whole family firmly behind me, I have learnt to look forwards, not backwards. Special mention goes to the boys for gallantly holding the fort during the most turbulent economic crisis facing our motherland. They acquitted themselves so well that it humbles me. Mashoko you are the first graduate in the family, but, just like pioneers in large families, you could not pursue post-graduate studies due to family commitments. Yet, even in your profession as a diplomat, you still retain residual sympathy for those of us remaining in academe. Because of this, you will always be a source of great inspiration and comfort, not just to me but to the whole family as well.

Introduction

“You might go out and play golf. I go out and look at my cattle. Some of our ranches are 40 miles from one end to the other. When have I got time to play golf? **There is something about cattle. Something ...**” (emphasis added).

Max Greenspan, wealthy Rhodesian rancher, Argus Africa News Service, 28 June 1963.

“The present highly critical situation [in the beef industry] calls for Government intervention involving expenditure The Government should immediately invite, by world-wide advertisement, competent capitalists to enter upon the business of meat export from S. Rhodesia, and to that end afford them every assistance within its power.”

A Report of the Committee of Enquiry in Respect of the Cattle Industry, (1923), 21.

“...the export of our chilled and frozen products is an essential service of the State, exactly as is the postal and telegraph service or the electrical supply... it is the duty of the Government to develop it in the interests of the colony. It is not a service which private companies should be in a position to make money out of, but adversely, it should be utilised for the general building-up and development of the agricultural export trade of S. Rhodesia.”

S2704/3/1, CSC, Expropriation of RECSCO, 1937-1951, B. L. Gardiner to Prime Minister, G. M. Huggins, 11 September 1937.

The historiographical centrality and/or corporate importance of cattle either as subjects of historical inquiry or as part of a vital food industry in any given economy cannot be underestimated. Apart from the fact that many societies have at one time or another fought one another over cattle, there is probably no single society in the world whose history or economy is not haunted or does not evoke the image/s of the bull and the cow. In fact, with regard to this point and in his book entitled Beyond Beef: The Rise and Fall of the Cattle Culture, Jeremy Rifkin makes a universally poignant observation when he notes that:

a unique relationship has been forged between human beings and cattle over the millennia of history. We have prayed to these animals, sacrificed them to the gods, and used them to provide food, clothing, shelter, traction and fuel. They have enriched our spiritual lives and fed our appetites. We have elevated

them to divine status, yoked them to the plough to turn the soil, milked them to provide nourishment for our young, and eaten them to gain strength and energy.... The bull and the cow, of the bovine species, have travelled with us from the very beginning of our sojourn. Their fate and ours have been intertwined in a myriad of ways and at every critical juncture of human history.¹

Thus, in a way, to examine the relationship between people and their cattle is to unravel the very soul of human society, its behaviour and history. Today, the beef quisine or culture itself is so deeply entrenched in the staple diet of most countries that trying to live a life of vegetarianism “is both eccentric and dated, in an uninteresting way.”²

Besides stimulating the development of many subsidiary industries such as the leather-based industries, the development of the cattle industry today has constituted a major source of food and foreign currency earnings, or in fact, a mainstay of many an economy in the world. To a certain extent, the world also owes much of its early ‘industrial genius’ or ‘industrial’ ways of thinking associated with sophisticated and unprecedented industrial innovations such as the assembly line, food preservation techniques, mass production, vertical integration techniques, refrigerated transportation and the railroad system to the development of the world’s largest commercial cattle complexes. For example, Henry Ford himself later reminisced that “the idea [for his automobile assembly line] came in a general way from the overhead trolley that the Chicago [meat] packers used in dressing beef.”³

¹ J. Rifkin, Beyond Beef: The Rise and Fall of the Cattle Culture, (New York, 1992), 2, 16.

² J. M. Coetzee, “Meat Country”, GRANTA, Vol. 52, (1995), 43. Although Coetzee, a scholar of note and vegetarian himself makes this point with specific reference to the United States of America, there is absolutely no doubt as to its universal applicability to any other country in the world, least of which is Zimbabwe, or South Africa for that matter. Besides, in spite of his open dislike for meat, Coetzee makes an important point when he acknowledges that “The question of whether we should eat meat is not a serious [one] ... [Rather its] like asking, ‘Should we be ourselves?. ...we have not made ourselves to be creatures with ... a hunger for flesh. We are born like that: it is the human condition. We would not be here ... if our forebears had eaten grass: we would be antelopes or horses.”, 46.

³ Rifkin, Beyond Beef, 120. Rifkin argues that, “Ray Kroc, the indefatigable founder of McDonald’s restaurant chain ... revolutionised American eating habits ... as effectively as Henry Ford changed the way the Americans travelled.” 267. Indeed, some of the world’s largest meat packing houses such as Vestey’s, Liebigs Extract of Meat Company, Swift & Armour together with the ‘hamburger kings’ or fast-food conglomerates like McDonald’s all developed due to the expansion of the international meat business. Liebigs, which was named after its founder, Baron Justus von Liebig, and founded in 1865, is known for its pioneering work in the production of *Extractum carnis* or meat extract and bully beef or canned beef. For a history of Liebigs, see specifically The Times (London) 20 January 1965; Cape Argus, 18 June 1965; For more details on the point made above, see also I. R. Phimister, “Meat and

Throughout the Americas, Australasia and Africa, the development of commercial ranching was again, partly if not largely, responsible for the 'taming' of the colonial frontier. In other words the entrenchment of commercial ranching was fundamental to the process of large-scale land alienation and the proletarianization of the indigenous people in colonies on these continents.⁴ In this way, colonial settler ranching not only contributed to the creation of a politically powerful but small class of 'cattle barons' or the settler ranching bourgeoisie and a large class of the pauperised peasantry but also shaped the nature and dynamics of class politics and struggle in colonies on these continents. Indeed, colonial Zimbabwe was no exception to this rule and, certainly, the country's agrarian economic history would be incomplete without a detailed analysis of the development of commercial beef industry. With the exception of a few geo-climatic variations, there is no doubt that Southern Rhodesia itself presented the classic elements of primitive accumulation synonymous with the entrenchment of colonial ranching capital in North America, South America, Australia and parts of Africa which include South Africa, Nigeria and Kenya. In colonial Zimbabwe, in particular, "land was extensive and cheap as a result of colonial conquest and expropriation, [black] labour power was produced and reproduced outside the capitalist sector, and there were stocks of indigenous cattle which could be seized or purchased cheaply."⁵ Indeed, from the very onset of colonialism, the image of Southern Rhodesia as Southern Africa's 'Texas' had automatically given the land 'between the two rivers' i.e. Limpopo and Zambezi, the reputation as "the new land of opportunity for men whose frontiers had closed elsewhere - for American Indian fighters and Scouts, for Afrikaner elephant hunters, for Australian bush rangers, for South African gold prospectors."⁶

Monopolies: Beef Cattle In Southern Rhodesia, 1890-38," *Journal of African History*, Vol. 19, No. 3 (1978), 391-95; Rifkin, *Beyond Beef*, especially chps. 17-21; 37; J. R. Gray, *Ranch Economics* (Iowa, 1968), 16-65; R. G. Williams, *Export Agriculture and the Crisis in Central America* (Chapel Hill, 1986), especially chps 4-6; P. Smith, *Politics and Beef in Argentina*, (New York, 1969), 49-40; G. Kay, *Development and Underdevelopment* (London, 1975), 167.

⁴ For a more detailed account of the land issue in colonial Zimbabwe, see R. Palmer, *Land Racial Domination in Rhodesia*, (Lusaka, 1977).

⁵ Phimister, "Meat and Monopolies," 395-6.

⁶ T. O. Ranger, "Tales of the 'Wild West': Gold-Diggers and Rustlers in south-west Zimbabwe, 1898-1940, An Essay in the Use of Criminal Court Records for Social History," *South African Historical Journal*, Vol. 28 (1993), 40.

It should be emphasised here that the splendid prospects of successful commercial ranching which the country held proved just as important in attracting settler fortune hunters as was its short-lived reputation as the "Second Rand." Even the success of the Anglo-Ndebele campaign of 1893-94, the second but most definite step which firmly placed the country in the hands of Cecil John Rhodes' fortune hunters for the next 87 years, did not succeed or depend merely on the strength of Rhodes' promises of generous gold claims alone. Rather, the prospects for unbridled land and cattle theft, and also the possibility of stock raising in Matabeleland, went a considerable way in persuading many prospective settlers to 'volunteer' their participation in the 1893-94 campaign. Hence, between October 1893 and March 1896, anything between 100 000 and 200 000 cattle were seized from the Ndebele by Cecil John Rhodes's [B]ritish [S]outh [A]frica Company and individual settlers. While most of these cattle were promptly sold on the Kimberley and Johannesburg mine markets, and many of the cattle remaining in the country were decimated by cattle epidemics of the late 1890s and early 1900s, there is no doubt as to the role of both land and cattle theft in the early development of settler commercial ranching in Southern Rhodesia. With any lingering euphoria concerning the territory's gold mining prospects dashed by the collapse of the myth of the "Second Rand" at the turn of the century, and also with the cost of living sky-rocketing as a result of the South African War of 1899-1902, white commercial ranching started in earnest as part of the colonial administration's strategy of alleviating food shortages in the young colony. In those early years, individual settlers and a few large land-owning private companies stocked their ranches with indigenous cattle, seized and/or stolen or bought at 'knock-down' prices from Africans.⁷ Thus, from very early on, indigenous African-owned cattle came to form the foundation on which the future of the commercial beef industry in the country was to be based.

⁷ For more details on these issues mentioned in the preceding paragraphs, see variously Phimister, "Meat and Monopolies", 396-397; J. R. Cobbing, "The Ndebele under the Khumalos, 1820-1896" (University of Lancaster, unpub. PhD thesis, 1976), 372-82; P. Stigger, "Volunteers and the Profit Motive in the Anglo-Ndebele War, 1893", *Rhodesian History*, Vol. 11, (1971), 22 and, "The Land Commission of 1894 and Cattle," *Zimbabwean History*, Vol. 11, (1980), 20-43; R. H. Palmer, *Land and Racial Domination*, 94; and for individual accounts, see, S. P. Hyatt, *The Old Transport Road* (Bulawayo, 1969), 279-301.

While the foregoing analysis serves primarily to demonstrate the centrality of cattle in the economic and political historiography of colonial Zimbabwe, it is striking to note that the study of the cattle, especially in the period after the Second World War, has either remained virtually marginalised to the fringes of serious academic inquiry, or has been neglected almost completely. This is in spite of the fact that the corporate value of the cattle industry to the Rhodesian economy increased tremendously after the Second War. Peculiarly enough, crops such as tobacco and sugar seem to have received much more special attention⁸, even though beef, alongside maize, was long recognised as the country's most essential protein-rich food resource, and as such, had actually become a state controlled product by the opening of the 'hungry forties'.

To date, the most in-depth studies on the early history of Rhodesian beef industry have so far only focused on the period before the Second World War. There are only two such studies by I. R. Phimister and V. E. M. Machingaidze.⁹ Phimister's article, entitled "Meat and Monopolies: Beef Cattle in Southern Rhodesia, 1890-1938," which was published in 1978 in the Journal of African History, constitutes the first real attempt to examine the beef industry's early history. In this article, Phimister analyses how the process of primitive accumulation and entrenchment of settler ranching capital was made possible by the availability of cheap abundant land, cheap labour and cheap indigenous foundation stock. Phimister argues that in spite of the advantages provided by these 'classic elements of primitive accumulation', the development of the beef industry in general suffered from a severe lack of capital, rampant cattle diseases, lack of adequate and modern transport facilities and poor ranching management techniques. Thus, because of these factors, white ranchers proved incapable of rearing quality cattle suitable for the world market. According to Phimister, the situation was made worse by the industry's limited success in securing markets in the Southern African sub-continent itself. These factors helped to make

⁸ For more details on this point, see A. S. Mlambo and E. S. Pangeti, The Political Economy of the Sugar Industry in Zimbabwe, 1920-1990 (Harare, 1996); F. Clements and E. Harben, Leaf of Gold: The Story of Rhodesian Tobacco, (London, 1962).

⁹ Phimister, "Meat and Monopolies,"; V. E. M. Machingaidze, "The Development of the Settler Capitalist Agriculture in Southern Rhodesia, with particular reference to the role of the State, 1908-1939," (University of London, unpub. D Phil thesis, 1980), esp. chp 4; A subsidiary analysis of the operations of the Imperial Cold Storage and Supply Company between 1924 and 1938 is also found in C. V. Kwashirai, "The Operations of the Imperial Cold Storage and Supply Company in Southern Rhodesia, 1924-1938," (University of Zimbabwe, unpub. BA Hon. thesis, 1990).

Government intervention in the industry necessary. However, because of its own limited resources, the government was obliged to try to attract, or seek partnerships with international meat combines with the necessary capital and skills in the international meat business, into the country. But, the main problem was that the world's largest meat combines such as Vestey's were repulsed by the poor quality and small numbers of cattle produced in the country. Thus, in the end, and desperate to protect the interests of its settler political constituency, the government was forced to swallow humble pie by opening negotiations with the [I]mperial [C]old [S]torage Company of South Africa, which, though powerful by regional standards, was virtually unknown in the international meat business. Phimister concludes by examining how contradictions in the government-ICS Company relationship surfaced quickly and eventually forced the government to expropriate the ICS's meat-works and establish the [C]old [S]torage [C]ommission in 1938.

Special reference should be made to Chapter Four of Machingaidze's 1980 doctoral thesis, the main body of which is devoted to a critical examination of the role of the State in the development of settler capitalist agriculture in the period between 1908 and 1939. In this chapter, Machingaidze examines the special and decisive role played by the government, in assisting the Rhodesian cattle industry to overcome problems of production and marketing and does this in more detail than Phimister's article. Taken together, studies by Machingaidze and Phimister complement each other and provide an invaluable starting point from which an examination of the industry's development in the post-war period can be made. The important thing is that an examination of the industry's performance and development after the Second World War provides an invaluable opportunity to test Machingaidze and Phimister's earlier observations in the context of post-war developments, and also to determine continuity or discontinuity in government policy towards the commercial beef industry in the last forty years of colonial rule.

Some insights into the development of the cattle industry before and after the Second World War can also be found in a few other published works, and that by H.

Weinmann and another by H. Dunlop, quickly come to mind.¹⁰ Although the main thrust in the book is not the cattle industry, Weinmann's Agricultural Research and Development in Southern Rhodesia sheds some light on the government's efforts to improve production and promoting better animal husbandry in the industry through pasture research and cattle breeding programmes. Although the book gives details of research work done at the country's premier animal and pasture research stations such as Grasslands and Matopos, it does not assess the impact of these experiments on the industry's production levels. On the other hand, Dunlop's work looks at the development of European agriculture in Rhodesia between 1945 and 1965 in general. In so doing, the work provides some valuable insights into far-reaching changes which occur in the government's post-war cattle policy especially in response to the shortage of beef on the domestic market and the need to achieve self-sufficiency in beef. However, besides this, Dunlop's work does nothing to significantly address the dearth of scholarly research on the subject in the period under consideration here. If anything, both Weinmann and Dunlop's works combined only help to highlight the need for serious research on the beef industry's development in the post-war years. Possibly, owing to the fact that the above scholars were not historians, their works hardly made use of available African scholarship, in the form of published literature, or archival material for that matter.

The lack of interest shown by historians in general has also, evidently, left the field open to shallow and dry scientific analysis by agricultural scientists, with equally unsatisfactory results. In his doctoral thesis in 1962, T. H. Vorster did nothing further than analyse environmental and climatic factors which influence the growth, production and reproduction of different breeds of beef cattle under range conditions in Southern Rhodesia,¹¹ while M. Rukuni and C. K. Eicher's Zimbabwe's Agricultural Revolution represents a valuable but missed opportunity to fully address the dearth of scholarly research on the beef industry in post-war colonial Zimbabwe.¹² For example,

¹⁰ H. Weinmann, Agricultural Research and Development in Southern Rhodesia, 1924-1950 (Salisbury, 1975); H. Dunlop, The Development of European Agriculture in Rhodesia, 1945-1965 (Salisbury, 1971).

¹¹ T. H. Vorster, "Factors Influencing the Growth, Production and Reproduction of Different Breeds of Beef Cattle Under Range Conditions in Southern Rhodesia," (University of Stellenbosch, unpub. DSc thesis, 1962).

¹² M. Rukuni and C. K. Eicher, Zimbabwe's Agricultural Revolution (Gweru, 1994).

in their book, Rukuni and Eicher waste no time in celebrating what they perceive as Zimbabwe's "agricultural revolution" without providing any requisite detail on how the so-called 'agricultural revolution' actually played itself out in the various sectors comprising the country's agricultural industry. Again, in their quest to celebrate Zimbabwe's agricultural achievements, the same scholars tend to gloss over the 'filth and squalor' which accompanied the process of capitalist agricultural accumulation during the colonial period. Apart from an article in their work by L. Ndlovu, which provides only a short summary of livestock research programmes in the 1960s and 1970s, Rukuni and Eicher's study leaves no-one more informed about the development of the country's various agricultural industries and the dynamics which governed the process of capitalist accumulation in general. Thus, just as is the case with earlier studies conducted by Weinmann and Dunlop, Rukuni and Eicher's study primarily serves to underline the need for more serious historical inquiry not just on the cattle industry but on other sectors of the agricultural industry as well.

Recently, work by J. A. McKenzie, and also, to some extent, another by M. Goldberg, have all made some valuable contributions on the political and economic trends which characterised the process of white capitalist agricultural development in post-war Southern Rhodesia.¹³ In particular, McKenzie's doctoral thesis, the main body of which is devoted to analysing the role of white commercial farmers in the governmental system of Southern Rhodesia, helped considerably in throwing a good deal of light on a crucial factor which, traditionally, had determined the pattern of white capitalist agricultural development in S. Rhodesia: i.e. the special relationship between white farmers and the government.¹⁴ By analysing the relations between government and white farmers, McKenzie's study provides a context within which one can effectively problematise the role of white farmers in influencing government

¹³ M. Goldberg, "Commercial Agriculture in Rhodesia, 1965-1980: Consolidation and Change," (University of London, unpub. MA thesis, 1982); J. A. McKenzie, "Commercial Farmers in the Governmental System of Colonial Zimbabwe, 1963-1980," (University of Zimbabwe, unpub. PhD thesis, 1989).

¹⁴ In his doctoral thesis, Machingaidze persuasively demonstrated how the colonial state fathered, mothered and nursed the development of settler capitalist agriculture in colonial Zimbabwe. The success of capitalist agriculture was almost always dependent on the favourable relationship between white farmers and the state. Whenever they were faced by a crisis white farmers always relied on the state to tip the economic scales in their favour. On the other hand, the state was dependent on the large class of small white farmers for political support. For more detail see Machingaidze, "Development of Settler Capitalist Agriculture in S. Rhodesia"; Phimister, "Meat and Monopolies".

policy in the beef industry during the period of [U]nilateral [D]eclaration of [I]ndependence and the Second Chimurenga War.

Studies by R. M. G. Mtetwa, M. Steele and Ian Scoones also have a special relevance to this study.¹⁵ In their analysis of African response to colonial cattle policies, studies by Mtetwa, Steele and Scoones not only helped to bury the widespread settler notion that African peasants in colonial Zimbabwe suffered from a “Cattle Complex”¹⁶, but they also highlighted important factors which governed African contribution to commercial beef production in the country. However, it is the conviction of the author of this study, that the validity of Mtetwa, Steele and Scoones’s findings should be tested and incorporated into a project of the magnitude proposed here.

Without A. S. Mlambo’s recent short study on the operations of the [C]old [S]torage [C]ommission in beef production between 1938 and 1963, there is no doubt that any attempt at detailed research on the beef industry in post-war Rhodesia would have amounted to stumbling through a gate left open by neglectful historians.¹⁷ Not only does Mlambo’s study mark a historiographical watershed in the analysis of the subject so far, but it also constitutes a new and welcome attempt to clear the undergrowth in what is otherwise neglected historical terrain. Still, because of its narrow focus, Mlambo’s study does not pre-empt further research on the development of the cattle industry in the post-war period.

¹⁵ R. M. G. Mtetwa, “Myth or Reality: The ‘Cattle Complex’ in South East Africa, with special reference to Rhodesia,” *Zambezia*, Vol. 6, No. 1 (1978); I. Scoones, “Livestock Populations and Household Economics: A Case Study from Southern Zimbabwe,” (Imperial College, London, unpub. PhD thesis, 1990) and see also Scoones “Households, Lineage Groups and Ecological Dynamics: Issues for Livestock Research and Development in Zimbabwe’s Communal Lands,” in B. Cousins and C. Jackson et al, *Socio-Economic Dimensions of Livestock Production in the Communal Lands of Zimbabwe*, (Masvingo, 1988).

¹⁶ Colonial officials in Zimbabwe as well as elsewhere Africa believed that Africans suffered from “Cattle Complex” or what other scholars have referred to as the ‘Uneconomic Culture’. Colonial officials were often angered by the apparent unwillingness of Africans to sell their cattle even in the face of incentives and they explained this response in terms of African emotional and/or attachment to cattle. This colonial view has since been vehemently dismissed by many scholars as a settler myth. Apart from Mtetwa and Scoones’s works see also L. G. Rutman and D. J. Werner, “A test of the ‘Uneconomic Culture’ thesis: An Economic Rationale for the ‘Sacred Cow’”, *Journal of Political Economy*, Vol. 82, No. 3 (1973).

¹⁷ A. S. Mlambo, “The Cold Storage Commission: A Colonial Parastatal, 1938-1963,” *Zambezia*, Vol. 23, No. 1, (1996).

Despite the fact that in their own accounts, most settler writers, of which there are many on Rhodesia, simply loved to dwell on the colourful frontier character of the new colony, some of the insights they provide on early settler experiences are still worthy of the historian's note.¹⁸ While most portrayals tend to depict, among other things, the undying settler expectation for Africans to just fade away before the march of 'progress', they reveal: the life of early settler ranchers, their constant and bloody struggle to keep wild carnivore at bay on remote farms, and most importantly, their condescending attitudes towards indigenous cattle breeds. However, while this may be the case, some of these accounts still need to be treated with caution lest one falls victim to settler prejudices about the real challenges facing early capitalist ranchers. Nevertheless, this writer feels that these frontier accounts are worthy of any researcher's consideration as they, in many ways, help to breathe life into any critical analysis of the development of the cattle industry in colonial Zimbabwe in general.

¹⁸ "Yank" Allen, "Hunt the Lion," NADA No. 29 (1952); D. M. Sommerville, My Life was a Ranch, (Salisbury, 1976); W. Robertson, Rhodesian Rancher, (London, 1935); C. Truepenny, Our African Farm, (London, 1965); L. T. Tracey, Approach to Farming in Southern Rhodesia, (London, 1945) and Beef on a Ranch and Farm, (Cape Town, 1963); A. Dunlop, The Development of European Agriculture in Rhodesia, 1945-1965, (Salisbury, 1971); A Practical Rancher's Ramblings, (QueQue, 1974).

Chapter One

The Experience of Late-comer: A Survey of the Background, Origins and Early History of the Beef Industry, 1890-1938.

Background, 1890-1908.

It must be understood from the very outset that the development of the cattle industry in colonial Zimbabwe took place along-side a simultaneous shift in the young colony's policy from mining to the development of settler capitalist agriculture in the first two decades of the twentieth century. Therefore, to understand the background and dynamics governing this shift is precisely to understand the origins of the commercial beef industry in Southern Rhodesia. In the first twenty years of Southern Rhodesia's existence as a colony, "there were very few European food producers: the land which was sold or given away in such vast quantities by [the Chartered British South Africa Company] was, as a rule, held as a speculative proposition and/or mined for gold rather than ... farmed."¹ This is largely explained by the fact that in the first decade of colonial rule, vast tracts of alienated land were generously sold by the Company administration to the so-called "'development' companies, but without effective occupation clauses ...[so much so that] in 1899, there were fewer than 250 white 'farmers' actually [residing] on the land, most of whom devoted their energies to trading and transport riding."² In the mean time, the food supply gap created by emphasis on mining resulted in a short-lived era of African peasant prosperity. But, from the turn of the century onwards, the situation changed as Africans lost more land and also as settler capital previously engaged in mining and other petty activities such as transport riding, was forced into agricultural production by; first, the collapse of the myth of the 'Second Rand'; secondly, the devastating impact of the rinderpest epidemic; thirdly, the advent of the railway; and fifthly, the outbreak of the South

¹ P. Mosley, "The development of food supplies to Salisbury (Harare)", in I. Jane (ed.), Feeding African Cities: Studies in Regional Social History (London, 1987), 207.

African War of 1899-1902. While the rinderpest epidemic and the advent of the railway combined to break the power of the petty transport riders, i.e. by permanently putting them out of business³, the South African War helped to exclude competition from the more established South African agricultural industry. Because of dwindling food imports, local prices for grain and other locally produced foodstuffs rose steeply, thereby creating a lucrative internal market for enterprising capitalist settler farmers. Not surprisingly, therefore, “the number of occupied farms increased from about fifty to one hundred and fifty to well over three hundred in 1903, and went on rising as a steady inflow of men with small capital and a large capacity for work ... occupied farms all over the country.”⁴ By 1908, capitalist agriculture on a significant scale was already seriously underway and the country had entered a new era of “white capitalist agriculture.”⁵

Laying the Foundation for the Beef Industry, 1908-1916

In comparison with other commercial cattle complexes in the Americas and Australia, the commercial beef industry in colonial Zimbabwe has a fairly recent history. This is explained by the fact that Southern Rhodesia was a much younger colony as compared to the Americas where the process of colonisation dated back several centuries. While in South America, a Spanish settler ‘cattle baron’ class or elite had already established itself by the 1580s⁶, a vibrant cattle oligarchy also quickly established itself in the north under the heavy influx of English capital on the heels of the American Civil War of the early 1860s.⁷ An interesting paradox is that while a prosperous cattle aristocracy in the Americas emerged in the wake of the mineral revolutions of the 1540s and 1840s⁸, in Rhodesia, it was the absence of a mineral revolution which had much the same effect.⁹ Thus, by the time Rhodesia set up its own cattle industry, beef

² I. R. Phimister, “Zimbabwe: the path of capitalist development”, in D. Birmingham and P. Martin History of Central Africa, Vol. 2, (London, 1983), 262.

³ Mosley, ‘The development of food supplies’, 207; S. P. Hyatt, The Old Transport Road (Bulawayo, 1969), 293-301; For a detailed discussion of the Texas Fever and East Coast Fever, see P. F Cranfield Science and Empire: East Coast Fever in Rhodesia and the Transvaal (Cambridge, 1991), chaps. 2-11.

⁴ Phimister, “Zimbabwe: path of capitalist development”, 262.

⁵ Palmer, Land and Racial Domination, 80.

⁶ P. I Wellman, The Trampling Herd: The Story of the Cattle Range in America (London, no date), 17; J Rifkin, Beyond Beef: The Rise and Fall of the Cattle Culture (New York, 1992), see chap. 7.

⁷ Rifkin, Beyond Beef, see chap. 14.

⁸ Ibid., 47.

⁹ Palmer, Land and Racial Domination, 80.

production in the Americas had reached a highly efficient, integrated and capital intensive stage where the meat trade had become the preserve of powerful 'meat kings' or monopolies like Vestey's.¹⁰

But, that was as far as the fundamental differences between the Americas and Rhodesia went. Indeed, even if Southern Rhodesia was, by far, only a late-comer in the business of cattle production, its cattle industry, just as in the older colonies, owed its early start to a protracted process of primitive capitalist accumulation. By virtue of conquest and expropriation, land was cheap and plentiful, grazing was abundant, there were large stocks of indigenous cattle, which could be seized or bought at knock-down prices, and labour was extremely cheap.¹¹ In particular, the provision of cheap and extensive land resources was a fundamental pre-requisite for successful ranching since ranching "by its very nature can only return a low income per acre."¹² Until about 1912, the minimum price of ranching land [in S. Rhodesia] stood at "8.5d. per acre This compare[d favourably] with the 1904 average prices of 34/4d. in the Orange Free State, 33/- in the Cape, 28/6d. in the Transvaal, and 25/- in Natal, while land along the Northern Rhodesian line of rail was fetching between 3d. and 8d. per acre at this time. Also, a much simpler form of land title was issued, rebates of between 20 and 30 percent on the purchase price were granted in the event of positive improvements being made to the land, a concession claimed in practise by an 'infinitesimal' number of farmers."¹³ Even a decade later, in 1921, suitable ranching land could still be acquired in the country for as little as 3-10s. per acre.¹⁴

The theft of African-owned land unleashed by colonialism yielded even more positive results for would-be settler ranchers and settler capitalist farmers in general. By depriving Africans of their main means of livelihood, the process of land alienation helped to force the peasantry into wage labour in much the same way as did the

¹⁰ Phimister, "Meat and Monopolies: Beef cattle in Southern Rhodesia", *Journal of African History*, Vol. 19, No. 3, (1978), 393-5.

¹¹ For more details on this see [B]ritish [S]outh [A]frica Company, *Ranching in Rhodesia* (London, 1919), 5; Phimister, "Meat and Monopolies", 395; V. E. M. Machingaidze, "The development of settler capitalist agriculture in Southern Rhodesia with particular reference to the role of the state, 1908-1939", (University of London, unpub. PhD thesis, 1980), 282; For full discussion on the land question, see Palmer, *Land and Racial Domination*, 30, 33 and chaps. 3-5.

¹² Phimister, "Meat and Monopolies", 396.

¹³ Palmer, *Land and Racial Domination*, 82.

Enclosure Movement in Western Europe. By swallowing large blocks of land, huge cattle ranches, especially those owned by large private companies, served as a mechanism for inducing and “sustaining agrarian underdevelopment in the [African] peasant economy.”¹⁵ This process induced the outflow of much needed cheap labour for capitalist ranching, which by its nature, is not amenable to mechanisation.¹⁶

Unlike in the Americas, where feral or wild cattle had freely roamed the western plains and the Pampas for centuries and were there for the frontier settler’s taking¹⁷, the foundation of capitalist ranching in Rhodesia had to be created via a vigorous and “thoroughgoing [process of plunder and] looting of the ‘natural economy’ of the Shona and the Ndebele.”¹⁸ This factor largely explains why foundation stock on white-owned ranches and indeed, the great bulk of settler-owned cattle before the Second World War was mainly derived from and composed of indigenous cattle breeds such as the Nkone, Mangwato, Matabele, Mashona and Tuli.¹⁹ By the time the first settlers arrived in the colony in the 1890s, Africans already owned thousands of cattle and were skilled cattlemen in their own right.²⁰ In fact, “in as much as there were traditional doctors for human ailments, there also came into being [amongst the Shona and the Ndebele] persons [skilled and] capable of treating animals.”²¹ For example, the “Shona possess[ed.] an intimate knowledge of the medical virtues of herbs, roots and bark and use[d] these for their cattle.”²²

The thinking which governed African cattle ownership was radically different from that of western capitalist ranchers. For instance, given their experiences with epizootic

¹⁴ Phimister, “Meat and Monopolies”, 396.

¹⁵ D. G Clarke, “The Political Economy of Discrimination and Underdevelopment in Rhodesia with special reference to African Workers 1940-1973”, (University of St. Andrews, unpub. PhD thesis 1975), 304.

¹⁶ Ministry of Agriculture, Beef Cattle Production Costs on some European Farms in Northern and Southern Rhodesia, 1959-1962 (Salisbury, 1964), 10; Phimister, “Meat and Monopolies”, 396.

¹⁷ For detailed accounts on feral cattle in the Americas, see variously: Rifkin, Beyond Beef, chap. 7; Wellman, The Trampling Herd, chap. 1.

¹⁸ Phimister, “Zimbabwe: The Path of Capitalist Development”, in D Birmingham and P. Martin (eds.), History of Central Africa, Volume 2, (London, 1983), 254.

¹⁹ Southern Rhodesia, Handbook for the Use of Prospective Settlers on the Land (London and Ipswich, 1924), 30.

²⁰ “Memorandum on the Cattle Industry, 1921”, Rhodesia Agricultural Journal Vol. 18, (1921), 268.

²¹ D. M Chavunduka, Cattle Production, (Gweru, 1985), 7.

²² E. A. Nobbs, “The Native Cattle of Southern Rhodesia”, African Journal of Science, Vol. 24, (1927), 337.

diseases, both the Ndebele and Shona believed in the safety of owning large numbers of cattle. Also, in the 'natural economies' of the Shona and Ndebele, cattle were not kept simply for their meat and milk, but they were kept for the provision of inputs such as manure, draught power and transport. In this way, cattle were an essential element to the process of food or crop production. Their versatility, as both forms of property and wealth, meant that cattle could also be used as payment for "the bride price, payment of fines and reparation or compensation for crimes [committed]", while only a small number of cattle were sometimes used in ritual ceremonies.²³ Thus, both to the Shona and Ndebele, static western notions of land-carrying capacity did not necessarily apply and the quality of cattle produced was inconsequential.²⁴ However, in spite of their importance, cattle could still be traded for grain, especially in times of famine or drought. Quite often, their remarkable qualities of hardiness and ability to maintain weight during the long dry seasons, also made indigenous cattle breeds an attractive insurance against drought or crop failure.²⁵

Due to their excellent breeding qualities, hardiness, as well as their low cost, indigenous cattle breeds were not a choice but the key to the development of early settler ranching in Rhodesia. For many years after the establishment of colonialism, indigenous breeds remained in demand among white ranchers primarily because lack of capital practically "ruled out 'large scale' importation of European breeds of cattle."²⁶ Unlike imported European breeds and also despite their small frames and long periods of maturation, indigenous cattle such as the Mashona, Mangwato or Tuli and Matabele were noted for their hardiness, resistance to diseases and ability to withstand "the extremes of summer and winter weather, drought and excessive wet seasons."²⁷ Thus, given these qualities, indigenous cattle, no doubt, presented early white ranchers with an excellent foundation on which they could, "either slowly

²³ Chavunduka, "The role of cattle in the traditional African society", in A. J. Smith, Beef cattle in Developing countries, (Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh, 1976),

²⁴ Ibid., 399.

²⁵ W. Robertson, one of the earliest Rhodesian cattle ranchers argues that the only sure way or 'sound' method of beginning was to "to start with Native stock, acclimatised to local conditions, cross them with fairly decent bulls; and later, to cross the progeny with first class Aberdeen-Angus beasts.", Rhodesian rancher, (London and Glasgow, 1935), 13.

²⁶ Machingaidze, "The Development of Settler Capitalist Agriculture in Southern Rhodesia with particular reference to the Role of the State, 1908-1939", (University of London, unpub. PhD thesis, 1980), 285.

²⁷ Ibid., 289.

grade-up the indigenous cattle by cross-breeding with imported grade and pedigree bulls, or [alternatively] systematically select the best types of indigenous cattle for breeding purposes.”²⁸ The Chartered Company itself, was to point out in latter years that in “the early days of ranching in Rhodesia, and even up to 1919, it was economically impossible to stock any large ranching proposition without starting on a foundation of native cows.”²⁹ Much later, Charles Murray, a Senior Animal Husbandry Officer, acknowledged the contribution of indigenous cattle to the development of Rhodesia’s capitalist ranching sector when he noted that

The trek ox came from the tribal areas. I always say the trek ox was responsible for the opening up of and development of Rhodesia’s agriculture. The old native cow provided the foundation, because she put blood in the foundation, and whatever cattle were brought from South Africa or Scotland, were merely for gradation.³⁰

Early Government Policy towards the Beef Industry, 1908-1918

From around 1908 onwards, the successful expansion of capitalist beef production in the country was largely sustained by the Chartered Company administration’s own policy of “white agriculture.” Through this policy, the Company administration offered generous incentives which managed to attract a number of big ranching companies and cattle experts from as far afield as Texas into the country. For instance, the Chartered Company’s handbook for prospective settler categorically outlined the colony’s generous land settlement policy thus: “while 15 000” acres is taken as the minimum area suitable for ranching, opportunities exist for the establishment of large ranching concerns, involving 50 000 acres and upwards, for those possessed of the necessary means.”³¹ Among the several big land companies which had established their ranching properties at least by the start of the First World War in 1914, included such companies as Willoughby’s Consolidated, Amalgamated Properties of Rhodesia Ltd, London and Rhodesia Mining and Land Company or (LONRHO) and the [B]ritish [S]outh [A] Company itself.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 285.

²⁹ Major G. G. F. Chomley (Assistant General Manager, BSA. Company), cited in “Cattle Industry of Southern Rhodesia”, *Rhodesia Agricultural Journal*, Vol. 21, (1924), 706.

³⁰ C. A. Murray, quoted in Machingaidze, “Development of Settler Capitalist Agriculture”, 290-1.

³¹ Southern Rhodesia, *Handbook for the Use of Prospective Settlers*, 14; Also quoted in Palmer, *Land and Racial Domination*, 94.

Founded in 1894, and named after one of the leading BSA. Company pioneers, John Willoughby, Willoughby's Consolidated had from the start planned on establishing a ranching business which would supply beef to both the domestic and export markets. These original plans were to turn Willoughby's Consolidated into a pioneer in the colony's infant beef industry. From the 1890s onwards, the company wasted no time in establishing a 350 000 acre ranch at Umvuma later known as the Central Estates. The foundation stock on this ranch was made up of indigenous cattle bought from Africans residing in the vicinity of the ranch. By 1908, its predominantly Afrikaner and Mashona cattle herd, which was crossed with imported Hereford and Lincoln breeds, had expanded to 3 200.³²

Also, by virtue of the Royal Charter, the BSA. Company was automatically the largest individual land-holding company in the country. From around 1908 onwards, the Chartered Company took a lead in setting up its own ranching empire by investing heavily in cattle ranching with a view to fully stock its huge Rhodesdale ranch, along with four other ranches by 1920. In 1912, its Rhodesdale ranch alone covered some 1 000 000 acres and by 1914, this ranch carried over 19 000 head of cattle.³³ At that time, the Company's two other large ranches, the 100 000 acre Tokwe ranch and the gigantic 3 590 000 acre Nuanetsi ranch carried an estimated 4 914 and 4 524 head, respectively. At its initial survey, the giant Nuanetsi ranch was one of the world's largest surveyed ranching properties, at "more or less the size of [present day] Lebanon"³⁴ in extent.

The [L]ondon and [R]hodesia [M]ining and [L]and Company, which was originally founded as a purely mining concern, also joined other struggling mining companies in developing its land assets by consolidating its ranching business in the years between 1910 and 1914. On its four big ranches, which included the Transsau-Clare Estate, Glass Block, Lochard and Wiltshire Estates, LONHRO ran a herd of indigenous cattle alongside herds of imported Sussex and Hereford beef cattle. At the same time, its

³² A. E. Hardley, Willoughby's Consolidated Company, Ltd, 1894 -1944: Review (1944), 23.

³³ African World, Annual, (1912); Machingaidze, "Development of Settler Capitalist Agriculture", 34 , 198.

³⁴ A. Wright, Grey Ghosts at Buffalo Bend, (Salisbury, 1976), 40.

other subsidiary company, the Mining Ranching Cotton and Tobacco Lands of Rhodesia (Ltd.), which owned approximately 1 462 898 acres of ranching land, also ran a herd of approximately 2 000 cattle. Apart from these properties, LONHRO also owned the Causton Block ranch and the Mayo Ranching Company on which several thousand herd of cattle were kept.³⁵

Among the largest ranching companies to invest in the country was [L]iebig's [E]xtract of [M]eat Company (LEMCO), which around 1909, wasted not time in expressing interest in acquiring "large tracts of land ... for ranching purposes in connection with [its] business."³⁶ Obviously pleased by Liebig's international reputation as the world's pioneering company in the history and chemistry of meat extraction and canning, the BSA. Company quickly came to an understanding with Liebig's representatives.³⁷ In February 1911, an agreement was signed under which Liebig's undertook to acquire 1 200 000 acres of ranching land at one shilling per acre. Under this agreement half the land acquired by Liebig's was to be stocked with cattle in under five years of beginning operations. In return the BSA. Company "promised to [do everything in its power] to secure favourable railway rates and to make available a further 10 000 acres should Liebig's build a factory inside the five year period."³⁸ Once the deal had been sealed, Liebig's was given carte blanche of selecting well watered and best ranching land in the Tuli district situated in the south of the country. Having exploited its privilege to the full, Liebig's established its headquarters at Mazunga³⁹ from where it proceeded to energetically develop its land holdings by "investing about 50 000 *pounds sterling* annually [until the outbreak of] the First World War."⁴⁰

³⁵ African World, Annual, 34, 169; Lonhro Annual Report for the year 1972.

³⁶ Phimister, "Meat and Monopolies", 26.

³⁷ Known as Liebig's Extract of Meat Company and named after its founder Baron Justus von Liebig, the company was founded in 1865. With a working capital of 15 000 *pounds sterling*, its first plant was erected at Fray Bentos in Uruguay in the 1890s. For more details on the company's history, see Times, (London) 20 January 1965.

³⁸ Phimister, "Meat and Monopolies", 26; H. H. De Laessoe, "Liebig's Rhodesia Enterprise", RAT, Volume 9, 1911-1912, 665.

³⁹ Mazunga was centrally located in the Tuli district and was about 70 kilometres from the West Nicholson railway branch line.

⁴⁰ Phimister, "Meat and Monopolies", 27.

The increased importation of cattle after 1908, the formation of the Land Bank in 1912 and the country's success in reducing cattle mortality from disease through dipping, led to a rapid increase in the national herd. Between 1909 and 1913, about 33 000 cattle, which included pedigree bulls, were imported from Northern Rhodesia, Nyasaland and South Africa for purposes of re-stocking or replacing herds lost due to the epidemics of the late 1890s and early 1900s. As a result of this, the number of white-owned cattle increased sharply from around 39 000 in 1907, to 341 878 in 1914.⁴¹ The Land Bank, which gave credit to "persons of European descent only", enabled an increasing number of white settlers to obtain loans of up to 2 000 *pounds sterling* on very easy terms for the purposes of purchasing land, fencing materials, agricultural equipment and foundation stock.⁴² On the other hand, the promulgation of the Compulsory Dipping Ordinance in 1914⁴³, and later, the Cattle Cleansing Acts of 1918 and 1927, respectively, helped to reduce significantly cattle mortality from tick-borne diseases in the country. To encourage the construction of dip tanks the Government made available grants of up to 50 *pounds sterling* to white ranchers with a view to enabling them to meet half the costs of constructing a single dip tank.⁴⁴ The Government also allowed white ranchers to exploit existing compulsory dipping regulations by letting them recover the costs of constructing dip tanks through extracting dipping fees from their African tenants.⁴⁵ Thus, owing to the fact that African cattle producers did not get similar financial assistance from Government, an estimated "75 percent of African cattle [in the country] were dipped" in this manner by 1921.⁴⁶ The splendid opportunities for super-exploitation which this veterinary policy presented, no doubt partly explains why the number of white-owned or controlled dip tanks jumped from 100 in 1910, to 325 at the end of 1913, and to 1 600 by 1919.⁴⁷ The success of the government's dipping policy was shown by the fact that

⁴¹ Palmer, Land and Racial Domination, 94.

⁴² According to Palmer, "The bank was of crucial importance in helping new European farmers to establish themselves on the land. Its success led white settlers elsewhere (notably Kenya where one was not established until 1930) to demand something comparable.", see Palmer, Land and Racial Domination, 82.

⁴³ Weinmann, Agricultural Research and Development in Southern Rhodesia, 111.

⁴⁴ Machingaidze, "The Development of Settler Capitalist Agriculture", 323.

⁴⁵ P. Mosley, The Settler Economies: Studies in the Economic History of Kenya and Southern Rhodesia, 1900-1963, (London, 1983), 42. "African farmers, whose wishes were not consulted, often had to pay dipping fees of 1/- or 2/- per head of cattle per annum.", See Palmer, Land and Racial Domination, 98.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Machingaidze, "Development of Settler Capitalist Agriculture", 324-5.

the number of cattle actually dying from tick-borne diseases, fell even in the face of new and severe outbreaks of disease in the country. For example, out of a total of 147 outbreaks of cattle diseases between 1906 and 1919, only 7 000 deaths were recorded countrywide.⁴⁸ Thus, as the country's infant beef industry became increasingly less prone to cattle epidemics, which had previously checked its expansion before 1908, the national herd also began to thrive better and expand faster.⁴⁹

Table 1.1 : European Owned Pure-bred Cattle (Selected years)

BREED	1924	1930	1940	1950
Afrikander	1 711	2 725	4 343	8 773
Friesland	1 913	3 898	1 496	3 121
Hereford	1 885	2 984	2 153	2 150
Aberdeen Angus	899	1 073	1 302	1 374
Sussex	545	1 137	1 366	1 318
Shorthorn	1 812	1 979	1 068	609
Devon	1 468	890	332	141
Other	522	709	935	1 999
Total	10 755	15 395	12 995	19 485

Source: Weinmann, Agricultural Research and Development in Southern Rhodesia, 154.

Some Constraints on the Beef Industry's Early Development

Although the Company administration did much to set the stage for the successful development of the country's capitalist agricultural industry in general, the process of economic expansion in the cattle sector itself was hampered by severe undercapitalisation on the part of most white ranchers, crude ranching methods, rampant cattle diseases and lack of transport facilities. It needs to be emphasised that the successful development of commercial ranching or beef production anywhere in the world necessarily turns on the availability of adequate capital. This is because of the constraint of long deferred returns on investments. Thus, unlike in annual cash crops such as cotton or groundnuts, where farmers have the luxury of switching from one crop to another to avoid losses, a commercial rancher, on the other hand, cannot switch production overnight should unfavourable economic conditions arise. The key difference lies in the slow rate of biological reproduction in cattle which delays

⁴⁸ Ibid., 313.

returns on investments for a long time. For example, the gestation period of a calf is nine months, and the earliest it can be sold for slaughter is when it is at least two years old. Apart from this, a steer not only has to be raised, but also has to be brought to the necessary slaughter weight and quality in the shortest time possible. Thus, from the time of its conception, the rancher has to wait for at least three years before any return on investment can be expected or realised.⁵⁰

Under conditions of inadequate capital and poor cattle management, such as those prevailing in S. Rhodesia before the Second World War, commercial ranching was a notoriously risky business. In particular, the problem of undercapitalisation had become a permanent feature of the Rhodesian beef industry since the adoption of the policy of “white agriculture” by the Chartered Company administration in 1908. Eager to recoup its losses made during the era of speculative mining, and thereby to cash-in on increased land sales, the BSA Company had encouraged white settlement on extremely easy terms. For example, all intending settlers were advised that a starting capital of 700 *pounds sterling* was enough to develop a minimally-sized ranch of 15 000 acres in extent. However, when the weakness in this policy of simply encouraging the influx of numbers finally became apparent, the Chartered Company, rather belatedly warned those “who contemplate embarking on ranching enterprises in Rhodesia ... not to do so on a small capital. Competent judges, put the minimum amount ... at 3 000 [*pounds sterling*]’. Modern estimates, even when trying to show how low costs were in the ‘early days’, still arrived at a basic figure of 8 000 pound sterling.” As Ian Phimister points out, “the Chartered Company’s revised estimate, which represented the absolute minimum necessary, came too late to alter a pattern which was already entrenched in Rhodesian ranching by 1919. By that date, there

⁴⁹ As can be noted, almost all the increase in the European herds represents Afrikaner or locally bred cattle. Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Zimbabwe Beef Industry, Chairman, R. C. Elliot, (January, 1981), 310; Machingaidze, “Development of Settler Capitalist Agriculture”, 13.

⁵⁰ L. S. Jarvis “Cattle as Capital Goods and Ranchers as Portfolio Managers: An application to the Argentine Cattle Sector”, Journal of Political Economy, Vol. 8, (1974), 491. See also G. Chigumira, “The Zimbabwean Beef Industry: A Demand and Supply Analysis”, (University of Zimbabwe, unpub. M Sc. thesis, 1993), 2. “The gestation period of a calf is nine months and the earliest it can be sold for slaughter is when it is at least two years old. Thus, from the time of conception, the producer has to wait for at least three years before any return to investment is realised”.

were already a multitude of 'small' undercapitalised ranches, together with a few large concerns financed by international capital".⁵¹

The predominance of such a large group of small undercapitalised producers was, no doubt, a major defining feature of commercial beef production in S. Rhodesia before the Second World War. It is true that such "small [undercapitalised] producers were both a cause and a consequence of S. Rhodesia's failure to establish itself in the world meat market. Always short on capital, and often without sufficient experience, such cattle-owners were singularly unfitted to meet the exacting requirements of the world market."⁵² Because of lack of capital, the majority of white ranchers in the industry found it extremely difficult to raise cattle from birth to slaughter at the right age, weight and quality. Whereas on the eve of the Second World War, ranchers in Argentina could raise 600-650 lb. steers within a period of 20-24 months, it still took most Rhodesian ranchers between four and five years to bring a steer to the required slaughter weight.⁵³ Although the problems facing local ranchers were exacerbated by the generally poor beef qualities of indigenous cattle which they relied on as breeding stock, lack of capital coupled with lack of ranching experience, on the part of most small white ranchers, often resulted in crude breeding techniques being used. Despite the existence of Government subsidised livestock improvement schemes breeding techniques in the industry, at best remained crude and at worst, primitive.⁵⁴

The failure to improve management standards arose from "bad old methods"⁵⁵ or the "Home Methods mentality", [or] the unquestioned belief in the superiority of European breeds among settlers [which] prevented the vigorous and systematic execution of [a suitable] breeding policy."⁵⁶ Because of the 'Home Methods' mentality, whole herds of cattle were being graded up too quickly, with the result that

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ A. E. Romyn, "The Cost of Fattening Bullocks of various Ages in Matabeleland," Rhodesia Agricultural Journal, Vol. 35, (1938), 850.

⁵⁴ Annual Report of the Secretary, Department of Agriculture, 1925, 5. A fencing loan scheme was also expanded while a farm development loan scheme was introduced in the mid 1920s. For more details on this point, see S1193/12, Acting Secretary, Department of Agriculture, "Importation of Cattle from England: Memorandum from the Rhodesia Agricultural Union", 23 July, 1927; Annual Report of the Secretary, Department of Agriculture, 1928, 4; 1929, 2-3;

⁵⁵ L. T Tracey, Approach to Farming in Southern Rhodesia, (London 1945), 79.

⁵⁶ Machingaidze, "Development of Settler Capitalist Agriculture", 293.

most cattle ended being bred above the quality of natural pastures in the country.⁵⁷ Although the first crosses between indigenous cattle and imported pedigree stock were successful, the subsequent crosses tended to produce progressively poorer offspring.⁵⁸ The government's failure to stop uncontrolled breeding or repeated crossings in the industry, often under unsuitable conditions, inevitably caused many inexperienced ranchers unwittingly to substitute the hardiness and thriftiness of indigenous breeds for the delicacy of imported ones. Instead of getting better progeny, most ranchers reaped a harvest of increasingly unthrifty stock which were vulnerable to diseases caused by external and internal parasites.⁵⁹ Thus, sooner or later, many of the crossed herds died, resulting in ranchers incurring heavy losses on their investments.

An important factor often overlooked by the pioneer ranchers was the fact that imported breeds could not thrive under S. Rhodesian climatic conditions. For instance, imported breeds such as the Hereford, Charolais, Aberdeen Angus, Shorthorn, Devon or Sussex suffered from high temperatures and seasonal fluctuations in the quality of veldt pasture in the country. Under local conditions, it was not uncommon for the weight of beasts to fluctuate between 100 lb. in the dry season, i.e. when the quality of pasture deteriorated, to as much as 1 000 lb. or even 1 200 lb. in summer, when veldt grazing was luscious.⁶⁰ This process of 'feast and famine', to which imported breeds were subjected by seasonal changes, often resulted in stunted growth rates and the production of poor quality animals.

Under local conditions, however, several options were open to ranchers: either one had to breed a special type of beast suited to local conditions, or alternatively, a rancher could choose to alter the conditions under which imported pedigree stock could live and thrive. The best option was for the rancher to slowly and systematically grade-up indigenous breeds while maintaining the hardiness in the progeny and adding

⁵⁷ White ranchers were of the general opinion that indigenous cattle breeds were inferior to European breeds. Thus, everybody wanted to cross their foundation stock with imported pedigree stock in order to introduce the desirable beef qualities of European breeds such as early maturity and size to their herds.

⁵⁸ R. Wallace (Professor of Agricultural and Rural Economy, Edinburgh University), "Cattle in S. Rhodesia", *Rhodesia Agricultural Journal*, Vol. 5, (1909), 515, Also quoted in Machingaidze, "Development of Settler Capitalist Agriculture", 294.

⁵⁹ Tracey, *Beef on Ranch and Farm*, 2

⁶⁰ *Ibid*, *Approach to Farming in S. Rhodesia*, 60

the properties of early maturity and size of the exotic breeds. However, this option was the rich man's course of action, as many of S. Rhodesia's multitudes of undercapitalised ranchers had neither the financial means nor the will to take the risk involved, particularly in the period after the First World War when the beef industry plunged into depression.

Even though extensive animal research had long identified lack of supplementary feeding as one of the beef industry's major weaknesses, "its resolution effectively revolved around capital and markets"⁶¹. Also, unlike government animal research stations which relied on grants, and did not operate on the profit motive, individual ranchers, on the other hand, had to operate on a profitable basis and make a living out of cattle.⁶² But, because of the unprofitable nature of beef production during the inter-war period on the one hand, and lack of capital on the other, the majority of ranchers in the industry opted to rely on natural veldt, which was cheaper, instead of adopting government recommended supplementary feeding techniques which often required expensive feed. However, by relying on veldt pasture, many ranchers risked compromising the quality of the beef produced, as no animals suitable for the more remunerative "Chiller" grade beef could be produced simply by utilising veldt pasture.⁶³

Because of undercapitalisation, a host of other economic evils detrimental to the development of proper production methods in the beef industry also emerged. For example, the prospect of a monthly cheque or income from milk and cream sales tempted many financially desperate ranchers to engage in dairy ranching or the milking of beef cows.⁶⁴ This practice, in which milk rather than beef often became the by-product of the ranching industry, at best retarded calf growth or at worst contributed to the increase in calf mortality in the industry in general.⁶⁵ The situation

⁶¹ Phimister, "Meat and Monopolies", 399; Tracey, Approach to Farming in S. Rhodesia, 59.

⁶² N. Murombedzi, "Pasture Research at the Grasslands Research Station, Veld Management and their contribution to the Cattle Industry of Southern Rhodesia, 1930-1980", (University of Zimbabwe, unpub. paper, 1988), 11

⁶³ A. E. Romyn and C. A. Murray, "Cost of Fattening Bullocks of various Ages in Matabeleland", Rhodesia Agricultural Journal, Vol. 35, (1938), 850; Also quoted in Phimister, "Meat and Monopolies", 399.

⁶⁴ F226/1087, "The Organisation, Structure and Economic Position of the Dairy Industry", 2.

⁶⁵ Currie Committee of Inquiry Report, 3

was made worse by the inability of beef producers to acquire the necessary inputs such as pesticides to ward off a host of fatal cattle diseases. It also meant that such ranchers could not acquire fencing material to keep out hordes of teeming wild game which either competed with cattle for grazing or acted as hosts for Foot-and-mouth disease carrying tsetse-fly. Not uncommonly, ranchers were simply forced to ignore parasitic diseases, which admittedly were less fatal but were largely responsible for the industry's low calving rates, stunted growth, sterility, shy breeding and low slaughter weights of less than 500 lb. per beast.⁶⁶ In turn, lower off-take rates in the industry meant that veldt pastures were overburdened by a higher proportion of follower-cattle or 'passengers' from which very little or no remuneration could be derived. Worse still, a higher proportion of follower-cattle also meant that costs of dipping, herding, fencing, disease control and watering even weighed heavier on the ranchers' shoulders.⁶⁷

The small rancher's economic problems were given an added twist by the threat posed by wild game. In the country's best south-eastern range lands, the large herds of elephant, hippopotamus and zebra simply made paddocking of ranches difficult "as they just walked through fences."⁶⁸ Also, because of the threat of wild carnivores, cattle "had to be herded as in Biblical days by herdsmen in the daytime and kraaled at night."⁶⁹ Lions in particular, gave ranchers a difficult time as "their smell terrified domestic stock [which could not] sleep by night nor graze by day, and in the dry season, [it was common for terrified animals to] die of [starvation]."⁷⁰ But, corralling cattle at night itself eroded the undercapitalised rancher's profit in other ways, too. Cattle driven to and from their grazing daily lost their condition, yielded less meat and were easily susceptible to the spread of diseases. On the other hand, the continuous tramping caused by moving cattle to and from the kraals not only caused erosion and

⁶⁶ Tracey, Beef on Ranch and Farm, 5; For data on average carcass weights see carved out weights of cattle sent to the Salisbury and Umtali Municipal Abattoirs from 1925 to 1935 quoted in the Burnett-Hurst Committee Report, 17-18.

⁶⁷ Report to the Minister of Agriculture and Lands on the Agricultural Development of Southern Rhodesia, Chairman, Frank Engledow (1950), para. 53, 77

⁶⁸ Machingaidze, "Development of Settler Capitalist Agriculture", 307.

⁶⁹ Ian De la Rue, "Fertility of the Beef Herd", Beef Cattle Science Handbook, Vol. 12, 232, quoted in Machingaidze, "Development of Settler Capitalist Agriculture", 306-307; "Memorandum on the Cattle Industry, 1921", 269.

⁷⁰ Ian De la Rue, "Address to the History Society", 15.

created dongas but also altered and desiccated the landscape, thereby curtailing the carrying capacity of ranches.

Not surprisingly, the need to protect cattle, grazing and fences on ranches led to the bloody slaughter of wild game. For example, evidence abounds in settler literature about the bloody conflict between early ranchers and wild carnivores in S. Rhodesia. In fact, just like his counterpart on the north American plains, the rancher on the Rhodesian frontier earned himself some side income as bounty hunters, often by ruthlessly slaughtering a wide range of wild animals, especially those classified as vermin by the government law.⁷¹ It is clear from settler accounts, however, that lions, leopards, crocodiles, wild dogs or jackals were major killers of cattle and remained the frontier rancher's worst economic nightmare in the years before the Second World War. One important reason for this was during those years many of the country's game reserves had not yet been properly demarcated and conservation was regarded as secondary to the expansion of white capitalist agriculture.⁷²

While most of the economic problems confronting the beef industry from its period of infancy had been identified, nothing much could be done if the issue of remunerative markets was not resolved. For as long as there were no profits to be made from raising beef cattle it was wishful thinking to expect Rhodesia's multitude of undercapitalised ranchers to abandon primitive methods of production and to raise cattle management standards. For instance, a recent writer noted that:

One should not scorn the stockmen of that time for insufficiently realising that superior stock required superior nutrition. Many of them did; but with the price of contract meat for the mines and railways standing at ten shillings per 100 IBC. it was entirely out of the question to put any money into capital improvement of the ranches or to purchase machinery to make hay or silage.⁷³

In 1933, A. E. Romyn, a government animal husbandry expert, noted that

⁷¹ For more details on this point, see R. Mutwira, "Southern Rhodesia Wildlife Policy, 1890-1953: A Question of Condoning Game Slaughter," *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol. 15, No. 2 (1989), 250-262.

⁷² For more details on this point, see "Yank" Allen, "Hunt the lion," *NADA* No. 29, (1952); W. Robertson, *Rhodesian Rancher* (London, 1935), 175; The same point is also made by Machingaidze, "Development of Settler Capitalist Agriculture", 306-7; C. Truepeny, *Our African Farm* (London, 1965), 63, 75-78.

⁷³ Tracey, *Beef on a Ranch and Farm*, 3.

In Southern Rhodesia we have not yet arrived at a satisfactory cattle breeding policy, and for this the local market is largely to blame. It has shown comparatively little discrimination in favour of quality, and in the absence of an export market for the better class of cattle, there has been very little encouragement to improve the ordinary run of herds. In fact, as a result the quality of beef cattle in Southern Rhodesia has gone back rather than advanced during the last decade, and the general idea has gained credence that the man who has made most out of cattle is the man who has taken the least trouble with them.⁷⁴

Supplementary feeding was the local industry's key to the world market. But, the provision of feed and care necessary to overcome widespread under-nutrition in the country's beef herds was completely out of the question especially in a situation where remunerative markets were non-existent.⁷⁵ Another problem which the industry's planners had to resolve was the issue of up-to-date transport facilities linking the territory's major ranching areas to the nearest seaport Lourenco Marques or Beira in Portuguese East Africa. Apart from the need to establish modern chilling and meat packing factories, it was extremely important for the local beef industry to tremendously increase export production so as to enable it to off-set high freight charges caused by the long distance from markets.⁷⁶

The Market Crisis, 1916-1922

In 1911, white owned cattle totalled an estimated 371 000 head, and from 1914 onwards, the herds expanded at an average of some 14 per cent per year until 1921 when they, for the first time, surpassed African owned herds to reach a total of 900 000 head. By 1925, and also for the first time in the history of the beef industry, white-owned cattle passed the one million head mark.⁷⁷ The expansion in the white sector of the beef industry was mainly caused by the demand for cheap beef during the

⁷⁴ A. E. Romyn, "Some Everyday Problems of the Rancher", Rhodesia Agricultural Journal, Vol. 30, No. 3, (1933), 186.

⁷⁵ Ibid., "Cattle Improvements and a Cattle Breeding Policy in Southern Rhodesia", Rhodesia Agricultural Journal Vol. 32, (1935), 100.

⁷⁶ The lack of modern slaughtering and meat packing factories in the country forced the local beef industry to export cattle on the hoof. There was therefore no value added on exports to enable the industry to make profit on exports and to cover the rather prohibitive freight charges brought to bare on it by the country's remoteness from the world market. For more details on this point, see Phimister, "Meat and Monopolies", 400.

⁷⁷ "Memorandum on the Cattle Industry", 250; E. G. Cross, "An Economic Appraisal of the Production and Marketing of Rhodesian Beef", Rhodesia Journal of Economics, Vol. 5, (1971), 19.

First World War.⁷⁸ In fact, so impressive was the development of the industry's capitalist sector that, Eric Nobbs, the Director of Agriculture, could hardly contain his joy in 1918 when he noted that the "cattle industry, the mainstay of our agricultural prosperity, continues to make steady and satisfactory progress."⁷⁹

Table 1.2: Estimated Cattle Holdings in S. Rhodesia, 1901-1941

Year	African	European
1901	44 000	12 000
1907	164 000	39 000
1911	330 000	164 000
1916	492 000	469 000
1921	854 000	905 000
1931	1 628 000	954 000
1941	1 769 000	851 000

Source: Palmer, Land and Racial Domination, 95.

However, with the cessation of hostilities in Europe in 1918, Nobbs' optimism quickly turned into gloom. The demand for cheap beef declined and Nobbs was forced to swallow his own words by warning that the industry was "rapidly approaching that critical stage when local markets are no longer sufficient for the increasing surplus. The numbers and [poor] quality of the stock available have not, hitherto rendered feasible a regular overseas export trade, [and] an outlet is becoming urgently necessary."⁸⁰ A year later, Nobbs again reported "a steady piling up of surpluses of the finished product, slaughter cattle, beyond our present outlets", adding that abundant supplies had forced the price of low-grade cattle to fall drastically in the Union of South Africa, the country's biggest regional market.⁸¹ With collapse of the Union market exports there fell by more than 50 percent between 1916 and 1926. (see Tables 1.3 and 1.4). Under the weight of accumulating surpluses local cattle prices went down like a lead balloon so much so that by 1922, African owned cattle were reportedly "worth little more than sheep."⁸²

⁷⁸ Machingaidze, "Development of Settler Capitalist Agriculture", 337.

⁷⁹ Annual Report of the Director of Agriculture, 1918, 1.

⁸⁰ Ibid., 1920, 2.

⁸¹ Ibid., 1921, 4.

⁸² Machingaidze, "Development of Settler Capitalist Agriculture", 371.

Table 1.3: Cattle Exports to the Union, 1916-1922.

Year	Total	Slaughter	Breeding
1916	12 722	12 722	nil
1917	13 221	13 180	41
1918	12 153	12 134	19
1919	27 520	22 735	4 785
1920	30 284	22 822	7 462
1921	12 637	7 673	4 964
1922	18 352	15 716	2 636
Grand Total	126 889	106 982	19 907
Average Total	18 127	15 283	2 844

Source: Report of the Committee of Enquiry in respect of the Cattle Industry of S. Rhodesia, (1934), 4.

The above situation in the beef industry was made worse by S. Rhodesia's tiny domestic market. In 1921, the country's population stood at an estimated 771 000 people, of which whites totalled 33 620 and Africans constituted the remainder.⁸³ Out of this population, the main source of domestic demand for locally produced beef was the minuscule white population and a small section of the African population made up of African labourers working in the small emerging mining and administrative towns. The remainder of the population in S. Rhodesia was composed of rural Africans who were either too poor to buy meat, or were peasant farmers themselves. Thus, in contrast to the experience in the Americas where a strong alliance of 'beef and bullion' had successfully been forged in the interests of the beef industry there⁸⁴, the S. Rhodesian mining industry itself "was unwilling to increase expenditure on African labour" through the provision of meat rations for mine labourers.⁸⁵

⁸³ B. M. Shutz, "European Population Patterns, Cultural Persistence, and Political Change in Rhodesia", Canadian Journal of African Studies, Vol. 7, No. 1, 1973, 10; Official Year Book of S. Rhodesia, No. 4, (1952), 128-131.

⁸⁴ In both South and North America, for example, the discovery of silver and gold resulted in "beef prices sky-rocket[ing] in the mining camps.... Cattle provided not only beef for the miners [from whom emanated a huge demand], but tallow for candles to light the shafts and hides for the pouches to transport the silver ore from the mines to the smelters. Cow leather was used to fashion saddles, water bags, cowboy jackets and chaps, and countless other accoutrements." For more details on this point see Rifkin, Beyond Beef, 47.

⁸⁵ Attempts by the cattle industry in 1923 to off-load surpluses on the local mining industry were met with stiff resistance from the mining houses. For more detail see C. van Onselen, Chibaro: African Mine Labour in Southern Rhodesia, 1903-1933, (London, 1976), 41-2.

Table 1.4: Market Distribution for S. Rhodesian Cattle Exports, 1925-27.

Market	1925	1926	1927
Union	9 591	12 250	7 244
For slaughter overseas(Imperial Cold Storage)	35 675	49 593	16 246
To United Kingdom (on the hoof)	236	310	200
Congo (including breeding stock)	14 410	11 845	21 642
Northern Rhodesia (for breeding)	85	32	219
Mozambique (538	614	219
TOTALS	60 545	74 646	46 898

Source: Report of the Director of Agriculture, 1927, 3.

In the meantime, the growing cattle surplus in the country further depressed prices in the industry so much so that the need to find export markets assumed ever greater urgency. The response of local producers to the crisis took several forms. The first attempt to deal with the industry's growing crisis came in 1917 when ranchers established the Rhodesia Meat Packing Company. The formation of this company was followed by the opening of a canning factory at Odzi near Umtali in 1919. But, owing to serious viability problems arising from the Odzi factory's poor location as well as the overriding problem of undercapitalisation, the venture collapsed in 1922, without achieving anything. Yet another attempt to enter the South African Rand mine market through the formation of the Meat Producers' Exchange and by enlisting the co-operation of South Africa's beef producers, again ended in disaster in 1923. It was the collapse of this second attempt to secure a place in the sun for themselves by S. Rhodesian ranchers which served to highlight the need for government intervention in the industry's quest for markets.⁸⁶

Government Intervention, 1923-1938

Government intervention in the beef industry itself was nothing new.⁸⁷ One of the earliest attempts by the old Chartered Company administration to help its emergent beef industry secure markets came in 1909 when the BSA Company signed an agreement with Liebigs, under which the latter undertook to build a factory within a period of five years. Although Liebigs energetically invested a great deal of money

⁸⁶ For more details on this point, see Phimister, "Meat and Monopolies", 401-404.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, "The state had been involved in the control of diseases since the turn of the century, and had provided the industry with financial assistance for importation of breeding stock, [construction of dip-tanks] and the fencing of ranches", 404.

and effort in the development of its one million acre ranch, it was only in 1934 that it eventually honoured its earlier agreement and set up a meat extract factory at West Nicholson.⁸⁸ With the coming of Responsible government in 1923, however, such intervention became more apparent. Unlike before, the national white bourgeoisie, which included all white ranchers themselves, now had more political control over the State and was able to use its influence to shape government policy in a direction more favourable to its own class interests.⁸⁹

Between 1923 and 1938, government intervention ranged from vigorous efforts aimed at attracting the world's largest meat combines into the industry to various beef control measures designed to make the African peasantry shoulder the beef industry's 'cattle burden'. In 1921, Nobbs, noted that:

both the Government and local private resources are powerless by themselves to establish a meat freezing and packing industry or by any direct means to provide the necessary facilities for exporting meat. Hence the only course is to induce those who are able and have the capital and skill to come into the country and take up this work.⁹⁰

Also, following the setting up of a Committee of Inquiry to look into ways of enabling the industry to get back on its feet in 1923, official thinking eventually crystallised around HU. Moffat's advice to the Prime Minister that government must leave "manufacturing industries of this sort [i.e. meat export] to capitalists who have the organisation, the experience and knowledge of the business."⁹¹ Acting on Moffat's advice, the Government entered into negotiations with the [I]mperial [C]old [S]torage and [S]upply Company of South Africa, which was interested in setting up a meat works in the country. In the meanwhile, the government also sent invitations to

⁸⁸ Phimister, "Meat and Monopolies", 405.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 405; G. Arrighi, The Political Economy of Rhodesia, (The Hague, 1967), 30.

⁹⁰ S1193/M5, Nobbs, Director of Agriculture to Treasurer, 20 December 1921. The Report of the Committee of Enquiry in Respect of the Cattle Industry of S. Rhodesia, 1923, pointed out saying: "The present highly critical situation [of the cattle industry] calls for Government intervention involving expenditure The Government should immediately invite, by world-wide advertisement, competent capitalists to enter upon the business of meat export from S. Rhodesia, and to that end afford them every assistance within its power.", 21. The idea of trying to induce Combines to come and operate in S. Rhodesia was tempered by appreciation of the fact that the big meat packing companies were the virtual arbiters of world meat trade. In 1923, R. D. Gilchrist, a rancher himself, summed up the nature of the world meat trade when he told the Legislative Council saying: "The History of the meat trade in all parts of the world for the last 10 to 15 years has been a history of trusts.", [S]outhern [R]hodesia [L]egislative [C]ouncil [D]ebates, 30 May 1923, col. 40.

⁹¹ S1193/M5, Moffat to Premier, 23 May 1924.

various meat packing companies in Britain, Australia and America, inviting them to come and open-up factories in S. Rhodesia on easy terms.⁹² Because of the poor quality coupled with the small numbers of cattle the country relatively tiny beef industry could produce, all efforts to attract meat combines like Vesteys drew an absolute blank. In the end, the government was left with no choice but to open up serious negotiations with the ICS.⁹³

The decision to enter into correspondence with the ICS reflected the government's desperate search for a lasting solution to the industry's crisis more than anything else. Even though the ICS was regarded as the "virtual arbiters of the stock industry, both live and dead [in the sub-continent's largest meat market, the Union]"⁹⁴, in comparison with the world's meat combines like Vesteys or even Swift and Armour, ICS was a virtual nonentity in the international meat business. Even worse, the government chose to re-initiate negotiations "even as that organisation was busily destroying the co-operative Meat Producers' Exchange."⁹⁵ On the other hand, ICS, which obviously had been patiently waiting for the other shoe to fall off, seized the opportunity to seal a deal in which they demanded a ten year monopoly on frozen and chilled meat exports and a land grant of 400 000 acres before any definite agreement was sealed. Finally, in November 1924, and amid acrimonious debate in the Southern Rhodesian Legislative Assembly, a deal was finally sealed between the S. Rhodesian government and ICS⁹⁶.

⁹² *Ibid.*, Nobbs, Director of Agriculture to Treasurer, 20 December 1921; See also correspondence contained therein on the cattle industry, 1921-1924.

⁹³ Some of the leading meat combines to which invitations were sent included Vesteys, British and Argentine Meat Co. (British), Swift and Armour and Co., (USA). These Combines operated on a very large-scale and were high monopolistic. For example, Vesteys had economic interests and land holdings extending from S. America, China, Russia, Australia, Madagascar, New Zealand and Argentina. Vesteys also operated at least 3 000 butcher shops in England before adding between 800 and 900 more shops when it absorbed the British and Argentine Meat Company in 1922. For more detail on their operations, see Phimister, "Meat and Monopolies", 391-395, 408. In comparison with other cattle producer Rhodesia's cattle numbers were a drop in the ocean. For example, in 1918, Argentina had over 27 million head of cattle; Brazil, 31 million (1917); and Australia over 12 million (1920). For more details on this point, see Machingaidze, "Development of Settler Capitalist Agriculture", 387-388.

⁹⁴ S1193/M5, Memorandum prepared for the interview between Sir David Graaff and the Cattle Industry Committee of Enquiry of Southern Rhodesia, August 1923 ; Also quoted in Machingaidze, "Development of Settler Capitalist Agriculture", 390.

⁹⁵ Phimister, "Meat and Monopolies", 407.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 408; Major objections came from ranchers who obviously had not forgotten ICS's contribution to the demise of the Meat Producers' Exchange. Such fears were made worse by the fact that the 1924 agreement did not set the minimum price at which RECSCO was to buy cattle and the fact that the agreement gave the company a virtual monopoly of the industry's internal and external meat trade, in

As agreed under the 1924 Agreement, which later became Act No. 34 of 1924, ICS was granted a monopoly on the export of frozen and chilled meat and also given an unspecified size of land for the erection of the freezing works. The government, on the other hand, pledged to use its influence to secure favourable railway rates, exemption of custom duties on imported machinery and other supplies for the Company's plant. In the event that ICS's profits fell below ten per cent of invested capital, the government undertook to compensate the difference, to a maximum of 15 000 *pounds sterling*. In return, ICS agreed to register, "with all convenient dispatch", a subsidiary company, the [R]hodesian [E]xport and [C]old [S]torage Company, with a capital of not less than 200 000 *pounds sterling* to establish a factory capable of processing a minimum of 20 000 head of cattle per annum. It was agreed that if RECSCO's profits exceeded ten per cent of the original investment, the difference was to be divided between RECSCO and the government. The two parties also agreed that RECSCO's monopoly would last for ten years and after seven years the government could give six month notice of its intention to expropriate the works at a mutually agreed price, failing which, the price would be fixed by arbitration.⁹⁷

Although things went smoothly at first, various factors soon conspired to frustrate RECSCO's efforts to relieve the industry of surpluses throughout the 1920s and 1930s. Among these were the Great Depression of the late 1920s and early 1930s, high freight costs and most importantly, the poor quality of locally produced meat.⁹⁸ The main problem was that as cattle were exported live from the country, after a long and gruelling land and sea journey, the cattle reached Smithfield market in London in a wretched condition. For example, describing the pathetic condition of cattle which had just reached the Smithfield meat market in July 1925, one report noted that:

In several lots there was a marked lack of uniformity in size and quality. There were too many leggy, flat ribbed animals with poor quarters - a type which

which case the agreement would become a menace rather a form of assistance to the industry. For details on the debate, see *S.R. Leg. Co. Debates*, 26 November 1924, cols. 67, 79, 92, 118-119.

⁹⁷ "Agreement with Imperial Cold Storage", *Rhodesia Agricultural Journal* Vol. 21, (1924), 633-636; S2704/3/1, Cold Storage, Expropriation of the Rhodesia Export and Cold Storage Company, 1937-1951, The Chilled and Frozen Meats Act No. 34 of 1924.

⁹⁸ For an assessment of the poor performance of RECSCO, see C. V. Kwashirai, "The Operations of the Imperial Cold Storage and Supply Company in Southern Rhodesia, 1924-1938." (University of Zimbabwe, unpub. paper, 1990).

does not catch the eye of buyers and reduces the value of good animals in the same lot. I saw several hundred Canadian steers in the same lairage, which had been landed a day or two previously; in comparison with Rhodesian cattle the points that struck me immediately and forcibly were: a) uniformity in size, quality and colour. A tape measure stretched over their backs as they stood in the rows could not have been an inch out of any one animal. They were almost entirely roan in colour and prime condition. b) All had been de-horned. The uniformity in size, condition and colour, together with the absence of horns added enormously to the general appearance and made the lot look most attractive, as the animals stood side by side in long rows.⁹⁹

Four years later, the quality of exports reaching Smithfield had not changed at all, prompting Newton, the Rhodesian High Commissioner in London, to complain that:

A number of these animals should never have been allowed to leave. To my opinion, the fitful exportation of a few hundred head once or twice a year, each consignment having a very bad 'tail' as has generally been the case, does more harm than good. I doubt very much whether the bulk of these cattle will show a profit, and am convinced that we have not yet got the numbers to keep up a supply of uniform quality in appreciable numbers.¹⁰⁰

Although between 1925 and 1926, RECSCO bought 37 700 and 49 600 head of cattle respectively, in 1927, the Company's purchases hardly exceeded 16 000 head.¹⁰¹ Even with the help of an annual government subsidy of 25 000 *pounds sterling*, the RECSCO still lost money heavily in 1928 and 1929.¹⁰² Not surprisingly, the industry's exports fell from over 73 000 head in 1929, to about 61 000 head in 1930. At the same time, RECSCO's purchases for overseas contracts dropped from over 33 000 head in 1929, to 22 000 in 1930. Apart from the Northern Rhodesian market which, having taken nothing at all in 1929, absorbed a paltry 3 600 head in 1930, RECSCO's exports to the Congo and the Union markets in 1930 only stood at 24 000 head and 7 500 head, respectively.¹⁰³

By January 1931, the government's patience with RECSCO was almost exhausted, and the Company was informed that if frozen meat was not exported overseas, the

⁹⁹ S1193/M5, J. M. Sinclair, "Report of the Rhodesian Cattle which arrived at Birkenhead on the 15th of July 1925."; Also Cited in Machingadze, "Development of Settler Capitalist Agriculture", 396.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, Newton to Minister of Agriculture, 10 July 1929; See also, "Consignment of 620 Rhodesian Cattle ex-SS 'Hyacinthus', June 1929", by B. F. Wright, 9 July 1929.

¹⁰¹ *Report of the Director of Agriculture, 1927*, 3.

¹⁰² H. Mss. LE 3/1/1/1, T. Haddon to Minister of Agriculture, 20 March 1930; Phimister, "Meat and Monopolies", 410.

¹⁰³ Editorial, *Rhodesia Agricultural Journal* Vol. 28, No. 3, (1931), 240.

original agreement would be broken and any subsidies from government scrapped. However, pause for thought for the Government came when the country's major ranching districts of Nuanetsi, Gwanda, Bulawayo, Victoria, Ndanga, Chilimanzi, Belingwe, Salisbury, Lomagundi, Mazoe, Mrewa, Umtali and Melsetter were hit by Foot and Mouth disease between 1931 and 1935, thereby making the survival of RECSCO's freezing plant extremely imperative. The disease, whose impact was multiplied by the effects of the Great Depression, resulted in the closure of the South African market and as if to make matters worse, the closure of the Union was then followed by a complete ban on the importation and transit of S. Rhodesia's cattle, animal and vegetable products in Northern Rhodesia, the Congo and Mozambique.¹⁰⁴ Owing to the closure of these regional markets, the beef industry's unsaleable surpluses swelled to some 100 000 cattle by 1934.¹⁰⁵ The above situation was made worse by the continued failure of S. Rhodesia to attract the world's largest meat combines into the country.¹⁰⁶ Faced with a deepening crisis in the beef industry and the risk of alienating its political constituency of which the white ranching community was a part, the government was left with the option of implementing beef control measures especially from the early 1930s onwards.

Shifting the 'Cattle Burden' on to the African peasantry, 1931-1935

From the early 1930s onwards, the government's overall strategy to rescue the beef industry involved making the African peasantry shoulder the largest share of the industry's 'cattle burden' through a combination of Beef Control Acts and stringent quarantine measures. Through a series of Beef Control Acts the government levied all cattle producers, including African peasants, to generate revenue for the beef industry's export effort. The interesting thing was that while African cattle producers did not receive any financial assistance from government or produce any cattle for

¹⁰⁴ S1194/181/21/1, Minister of Agriculture (Pretoria) to Minister of Agriculture, (Salisbury), 15 April 1931. Chilled and Frozen meat were only allowed in sealed trucks to Cape Town at the end of 1932; S1194/181/9/1, Governor, (Livingstone) to Governor, (Salisbury), 22 April 1931; Governor, (Livingstone) to Colonial Secretary, Lord Passfield, 1 May 1931; S1194/181/7/1, Governor, (Beira) to Governor, (Salisbury), 21 July 1931.

¹⁰⁵ Report of the Committee of Enquiry into the economic position of the Agricultural Industry of Southern Rhodesia, (1934), 369.

¹⁰⁶ Phimister, "Meat and Monopolies", 395.

export, it was felt that the African peasantry was “one of us, living as he does in this country, he should pay his fair share towards assisting the [beef] industry.”¹⁰⁷

Under the Cattle Levy Act No. 11 of 1931, any person who slaughtered more than five head of cattle per year for sale, barter or consumption would, regardless of the weight, quality or price of the beasts involved, pay two shillings and six pence per head to government.¹⁰⁸ Although the government hoped to raise 15 000 *pounds sterling* per year from the levy, only 6 101 *pounds sterling* was raised during 1932-33 and 9 427 *pound sterling* between 1933 and 1934.¹⁰⁹ The levy, which was met with a general feeling of “resentment and hostility” by white ranchers for its exclusive nature, failed to achieve the set targets mainly because of widespread evasion by private butchers.¹¹⁰ Besides this, the levy was also attacked by A. E. Romyn, the country’s Senior Animal Husbandry Officer, for encouraging “maximum volume of exports ... consistent with certain low requirements for quality.”¹¹¹

Because of widespread criticism, the main thrust of the debate ahead of the Cattle Levy Act of 1934 revolved around the specific grades of beef to be ‘bountified’ or subsidised. During that debate Romyn’s position that only stall-fed and not grass-fed cattle should be bountified, not surprisingly, drew sharp criticism from the [R]hodesia [S]tock [O]wners [A]ssociation whose undercapitalised members were accustomed to producing ‘Compounds’ or ‘Scrubs’ and could not afford to stall-feed cattle.¹¹² In particular, ranchers from the Bulawayo District, where supplementary feed could not be produced because of the unfavourable climatic conditions, feared that the withdrawal of a bounty on grass-fed cattle “would be a serious blow to the trade

¹⁰⁷ W. A. E. Winterton, *S. R. Leg. Co. Debates*, 26 March 1935, col. 451.

¹⁰⁸ Cattle Levy Act No. 11 of 1931, Section 2; For a debate on the defects of this Act, see J. H. Smit, *S.R. Leg. Co. Debates*, 27 March 1931, col. 160..

¹⁰⁹ *Committee of Inquiry into the Costs of Distribution of Imported Goods and Local products in Southern Rhodesia: Interim Report on Livestock and Meat with Special Reference to Cattle and Beef, 1936*, Chairman, R. Burnett-Hurst, 34; These figures differ slightly from those in: Cattle Levy Accounts for the Years ended 31 March 1933 and 31 March 1934.

¹¹⁰ S1216/SC53/100/17, Cattle Levy Act of 1933, Civil Commissioner to Secretary, Department of Agriculture and Lands, 24 June 1933; Report of the Auditor General for the Financial Year ended 31 March, 1933: Cattle Levy Account: Division of Agriculture and Lands, Auditor General’s Certificate; The Native Department also found it difficult to trace Africans who slaughtered more than five cattle; See also, Smit, *S.R. Leg. Co. Debates*, 27 March 1931, col. 160.

¹¹¹ S1216/SC20/132/72, A. E. Romyn, Senior Animal Husbandry Officer, “Carnavon Castle”, to Secretary, Department of Agriculture and Lands, 15 September 1933.

already established.”¹¹³ Though obviously selfish, the position of the Bulawayo ranchers was supported by the fact that, around 1934, RECSCO was failing to secure enough supplies of cattle for chilled exports due to the shortage of stall-fed cattle in the country.¹¹⁴

For no reason other than political expediency, the government decided to arrange a subsidy amounting to half-penny per IBC. [c]old [d]ressed [w]eight on “selected grass-fed cattle” of “Chiller” grade quality, while at the same time raising the bounty on stall-fed “Chillers” to three-quarter pence per IBC. c.d.w.¹¹⁵ However, due to continued political pressure from white ranchers who were demanding a more inclusive bounty system, the government was eventually forced, not just to double the bounty on both grades, but also to pay bounties on ‘Scrub’ cattle destined for the newly erected Liebigs factory at West Nicholson. In all, the bounties, covering all sorts of grades for export delivery, thus, came to read as follows: one and a half-pence per IBC. c.d.w on First Grade stall-fed “Chillers”; one penny per IBC. c.d.w on Second-Grade or selected grass-fed ‘Chillers’; one-quarter penny per IBC. c.d.w on Freezers or ordinary grass-fed animals; and one-eighth pence on boneless beef and meat extract derived from low-grade cattle delivered to Liebigs’s meat canning factory.¹¹⁶

But, the main problem with an inclusive bounty was that it could not be implemented without increasing the original slaughter levy. Because of this, the RSOA suggested that the slaughter levy be increased from 2s. 6d. per head to 10s per head.¹¹⁷ However, instead of following this path, the government opted to add a 3d. tax on all cattle in the country on top of the original 2s 6d. slaughter levy already in place under

¹¹² S1216/SC68/132, Circular Letter, [R]hodesia [S]tock [O]wners [A]ssociation, 5 January 1934.

¹¹³ Ibid., Telegram. Bulawayo Landowners Association to Prime Minister, 4 January 1934.

¹¹⁴ Ibid., Manager, RECSCO, to Secretary, Department of Agriculture and Lands, 8 January 1934.

¹¹⁵ Ibid., Secretary, Department of Agriculture and Lands, to RECSCO, 31 January 1934.

¹¹⁶ S1216/SC68/132/106, Romyn, Senior Animal Husbandry Officer to Secretary, Department of Agriculture and Lands, 22 May 1935.

¹¹⁷ S1215/SC74/132/55, Secretary, of Department of Agriculture and Lands to Umtali District Farmers Association, 23 March 1934; In particular, white ranchers preferred the 10s. slaughter levy as it would be spread on to the producer, middlemen or butcher and the consumer; whereas the 3d. would fall on the producer alone, who in their opinion, was already struggling to make ends meet. For more details on this point, see: S1215/1326/15, RSOA Minutes of a Special Executive Meeting, 22 March 1934.

the 1931 Act. During the Second Reading of the 1934 Cattle Levy Bill, the Minister of Agriculture, C. S. Jobling, explained the advantages of the 3d. tax when he noted that:

those living in the Reserves [i.e. African peasants] will hardly know that there has been such a tax, by reason of the fact that they have built up a reserve dipping fund from which the tax will be paid. The Chief Native Commissioner thinks that it is a perfectly legitimate way to make use of the money, and the matter of collecting it so far as Natives are concerned, has been immensely simplified.¹¹⁸

Not surprisingly, the very idea of taxing African peasants to assist white export endeavour found favour amongst white ranchers and other senior government officials, many of whom were of the widespread opinion that Africans were “largely responsible for the large [cattle] surplus”¹¹⁹ already “flooding the [domestic] market.”¹²⁰ For instance, while T. E. Robins, the chairman of RSOA, justified the new tax by pointing out that “the [dipping] fund to be raided [was] payment for services rendered”¹²¹, Godfrey Huggins, the Prime Minister himself, felt that Africans would prefer an indirect form of stock tax “unless ill-intentioned people or agitators stir them up.”¹²² Basing its calculations on the 1932 cattle population and national slaughter figures, the RSOA estimated that Africans would have to find 20 353 *pounds sterling* as compared to 11 927 *pounds sterling* from white ranchers.¹²³ However, by virtue of the fact that Africans owned more cattle than white ranchers, and also due to widespread evasion by private butchers, white ranchers and speculators alike, the largest share of the tax burden was borne, not by the real beneficiaries of the industry’s export scheme who were white ranchers, but by the African peasantry.¹²⁴

What the government failed to get from African peasants through the tax or slaughter levy, it got through manipulating quarantine regulations imposed to curb the spread of

¹¹⁸ C. S. Jobling, Minister of Agriculture and Lands, *S. R. Leg. Co. Debate*, 1 May 1934 col. 822-823.

¹¹⁹ W. A. E. Winterton, *S. R. Leg. Co. Debates*, 26 March 1935, col. 449.

¹²⁰ SC1215/1326/15, E. Mulligan, RSOA minutes, 22 March 1934.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*

¹²² Godfrey Huggins, Prime Minister, *S. R. Leg. Co. Debates*, 9 August 1934, col. 1227.

¹²³ S1215/1326/15, RSOA, Minutes, 22 March 1934.

¹²⁴ For example, private butchers either forced Africans to accept lower prices for their cattle or simply resorted to slaughtering heavier animals (which came from European ranches where grazing was better) to minimise the impact of the slaughter levy. The imposition of the levy therefore, closed the local market for producers who could not produce heavier animals, namely Africans, whose cattle were lighter due to poor grazing conditions in the reserves. For more details on this point see: *Committee Report on the Economic Position of the Agricultural Industry, 1934*, Chairman Max Danziger, 16.

Foot-and-mouth disease. Desperate to persuade South Africa to allow the resumption of Rhodesian cattle exports through that country, the Rhodesian government chose to commit all its resources to the fast clearance of Foot-and-mouth disease from all white farming areas. The idea behind this was to ensure the speedy lifting of quarantine regulations from all white farming areas and ensure the immediate resumption of cattle sales. In the meanwhile, no similar efforts were made to ensure the speedy elimination of the disease in African reserves. In fact, right from the outbreak of the Foot and Mouth epidemic in April 1931, the predominantly white-oriented Department of Agriculture and Lands completely failed to show any concern about the consequences of rigid veterinary restrictions on the African stock-owners or the extremely low cattle prices they received after the deduction of the slaughter levies for that matter. Instead, in February 1932, Jobling, the Minister of Agriculture actually justified this differential treatment of African cattle producers by stating that:

He is far better able to tide himself over against a period of lack of markets than is the European farmer. With an abundance of cattle and milk and with a good season for grain, the native can live in, to what to him is the lap of luxury, quite independent of markets.¹²⁵

On the other hand, D. M. Sommerville, a rancher and parliamentarian, also spoke for many in the white ranching community, when he added that Africans enjoyed other advantages “over the European such as free land, cheap dipping, and the low standard of living.”¹²⁶ But, the real objective behind leaving the situation in African Reserves unattended was to facilitate the resumption of white cattle sales both in and outside the country while hundreds of thousands of African-owned cattle were locked away under quarantine. In this way, the government hoped that the domestic market would not be flooded by African-owned cattle and white ranchers would take advantage of firmer prices on the domestic market. The interesting thing was that after locking hundreds of thousands of African-owned cattle under quarantine, the government conferred upon Liebig's, which had just opened its meat extract plant at West Nicholson in 1934, the monopoly of buying all cattle from African areas inside the quarantine. Thus, in a way quarantine regulations became, not just a mechanism for regulating the flow of cattle on to the domestic market, but also a means through

¹²⁵ S981/4, Ministry of Agriculture: Out-letters: General, Letter from Minister of Agriculture to Secretary, Department of Agriculture and Lands, 8 February 1932.

¹²⁶ D. M. Sommerville, *S. R. Leg. Co. Debates*, 8 May 1934, col. 1227.

which ultra-cheap cattle were channelled to the new Liebigs factory.¹²⁷ The above stand point is supported by the extension of African Reserves under quarantine from two in 1933, to five in 1934 and six in 1938. Practically, these restrictions more than took care of the huge cattle surpluses in every subsequent year between 1931 and 1938, (see table 1.5 below).

It is also interesting to note that while African Reserves like Chibi and Bikita were locked under quarantine from 1934 to 1938, the actual outbreak of Foot-and-mouth which led to implementation of quarantine measures had actually occurred on the adjoining white-owned ranches of Nuanetsi and Devuli.¹²⁸ In fact, as the Native Commissioner for Bikita reported in 1938, “there had in fact, never been a case of Foot and Mouth disease in the Reserve” throughout the period of quarantine.¹²⁹ Clearly, reflecting that quarantine measures were largely an attempt to throttle the flow of African-owned cattle onto the domestic market, white ranchers in the same neighbourhood were given the option of either selling their cattle to RECSCO, which offered higher prices for all ‘Freezers’ and ‘Chillers’, and not Liebigs or alternatively, to sell on the open market where prices had started stabilising due to a ban slapped on African cattle. Under the circumstances, White ranchers got the best deal in all cases. For example, there was nothing to stop white ranchers from buying African-owned cattle from inside the quarantine at extremely low prices and then taking advantage of quarantine flexibility afforded them by the government to take a profit on the open market.¹³⁰

¹²⁷ Whereas RECSCO was principally concerned with developing an overseas market for high-quality chilled and frozen beef Liebigs on the other hand, was only interested in low-grade cattle and European ranchers were not simply prepared to accept the cheap prices offered by Liebigs for meat extract beef. Thus, it was the availability of hundreds of thousands of ultra African-owned cattle which finally persuaded Liebigs to open its plant at West Nicholson only in 1934 in spite of having started operations in the country in 1909.

¹²⁸ C. F. Keyter, “Beef Control in Southern Rhodesia, 1931-1938, and its significance to African rural underdevelopment”, (University of York, unpub. paper, 1978), 19.

¹²⁹ S1563, Annual Report of the Native Commissioner, Bikita, 1938.

Table: 1.5 : African Districts Under Quarantine , 1931-1938.

Year	No. of Cattle in Areas Under Quarantine	Districts Under Quarantine
1931	39 718	Chilimanzi
1932	156 300	Bulalima-Mangwe
1933	251 701	Bulalima-Mangwe; Insiza
1934	487 493	Ndanga; Chibi; Gwanda; Nyamandlovu; Belingwe
1935	411 221	Ndanga; Chibi; Bulalima-Mangwe; Gutu; Bikita
1936	329 851	Ndanga; Chibi; Matobo; Melsetter; Victoria; Bikita
1937	341 777	Ndanga; Chibi; Matobo; Melsetter; Victoria; Bikita
1938	421 251	Ndanga; Chibi; Matobo; Melsetter; Victoria; Bikita; Charter
1939	184 055	Charter; Insiza
1940	146 953	Charter; Hartley

Source: Information compiled from Annual Reports of Native Commissioners, contained in S1563 and S235/509-517.

The introduction of the slaughter levies and the use of veterinary restrictions at the expense of the peasantry facilitated a double process of exploitation: i.e. the extraction of cattle (potential capital), through forced sales and the direct siphoning off of actual capital for the industry's export effort, (i.e. in the form of levies), all in the interests of white capitalist beef production. For example, the promulgation of the Cattle Levy and Beef and Export Act No. 28 of 1935, which repealed the 1931 Act and scrapped the 1934 3d. tax in favour of the 10s. slaughter levy¹³¹, automatically meant that the capital burden on the African peasantry began to shift more towards cattle. It is interesting to note that while under the 1935 Act white contribution to the Cattle Levy Account actually increased from 11 927 *pounds sterling* to 31 379 *pounds sterling* per year, the African contribution fell from 20 353 *pounds sterling* to 5 286 *pounds sterling* per year.¹³²

The fall in the capital burden was, by all means, more than compensated for by the exceptionally high degree of exploitation in the marketing sphere by private butchers, white cattle dealers, or by speculators either acting on their own or as free agents in the employ of Liebig's and its buying agents. The exploitation began at the point of

¹³⁰ C. F. Keyter, "Beef Control", 19.

¹³¹ Cattle Levy and Export Bounty Act No. 28 of 1935.

sale at which only two methods were used: sale by public auction (government or privately organised sales) and sale by private treaty (or so-called out-of-hand sales at the farm). For every beast sold, the producer or seller received what remained after agent fees and the slaughter levy were deducted from the selling price. In particular, the deduction of the slaughter levy effectively undermined the market for low-grade cattle produced by African peasants. Because the slaughter levy was applicable to cattle over six months old, private butchers preferred buying one animal of, say, 1 000 IBC. for which the levy was 10s., than two or three 'Scrubs' totalling the same weight, but, for which the levy would be 20s. or 30s.¹³³ Thus, the Government's slaughter levies contributed not only to the accumulation of 'Scrubs' in African Reserves but also to the decline in the quality of stock in the African cattle sector in general.

Middlemen, most of whom were speculators or agents in the employ of either white ranchers or private companies for that matter, had many other ways of shifting the burden of the slaughter levy on to the shoulders of the African peasantry as well. For instance, through co-operation or conspiracy, they could siphon off healthy profits by fixing the producer price to their advantage and increasing the 'spread' between the amount the producer received for his cattle and the amount the consumer paid for the meat. Often, middlemen turned up at government organised sales to buy cattle for immediate re-sale, and it was not uncommon for cattle to change "hands twice within a week between leaving the producer's farm and reaching the butcher."¹³⁴ The African producers' problems were worsened by the fact that a large proportion of their cattle were either sold through the medium of Jewish rural store-owners located in outlying districts, or to white farmers or miners in possession of cattle dealer's licences. In the rural market sphere, cattle were bartered for groceries before being collected by middlemen for re-sale at government organised auctions, either to butcher-retailers or directly to consumers.¹³⁵ The African cattle producers had only two choices: selling directly to RECSCO, or to Liebigs, or more commonly, selling through agents, usually in return for a higher price at the factory or a lesser price at the farm.¹³⁶ However,

¹³² S1215/1326/15, RSOA Minutes, 22 March 1934

¹³³ S235/514, Annual Report of the Native Commissioner, Makoni, 1935.

¹³⁴ Interim Report on Livestock and Meat with Special reference to Cattle and Beef, 1936, 14.

¹³⁵ Ibid.

¹³⁶ Ibid., 14-15.

because of veterinary restrictions on the movement of cattle and the fact that most African Reserves were situated very far from the nearest line of rail, most if not all cattle sales were conducted through middlemen.

The above situation was made worse by the absence of a government approved weight-and-grade system to protect the producer from unscrupulous cattle dealers. Cattle were simply sold by live-weight-and-grade, or by weight-and-grade-on-the-hoof, whereby "each purchaser personally estimated the weight and quality of the animal [on sale] and made an offer accordingly."¹³⁷ As a result of this, exploitation of African peasants was rife and often prices varied sharply from place to place. Not uncommonly, prices even fluctuated sharply during the course of one sale!. Often, "white cattle dealers [many of whom were bona fide farmers], store-keepers and butchers, employed African agents to roam the country buying cattle for them, and [they often] turned a blind eye when their agents snapped up strays; [or even] on occasions ... took a hand themselves in the theft of cattle."¹³⁸ But, the main problem was that:

peripatetic African cattle buyers ...went around Reserves, often by bicycle buying-up stock, and hides for ready cash. Working only on commission basis these touts multiplied in number, and in cut-throat competition with one another they created rings and exploited the African producer and often encouraged theft ... as a way of reducing their outlay of cash which they appropriated to their own use; in this and other ways, they cheated their distant European employers, many of whom were Jewish traders, themselves 'marginal men' in the white Rhodesian economy, gave an added twist to the screw of exploitation.¹³⁹

Although the African peasantry carried the largest share of the beef industry's 'cattle burden' and contributed more towards the industry's export effort, they did not derive

¹³⁷ R. S. Roberts, "Aspects of African cattle marketing in colonial Zimbabwe to the late 1940s." (University of Zimbabwe, unpub. paper, 1982), 2.

¹³⁸ T. O. Ranger, "Tales of the 'Wild West': Gold-Diggers and Rustlers in South-West Zimbabwe, 1898-1940, An Essay in the Use of Criminal Court Records for Social History", South African Historical Journal, Vol. 28 (1993), 54.

¹³⁹ Roberts, "Aspects of African cattle marketing", 3; Machingaidze argues that cattle dealing activities had been on the increase since the reduction dealer's licence fees from ten pound sterling for each 'Native' tout to one pound sterling in 1924. For more details see, Machingaidze, "Development of Settler Capitalist Agriculture", 317; According to Roberts the number of dealers increased from about 198 in the early 1920s to about "508 in 1941, but with notable collapses in the years 1931-35 when the average was 96 per annum." For more detail on this point see, Roberts, "Aspects of African cattle marketing", 5.

any real economic benefits especially in terms of higher prices for their cattle.¹⁴⁰ In theory, the peasantry were supposed to qualify for the one-eighth penny bounty (for boneless beef and meat extract derived from low-grade cattle), involving an amount of some 7 500 *pounds sterling* annually. This amount was voted to Liebigs by the government on the understanding that the company would pass it on to the producers of low-grade stock in the form of a “regular and fair price for his stock.”¹⁴¹ However, evidence gathered by the Hudson Commission in 1939, clearly indicates that Liebigs as the sole buyer of cattle in all African Reserves inside the quarantine, failed to pass on the bounty to African cattle producers, both in cases where the company acquired cattle by direct purchase, or indirectly through white agents. Evidence suggests that if the bounty ever left Liebigs’ coffers at all, a significant share of the bounty was dissipated through the numerous marketing charges deducted from the producer price while the remainder disappeared into the pockets of Liebigs’ agents acting in collusion with corrupt Native Department officials responsible for organising the cattle sales.

Giving evidence to the Hudson Commission in 1939, R. D. Gilchrist, a rancher himself, argued that African cattle prices at the Liebigs sales were deliberately kept down by buyer’s rings. He acknowledged that at one sale at which only five buyers had been present, the Liebigs buyer present did not buy a single beast, yet all cattle at the close of the sale went to Liebigs. In his opinion, all cattle at the sale in question had been sold without any competition between buyers because “an arrangement had been obviously come to amongst the other buyers with Liebigs,” not to bid up prices. The result was that, while underpaying African cattle producers, Liebigs was able to export its products to South Africa at a reasonable profit and entirely free of customs duty. The interesting thing was that in spite of the fact that all cattle which went to Liebigs’ plant ended up as meat extract anyway, in which case quality would be completely irrelevant, the government still chose to subsidise all higher grade cattle sent by white ranchers to Liebigs. The Hudson Committee showed that while white

¹⁴⁰ Due to the rigorous implementation of the Land Apportionment Act of 1930, the African cattle sector increasingly came to be governed by the twin factors of land scarcity and overcrowding. Thus, due to extremely poor grazing, coupled with lack of financial support from the Government, most cattle coming Reserves were generally of a poor quality. Unlike white ranchers therefore, most African cattle producers could not qualify for bounty on higher grade cattle.

ranchers who sold cattle to Liebigs from within the quarantine were subsidised by government, “there was no subsidy payable to Native cattle-owners” in spite of the fact that Africans were not protected “in respect of grading or in the estimation of weights [and] ... had merely to take or leave the prices which were offered.”¹⁴² J. L. Games, a cattle buyer for RECSCO, described a common scene at previous sales he had attended by noting that, “buyers were turned loose to do the best they could In the rush and bustle and hurry, we all acted like a lot of fowls turned loose ... rushing and trying to get as many [cattle] as we could.”¹⁴³ In Games’ opinion, every buyer’s modus operandi at the sale was to buy cattle at the lowest possible price, wait until all the African producers had left, to re-sell the cattle to either Liebigs or RECSCO at a significantly higher price.¹⁴⁴ Where African peasants refused to accept low prices, such as at the Gutu district cattle-culling sales in 1938, Native Department officials were almost always ready to use brute force.¹⁴⁵ Unlike white ranchers who had the government firmly behind them, African cattle producers could be severely exploited without recourse to the law. Thus, judged in overall terms, the government’s intervention in the beef industry from the early to the mid 1930s, involved not only the extraction of actual capital from the African cattle sector in the form of export levies, but also potential capital in the form of cattle bought at extremely low prices.

¹⁴¹ ZAX 1/1/1, Evidence presented to the Commission of Inquiry into Certain Sales of Native Cattle in Areas occupied by Natives, 1939; R. D Gilchrist’s evidence, Third Day, 67; D. M. Somerville, S. R. Leg. Co. Debates, 12 May 1934, col. 1502.

¹⁴² ZAX 1/1/1, Oral Evidence to the Sales of Native Cattle Commission, Evidence from R. D. Gilchrist, 1938, 69-78.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, Oral Evidence from J. L. Games, 1 November 1938, 45-46;

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, Oral Evidence from A. K. Jackson, 1938, 101-109; *Ibid.*, Gilchrist’s evidence, 82; *Ibid.*, Chairman’s Summary, Third Day, 80.

¹⁴⁵ Although the final report of the Hudson Commission glosses over the issue of force being used on unco-operating peasants, evidence submitted to the Commission proves this to have the case in Gutu. See, *Ibid.*, Oral Evidence from A. C. Jackson, 24 October 1938, 27-29; According to the evidence submitted by Mrs R. L. Comberbach, wife of Native Commissioner (Chibi District), the use of force in Belingwe District was making African peasants part with “whole mobs of cattle” resulting in

The Shift Towards Direct Government Control

The government's overall strategy of shifting the beef industry's 'cattle burden' onto the back of the African peasantry in the interests of white survival, amounted to little more than shuffling berths on a sinking ship. In particular, the now familiar and perennial problem of remunerative markets remained unresolved. To make matters worse, in spite of the fact that the government continued to dole out financial assistance to RECSCO, the company still failed to make a dent on the international meat market and thus, continued to suffer mounting losses. It was precisely the failure of its earlier intervention measures coupled with the increasingly shrill voices of the country's multitude of undercapitalised white ranchers about the worsening economic state of the beef industry which, in the end, forced the government to re-examine its relationship with RECSCO with a view to taking over its operations.

RECSCO's relationship with the government seems to have taken a severe knock from the fact that by the late 1930s, its operations had become a source of tension with both the government and its vital political constituency of small white ranchers. While on the one hand, ranchers alleged that the company was underpaying them for their produce, the government on the other hand, was:

dissatisfied with the arrangement [with RECSCO] because, in spite of large sums of money voted by Parliament, there were no signs of improvement in the industry and there were indications that the subsidy voted was finding its way into Company's pocket and not the producers as intended.¹⁴⁶

Apart from the alleged dishonest practices of the company's management hinted at in the above statement, the government was not impressed by the RECSCO's dismal export performance. According to Phimister, however, the divorce between RECSCO and the government was unavoidable because the marriage between private enterprise and the settler government was based on potentially conflicting interests which could not be reconciled. The fact was that while the company was interested in making profits through cost-cutting measures and purchasing cattle at the lowest possible

heightened "communistic feelings of rebellion.", *Ibid.*, Oral Evidence from Mrs R. L. Comberbach, 7 November 1938, 4-14, 37.

¹⁴⁶ S2704/1/1340/2, Cold Storage Commission, General, 1948-1950, Minister of Agriculture to Cabinet.

price, the government wanted it to pay remunerative prices to ranchers.¹⁴⁷ As the company was obviously not prepared to compromise on its modus operandi, the situation in the beef industry went from bad to worse, with local cattle prices remaining pegged far below costs of production and there seemed to be no hope of them improving in the near future.¹⁴⁸ Many ranchers drew the appropriate conclusion and left the industry. In fact, in the period between 1925 and 1939, “anything from one million to two million pounds sterling [was] lost or withdrawn [by] some 40 odd large owners”, and with them also went approximately 180 000 head of cattle.¹⁴⁹ The withdrawal of large ranching capital itself left the beef industry dominated by small undercapitalised ranchers, a development which further blunted its competitive edge both in the region and overseas.

Table 1.6: Private Company Owned Ranches in Southern Rhodesia, 1920s-1930s.

Name of Company	Ranch /es	Approx. acreage	Herd Size
Liebigs (LEMCO)	Mazunga	3 000 000 (1934)	63 000 ¹⁵⁰
LONRHO	Glass Block Ranch;	-	-
	Lochard Wiltshire;	-	-
	Transsau-Clare	700 000 (Total)	32 000 ¹⁵¹
Willoughby's Consolidated	Central Estates	581 177	35 500 ¹⁵²
Nuanetsi Ranch Ltd.	Nuanetsi Ranch	500 000	23 000 ¹⁵³
Congo Rhodesia Ranching Co.	-	+ 500 000	40 000 ¹⁵⁴

The actual impact caused by the withdrawal of large capital on the industry was partly shown by a noticeable shift in the cattle-ownership structure of the white-dominated capitalist ranching sector. While at the beginning of the Depression in 1929, there were approximately 16 large cattle producers owning at least 5 000 head of cattle each, by 1938, there were only 11 such big producers left in the industry as a whole. Again, during the same period, the number of producers owning between 1 000 and 5 000 head of cattle fell from 95 to 61, while the figure for those owning between 250 and 1 000 head declined from 641 to 585. This was in deep contrast to the number of

¹⁴⁷ For a full assessment of the poor performance of RECSCO see, Phimister, “Meat and Monopolies” and Kwashirai, “The operations of ICSSCO”.

¹⁴⁸ Romyn, “The Export of Chilled Beef from Southern Rhodesia”, 172-3, 176.

¹⁴⁹ Committee of Enquiry into the Economic Development of the Colony, 21;23.

¹⁵⁰ Industry and Commerce of Rhodesia, Annual (1976).

¹⁵¹ Lonhro, Annual Report, 30 June, 1956.

¹⁵² Willoughby's Consolidated Annual Report, 1937.

¹⁵³ A. Wright, Grey Ghosts at Buffalo Bent (Salisbury, 1976), 43.

¹⁵⁴ African World, Annual, No. 31, (1934), 169.

small producers owning 250 head or less which actually increased from 1 929 to 2 322 ranchers or more than 21 percent between 1929 and 1938.

Table 1.7: Family Owned Ranches in S. Rhodesia's South Eastern Low Veldt, 1920s-1930s.

Name of family	Name of Ranch	Herd Size
Bridges	Devuli	20 000 (1935) ¹⁵⁵
Whittalls	Humani	-
Dotts	Angus Ranch	-
De La Rue	Ruware	-
Beverleys	Faversham	-
McDougall	Triangle	-
Greenspan	Greenspan Brothers	50 000 (1963) ¹⁵⁶
Sommervilles	Lone Star Ranch	-
Meikles	Leachdale Ranch	-

The withdrawal of big ranching capital from the industry also resulted in significant reductions in the total numbers of young and breeding stock. As can be seen in table 1.8 below, between 1926 and 1935, the breeding herds i.e. cows shrank by 61 470 head or 20 percent while the number of calves less than a year old also declined by over 31 percent or 55 128 head.

Table 1.8 : European Owned Cattle Classified by Principal Groups, 1926-1935

Year	Cows	Heifers +1 Year	Calves < 1 Year	Yearling Oxen	Trained Oxen	Untrained Oxen
1926	313 671	133 373	175 206	83 876	124 601	126 512
1927	308 438	130 446	157 701	87 676	124 793	132 719
1928	286 192	131 921	133 564	79 093	120 441	140 867
1929	284 663	128 510	148 192	72 085	116 805	138 652
1930	294 065	127 751	153 833	81 089	110 830	129 565
1931	307 882	132 786	149 236	88 105	111 756	150 061
1932	319 630	137 534	150 501	94 220	114 003	161 863
1933	295 974	131 495	137 621	77 615	121 940	162 180
1934	278 810	127 182	129 830	65 884	120 163	150 470
1935	252 201	119 643	117 078	62 643	116 087	127 602

Source: Burnett-Hurst Committee Report, 10.

Discussions on the future of RECSCO sparked a bruising debate among ranchers and politicians alike. For example, the Meikle Brothers, one of the country's biggest and most influential family ranchers, blamed the government for the state of affairs in the beef industry. For instance, they accused it of taxing an already "bankrupt industry" to

¹⁵⁵ de La Rue, "Address to the History Society", *Heritage*, No. 5, (1985), 15

¹⁵⁶ *Cape Argus*, 28 June 1963.

bolster a concern, i.e. RECSCO, which would never have been able to pay its way as it was working on an impossible and uneconomical proposition. In a spirited defence of the free market and an attack on the contradictory nature of the government's export levy, the Mickle Brothers argued in 1935 that:

It is all a series of vicious circles, one within the other, levies and bounties, and the Government would be well advised to scrap the lot and let each industry find its own level and be governed by the natural law of supply and demand. No matter to what extent the market is glutted with any given commodity, if it is exported under a bounty the farmer will go on producing more and more, and so assist in aggravating the position. He will only stop and turn his attention to something else when he finds himself up against a brick wall with definitely no outlet for his product.¹⁵⁷

An unsigned letter addressed to Huggins, the Prime Minister, described RECSCO as “a company born in war and who have lived and made profits only on war and rebellion and rigging the markets.”¹⁵⁸ Although the company had also fallen victim to the fact that it was being forced to trade in low-grade grass-fed cattle which obviously could not compete on the world market, the government's planners had, by the late 1930s, come to the conclusion that RECSCO's assets should be expropriated by the government in order to protect the beef industry from manipulation. For example, in 1938, the Secretary for Agriculture argued that as long as the country's Cold Storage meat “works remained in the hands of private enterprise [i.e. RECSCO], there could be no security for the industry and no assurance that, at any time convenient to the company, prices for “Chiller” grade’ and “Freezer” cattle might not be reduced to so low a level as to be quite uneconomic to [white] cattle producers.”¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁷ S1216/SC74/132/112, Letter from Meikle Brothers, Leachdale Farm to Minister of Agriculture, 12 September 1935.

¹⁵⁸ S2704/3/1, Expropriation of RECSCO, 1937-1951, Letter addressed to G. Huggins, 18 September, 1937. In connection with this point, Phimister argues that “The ICS. Company [to which RECSCO was a subsidiary] had enjoyed a somewhat chequered career. Cold storage operations had begun in South Africa after the rinderpest devastation had made large-scale meat imports necessary. Facilities were established in Cape Town, Durban and Johannesburg, and in 1898 about 5 million pounds of meat were imported. A tremendous boost to this fledgling industry was delivered by the outbreak of the South African War in 1899, when the British War Office contracts were issued calling for supplies to troops. The contract was won by the South African Supply and Cold Storage Company, formed in May 1899 and controlled by Sir James Sivewright and David Graaff. Its profits were phenomenal. Between July 1899 and June 1900 profits reached 462 784 pound sterling on a capitalisation of about 500 000 pound sterling; for the year ending June 1901 profits soared to 1 071 168 pound sterling, dividends of 105 per cent were paid, and the company's reserve fund was raised to 1 million *pounds sterling*.” Quoted in Phimister, “Meat and Monopolies”, 407.

¹⁵⁹ Ann. Rep. Sec. Dept. of Agric. and Lands, 1938 ; Mlambo, “Cold Storage Commission”, 58.

However, while there was general unanimity among white ranchers that the company had failed the industry in its hour of need, there was still some division on whether the government should appropriate the company's meat freezing works or not. While small ranchers like S. C. Modcroft felt that "some sort of [government] control" was needed "soon" before the country was "landed with a lot of poor whites", others like B. L. Gardiner obviously representing large ranching capital and specifically the Bulawayo based Willoughby's Consolidated Company, wanted RECSCO to stay and strongly opposed the expropriation of its Bulawayo works. Gardiner argued that "it is always the case that once a concern is under State control, efficiency goes by the board." He went on to point out that a government controlled company would not have "skilled staff except the usual sort of thing, representatives of the farmers and ranchers, plus civil servants", who did not "know anything of cold storage, marketing, chilled and frozen products and by-products and all the et-ceteras of this business." In his opinion, the government controlled company's "board would continually be subjected to political pressure and wire-pulling", and would also mean "onerous financial responsibility on the state and on the tax payer." Gardiner concluded his case by categorically stating that the proposed experiment in state intervention would "end in disaster, and its repercussions on the cattle industry of Southern Rhodesia will be most serious."¹⁶⁰

However, Gardiner would have been best advised to confine his defence to the small circle of the country's large ranchers which he represented. The conflict between RECSCO and the government had reached a position where "neither the government, nor the local ranchers, though, could sustain losses indefinitely."¹⁶¹ For all it was worth, the government opted to listen to the shrill voices of the small ranchers, who, in their numerous numbers, actually "provided [it] with valuable electoral support."¹⁶² Arguing in favour of expropriation and conversion of RECSCO into a public utility company or parastatal, the Minister of Agriculture declared that "the export of our chilled and frozen products is an essential service of the State exactly as is the postal

¹⁶⁰ S2704/3/1, C.S.C., Expropriation of RECSCO, 1937-51, B.L. Gardiner to PM, G. M. Huggins, 11 September, 1937.

¹⁶¹ Phimister, "Meat and Monopolies", 411.

¹⁶² S2704/3/1, CSC, Expropriation of RECSCO, 1937-51, B. L. Gardiner to P. M., G. M. Huggins, 11 September, 1937.

and telegraph service or the electrical supply and that it is the duty of the government to develop it in the interest of the colony. It is not," the Minister went on, " a service which private companies should be in a position to make money out of, but adversely, it should be utilised for the general building up and development of the agricultural export trade of Southern Rhodesia."¹⁶³

In the end, the government had its way and on the 15th October 1937, the Cabinet resolved that a bill should be drafted for the establishment of a body on the lines of the Electricity Supply Commission to take over the marketing of beef in the country. The bill, which sailed through parliament, became known as the Cold Storage Commission Act No. 37 of 1937, and provided for the establishment of a Commission whose purpose was the acquisition, establishment and operation of abattoirs and refrigeration works for the purpose of chilling, freezing and storing beef, mutton, pork and other meat foods for export, or for consumption within the country. Unlike a private company which operated strictly for profit, the [C]old [S]torage [C]ommission would provide a public service by operating on-a-no-profit-no-loss basis.¹⁶⁴ Eventually, after the matter involving the expropriation of RECSCO had gone for arbitration the company was offered a sum of 286 937 *pounds sterling* and the new CSC took over all its assets.¹⁶⁵

Conclusion

This chapter has attempted to provide a survey of the origins and early development of the beef industry in Rhodesia in the period before the Second World War. It tries to show how the government intervention crucial in laying the foundation for the industry. Because of the availability of vast cheap land resources, cheap labour, and cheap foundation stock in the form of indigenous cattle breeds, white ranchers were able to establish themselves on the land relatively quickly and easily in the period up to the outbreak of the First World War in 1914. However, Southern Rhodesia's advantages as 'cattle country' were nullified by overriding problems such as lack of remunerative markets, undercapitalisation, poor beef qualities of cattle produced,

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁴ CSC, Act No. 37 of 1937.

¹⁶⁵ S2704/3/1, CSC, Expropriation of the RECSCO, 1937-51; CSC, First Annual Report and Accounts for the period 1st December, 1937 to 31st December 1938.

crude cattle management, diseases and lack of adequate and modern transport facilities. However, due to the huge and indiscriminate demand for poor quality beef especially in the Union of South Africa during the First World War, the beef industry was able to enjoy a short-lived boom. With the cessation of hostilities in Europe, there was a sharp decline in the post-1918 Union market, and with local prices reaching rock bottom level in the years between 1921-1922, the local industry entered a period of severe crisis. When all efforts by local ranchers to find a remunerative market for surplus cattle ended in disaster, the government was left with no option but to intervene and help rid the industry of accumulating cattle surpluses. However, much to the irritation of local ranchers, the government's first attempts to entice some of the world's largest cold storage companies with the necessary expertise and money to come and operate in the country met with virtually no success. The main reason for this was that the meat combines were repelled not just by the small quantities and poor qualities of beef produced by the local beef industry, but also by the dull international economic climate of the late 1920s. In the end, in 1924, the government was forced to open negotiations with ICS, which, though a monopoly by regional standards, was a virtual nonentity in the international meat business.

In spite of the fact that throughout the 1920s, the government pumped huge subsidies into ICS's Rhodesian subsidiary, RECSCO's export effort, the company failed dismally to penetrate the dull international market. However, just when the government was contemplating expropriating RECSCO, the beef industry's fortunes hit their lowest ebb during the Foot-and-mouth epidemic of 1931-1935. In particular, the accumulating cattle surpluses which weighed heavily on the beef industry made it unwise for the government to take any such drastic measures against the company. Once again, the government was forced to tax cattle producers and consumers in order to raise money for subsidies through a series of beef Control Acts. In achieving this goal, the government was careful not to place the industry 'cattle burden' on its increasingly restive political constituency of small white ranchers. Rather, it chose to shift the largest share of the beef industry's burden on to the back of the African peasantry in the interests of white survival.

Although some hopes were raised when Liebigs finally opened its factory after a 25-year wait at West Nicholson in 1934, the industry's crisis continued to worsen. The reason for this was that while Liebigs was primarily involved in meat extraction, a line of business requiring ultra-cheap low-grade cattle only, RECSCO was not prepared to pay high prices for grass-fed cattle produced by the beef industry's multitude of undercapitalised white ranchers. Because of the continued lack of remunerative prices, many of the bigger ranchers left the industry further blunting its competitive edge both in region and overseas. In the meanwhile, "the now increasingly predominant small producers, who provided the government with valuable electoral support, expected continual subsidies for the cattle trade."¹⁶⁶ As the government's survival depended critically on the electoral support of this impoverished white cattle ranching elite, it never hesitated to expropriate RECSCO's meat works and establish in its place, the CSC. Unlike RECSCO, the CSC was a public utility company or parastatal which did not operate on profit. Its primary function was thus, to help resolve permanently the contradiction inherent in the government, ICS and RECSCO relationship in favour of local ranching capital. Through the CSC, the government sought to put a 'bottom' on the beef industry's domestic market once and for all.

¹⁶⁶ Phimister, "Meat and Monopolies", 412.

Chapter Two

The Beef Industry During the Second World War, 1939-1945

The Creation of a Larger Domestic Market

The outbreak of the Second World War was a blessing in disguise for the beef industry and essentially benchmarks two crucial periods in the industry's history: the period before 1939, when the industry's expansion was mainly hamstrung by lack of remunerative markets; and the period of the war i.e. 1939-1945, during which the industry received a major boost from a sudden expansion in domestic demand for agricultural products. The difficulty of trading in war-time, the establishment of the Empire Air Training Scheme, the influx of European refugees and Italian prisoners of war¹ into the country, in the short-term, combined to create a deeper and wider domestic market for the agricultural industry as a whole:

The Air Training Scheme proved a major economic boom. Farmers and industrial firms suddenly found an almost insatiable market, and [Sir Earnest] Guest [The Minister of Air] calculated that Imperial expenditure on the Scheme alone almost equalled the indirect benefit which the country derived from its entire gold-mining industry.²

The Second World War's more long-term contribution to the expansion of the domestic market was its impact on S. Rhodesia's base mineral and tobacco industries. Having suffered from severe competition from the Turkish industry "in the period immediately preceding the outbreak of hostilities, the [Rhodesian] chrome mining industry subsequently emerged as the mainstay of the Allied war-effort."³ Increased

¹ During the Second World War, S. Rhodesia was used as a training ground for the Royal Air Force and as a safe haven for war internees comprising mainly of Italian prisoners of war. In particular, the early months of the war saw the influx of approximately 15 000 Royal Air Training personnel. By the beginning of August 1940, Air Training Camps inside the country had the capacity to train an average of 1 800 pilots, 240 observers and 340 air gunners per year. For more details on this point, see; R. Blake, *A History of Rhodesia*, (Eyre Methuen, 1977), 274; S935/35, Progress of War Weekly Reports, 8 August 1940; *Southern Rhodesia: Past and Present*, 45.

² Sir Earnest Guest was the Minister of Air and the Ministry of Air was set up in 1940. For more details on this point, see L. H. Gann and M. Gelfand, *Huggins of Rhodesia*, (London, 1961), 153; *Southern Rhodesia: Past and Present*, (Salisbury, 1944), 45.

³ Phimister, *An Economic and Social History of Zimbabwe, 1890-1948: Capital Accumulation and Class Struggle*, (London and New York, 1988), 222; Chamber of Mines of Rhodesia, *Annual Report for the year 1939*, 28.

demand for Rhodesian chrome by the Allies during the war resulted in an upsurge in the value of chrome exports 186 577 *pounds sterling* in 1939, to 667 254 *pounds sterling* by 1942.⁴ Also, with the outbreak of the war, the fortunes of the Southern Rhodesia's fledgling tobacco industry soared to new heights. The demand for pipe tobacco and cigarettes in Britain caused the domestic price of S. Rhodesian tobacco to double between 1939 and 1944, and for "the first time since tobacco had been commercially planted in the country, every grower was making money."⁵ In fact, so bright were the tobacco industry's prospects that the 'leaf of gold' attracted the main agricultural effort and the country lost its self-sufficiency in basic foodstuffs. This was not surprising especially "in view of the financial attractions ... [of] tobacco ... [as opposed] to the much less remunerative maize crop."⁶

The S. Rhodesian government, which considered food production to be just as important as soldiering, ensured that most white commercial farmers stayed on the land and did not leave for the war-front. As early as September 1939, the Minister of Agriculture and Lands, told those present in the Legislative Assembly:

I wish to make it clear to all sections of the [agricultural] community that the colony must spare no effort to maintain her normal agricultural output of maize, tobacco, cattle, dairy products, pigs, and so forth. While I realise the intense desire on the part of farmers and tobacco producers to offer themselves for military service, I am convinced that they will be performing an equally, and perhaps more valuable national service by remaining on their farms and continuing with their normal programme of livestock and crop production.⁷

As the demand for food increased shortages, the government placed more emphasis on ensuring self-sufficiency in food. This turning point in government war food policy came in 1942, when a severe drought resulted in a record shortfall in maize and other

⁴ As the country's Governor was quick to point out: "The great value of S. Rhodesia's production and resources had been fully realised after the Japanese onslaught had deprived the Empire of [many raw materials, including] Chinese tungsten The United States was about to embark on vast munitions drive involving an immense increase in steel production and therefore, in the demand for steel alloys. The Philippines' chrome had been lost; Turkish chrome was the subject of a vast amount of negotiation ...[and] it was difficult to obtain large quantities for our own use since the industry was organised to ship chrome through the Sea of Marmora and the Aegean waters were now denied to us ...The answer lay in S. Rhodesia's chrome [and tungsten] ... now that Burma is in Japanese hands." For more details on this point, see Chamber of Mines of Rhodesia, *Ann. Rep., 1942*, 19.

⁵ F. Clements and E. Harben, *Leaf of Gold*, (London, 1962), 130; M. Corina, *Trust in Tobacco: The Anglo-American Struggle for Power* (London, 1975), 184.

⁶ Clements and Harben, *Leaf of Gold* (London, 1962), 129; See also *Ann. Rep., Sec., Dept. Agric. and Lands, 1942-1943*.

food grains.⁸ In March 1942, a [F]ood [P]roduction [C]ommittee was established to boost the production of urgently required foodstuffs by offering incentives ranging from subsidies, grants, loans, bonuses to guaranteed production prices.⁹ On 21 April 1942, the Cabinet “resolved that legislation be prepared to enable Native labour to be conscripted for civil work of national importance.”¹⁰ Godfrey Huggins, the Prime Minister himself, emphasised the urgent need for compulsory labour to produce food needed “to feed the white civil population, ten thousand Royal Air Force personnel, our own troops, and six thousand internees.” Huggins further emphasised the need for the conscription of African labour to be used in the production of strategic minerals requested by the Empire’s two main allies, Britain and the United States of America.¹¹

On 1 August 1942, the [C]ompulsory [N]ative [L]abour [A]ct came into effect and empowered the government to forcibly conscript African males between the ages of 18 and 45 who were out of employment for three months or longer.¹² Under the CNLA, Africans were ‘press-ganged’ for work on white farms, the construction of air fields and for use in the expanding “base mineral industry around Bulawayo, where production was considered to be of strategic importance to the war effort.” In most cases, however, labour “gangs were supplied to chrome and tantalite producers.”¹³ Thus, between 1943 and 1945, an average of 11 408 conscripts were forcibly recruited

⁷ S.R. Leg. Ass. Debates, 8 September 1939, Col. 1467.

⁸ The country was forced to ration maize supplies and had to import maize from countries as far afield as Sierra Leone, Nigeria, Brazil and Argentina. However, it is important to note that food imports were made more difficult by the shortage of shipping space during the war. For more details on this point, see correspondence in S482/151/42.

⁹ A. Masenda, “The Food Production Committee and State Food Policy in Colonial Zimbabwe during the 1940s”, (University of Zimbabwe, unpub. MA, 1987). The FPC also encouraged settler tobacco farmers to return at least 25 percent of their land to maize production. For more details on this, see S961/1, Minutes, 17 March 1942.

¹⁰ D. Johnson, “Settler Farmers and Coerced African Labour in S. Rhodesia, 1936-46”, *Journal of African History*, Vol. 33 (1942), 119-120; The rationale used to justify this process was that the African peasantry had to make a contribution to the Imperial war-effort by turning out in thousands as manual labour, not only for white farmers but also for the Government public works programme and the expanding base mineral industry. For more details on this point, see S1215/1080/10, “Comments on the organisation of the agricultural community in the event of national emergency”, 11 May 1939.

¹¹ Johnson, “Settler farmers and coerced African labour”, 119-120; For the specific reference, see S482/55/42, G. Huggins, Prime Minister to Sir Fraser Russel, Acting Governor, 1 May 1942.

¹² The important thing to note here is that the 1942 Act only served to legalise a process that had already got underway since the start of the war. By the time the Act came into effect, about 1 935 conscript labourers had already been ‘press-ganged’ for farm labour. See *S. Rhod Leg. Ass. Debates*, 4 November 1942, Col. 2206.

¹³ Johnson, “Settler Farmers and Coerced Labour”, 125.

per year for the entire period of the war.¹⁴ On the whole, the country's demand for labour was so great "that for the first time ... a significant number of African women enter[ed] the labour market primarily as domestic labour." Thus, through the use of legislative compulsion, African "movement into towns [and mines] became more rapid [and] African urban density increased on the order of almost ten percent per year during the war."¹⁵ It is important to emphasise the point that this process of proletarianisation and urbanisation of the African peasantry was crucial in creating the necessary conditions for internal industrialisation and agricultural expansion in the country during the war.¹⁶ Thus, in contrast to the period before 1939 and for the first time in the colonial history of the country, an urban domestic market for agricultural products like beef and milk was created. In this way, the conditions necessary for the expansion of the country's fledgling beef industry were created.

In the meanwhile, while the domestic market was expanding, prospects for the country's beef exports also brightened significantly with the escalation of hostilities. Because of the disruption of beef supplies from the Argentine, Britain was forced to rely more on Rhodesian supplies than ever before. In March 1940, the government signed a contract with the British Ministry of Food to meat supplies to British troops. Under this contract, the British government agreed to "take all the beef and beef offal the [country could] supply at prices which ... were 'fair and reasonable and based to a great extent, on the net prices realised before the outbreak of the war.'" But, as the war intensified, the British were forced to take "all the beef that the colony [could] spare."¹⁷ However, around 1942-43, the pattern of Rhodesia's war-time beef trade with Britain changed as overseas exports dwindled. Several factors help to explain this phenomenon. Firstly, Rhodesia's domestic and regional markets were beginning

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 127; These figures are nearly similar to those in the article by O. B. Pollock, "The Impact of the Second World War on African Labour Organisation in Rhodesia", *Rhodesia Journal of Economics*, Vol. 7, No. 3 (1973), 122.

¹⁵ Pollock, "The Impact of the Second World War on African Labour Organisation", 122.

¹⁶ G. Arrighi and J. Saul, *Essays on the Political Economy of Africa*, (Nairobi, 1974), 354. Instead of putting checks on the "excessive" influx of Africans into urban areas and controlling the number of "loafers" through the Native Registration Act, from the early 1940s the government eased the influx control measures and took measures to stabilise African labour. In 1941, the Land Apportionment Act was amended to provide, among other things, for the establishment of urban black townships. For more details see, R. C. Riddell, *The Land Problem in Rhodesia: Alternatives to the Future*, (Salisbury, 1978), 14-15.

¹⁷ *Forum*, Vol. 2, No. 49, 2 February 1940, 6; S1215/1342/1, Cold Storage Commission Agreement for the Supply of Meat to Britain, September 1939 - November 1942.

to absorb all previous surpluses of beef. In fact, by the time beef exports petered out, the difference between supply and demand in the country was increasingly being met at the expense of the overseas export trade.¹⁸ Secondly, Rhodesia's war-time export trade was also being jeopardised by the disruption of normal peace-time marine transportation and the shortage of refrigeration space on ships docking at South Africa's major seaports of Durban and Cape Town. The shortage of cold storage on ships actually worsened with intensification of the war itself. Hence, between 1943 and 1944, the country's exports stopped completely, while in 1945, only minuscule amounts were exported.¹⁹

On the whole, however, the loss of the English market was partly compensated for by an appreciable increase in exports to regional markets, comprising of the Union of South Africa, Northern Rhodesia and the Congo.²⁰ It is important to emphasise here that both Northern Rhodesia and the Congo's abundant copper resources were of strategic importance to the vast Commonwealth ground, sea and air war-effort. These sub-continent markets, which had hitherto been closed to S. Rhodesia's beef exports for a long time, at last began to open up under the stimulus of the war. For example, the South African market which, as shown in Chapter One, had eluded even the best efforts of the cattle industry throughout the 1920s and 1930s, began to take more beef from S. Rhodesia.²¹ Firstly, just as in Rhodesia itself, the domestic war-time demand for beef in South Africa resulted from the need to feed the armed forces, refugees and prisoners-of-war. Secondly, South Africa experienced a heavy drain on its fresh meat supplies as huge military convoys began to round the Cape following Italy's entry into the war and the consequent closure of the Mediterranean route to the eastern war-front. Because of these factors, South Africa was forced to import more beef from its

¹⁸ S1194/190/5, P. B. Fletcher, Minister of Agriculture and Lands, to the Prime Minister, 12 January 1948.

¹⁹ A. S. Mlambo, "The Cold Storage Commission: A Colonial Parastatal, 1938-1963." *Zambezia*, Vol. 23, No. 1, (1996), 61; The CSC actually complained about the operational problems caused by the shortage of refrigeration space on South African port of Cape Town. For more details on this point, see CSC, Annual Report for the years, 1940-41; Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Cost of Living on Cattle and Beef Prices, (Hereinafter referred to as the Newman Commission Report), Chairman, C. M. Newman, (February 1955), 20.

²⁰ E. Mufema, "The Impact of the Second World War on Rhodesian Settler Agriculture with particular reference to Tobacco, Maize and Cattle, 1939-1949", (University of Zimbabwe, unpub. BA Hons., 1992), 31.

²¹ Newman Commission Report, 20.

northern neighbour in order to cover its shortfall in domestic civilian consumption. Speaking at a Congress in October 1944, the South African Minister of Agriculture noted that:

Meat was short, partly because in the first four years of the war five years supply of cattle had been slaughtered. In the year 1942-43 about 300 000 head of cattle had been supplied for military purposes alone and at the same time civilian consumption had increased. So great had been the demand on the country's stock that the previous year cows in calf had been slaughtered as well as many of the country's breeding animals. The shortage, therefore was inevitable.²²

The effects of over-slaughtering in South African made itself felt to its full extent in the last two years of the war, i.e. 1944 and 1945. For instance, in 1944, South Africa was forced to import an estimated 3 212 199 Ib. of beef from S. Rhodesia while in 1945, some 2 840 272 Ib. were again imported. Furthermore, "in addition to small quantities of different types of processed and preserved meats, some 10 330 000 Ib. of other preserved meats [which included tinned beef] were imported in 1944 and 1945, respectively."²³ Also, under the stimulus of the war, the sub-continent's copper-belt markets of Northern Rhodesia and the Congo began to consume more S. Rhodesian beef. In 1942, the Cold Storage Commission confidently reported that:

The Northern Rhodesian government ... is negotiating for large supplies for the Copper-belt, and the Congo is also taking increased quantities for war purposes.... A contract for the supply of bacon to the War Evacuee camps in Northern Rhodesia has been concluded and ... the output of hides will be taken by the Union of South Africa. Fats of all descriptions can be consumed within the Colony and the same applies to the production of cattle foods. There will be no difficulty in disposing of the Commission's products in the immediate future.²⁴

Exports to N. Rhodesia increased by some 300 per cent from 425 tons in 1938, to 1 278 tons in 1945, while during the same period, exports to the Congo trebled from 504 tons to 1 506 tons in 1945. (see Table 2.1 below).

²² Director of Information, News Bulletin 17 October 1944, (South Africa House, London).

²³ BC 825/C1/12/1, Industrial Manpower Papers: A. P. van der Post, "Foodstuff in Short Supply: Meat and Meat Products," (1951), 161.

²⁴ CSC, Ann. Rep. and Acc., 1942.

Table 2.1: Beef Exports and Local Consumption in S. Rhodesia During the War, 1938-1945. (tons - 2 000 Ibs.)

Year	Exports to N. Rhod.	Exports to S. Africa	Exports to Congo	Exports to U/Kingdom	Total Exports	Local Consumption
1938	425	-	504	3 606	4 535	873
1939	73	5	522	5 038	5 638	2 050
1940	385	19	251	7 223	7 878	4 196
1941	756	1 004	322	1 800	3 882	6 138
1942	1 765	934	812	358	3 869	6 216
1943	1 351	10	817	-	2 178	7 304
1944	1 347	1 366	714	-	3 427	9 932
1945	1 278	123	1 506	1 280	4 187	13 177

Source: S. Rhodesia, Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Cost of living on Cattle and Beef Prices, 1955. (Chairman - C. R. Newman, hereinafter referred to as the Newman Commission Report), 20.

Cut loose from the overseas markets by the war and faced with its own commitment to feed thousands of Empire forces, refugees, Italian prisoners of war, as well as an expanding African labour force, the Rhodesian beef industry shifted its emphasis from the overseas market to the expanding domestic market. A major source of domestic demand from 1939 onwards, was the government itself, which through the Supply Corps, a part of the Rhodesian Army, supplied beef and dairy products to strategic areas of the economy considered vital to the country's war-effort. The Supply Corps were "the biggest distributive undertaking in the colony and [were] responsible for feeding air stations, military camps, internment and refugee camps and in the Salisbury area, government hospitals and school boarding houses."²⁵ They also supplied labour gangs working on various government development projects and white-owned farms. In fact, so great was domestic demand that cattle surpluses, which had been a millstone on the local cattle market during the inter-war years, disappeared as national slaughterings increased by some 134 percent from 71 000 head in 1937, to 160 000 head by 1945.²⁶ Because of the increase in domestic consumption, the quantity of beef available for local consumption was barely equal to the domestic demand, which resulted in "unfortunate effects on the cost of living of the

²⁵ E. Mufema, "The Impact of the Second World War on Rhodesian Settler Agriculture", 31.

consumer.”²⁷ Thus, a different situation from that of the 1920s and 1930s, arose whereby the government had to intervene by taking measures to prevent a rise in the cost of living by equalising supplies or reconciling the difference between supply and demand.

Beef Control during the War

As pointed out in Chapter One, the government’s policy towards the beef industry before 1939 had largely been geared to helping the industry find export markets as a way of dealing with unsaleable cattle surpluses. During the war, however, government policy shifted towards ensuring internal self-sufficiency, stabilising local prices and eliminating speculation. Rather than let its expensively acquired CSC become redundant, the government gave the CSC the task of rationalising and restructuring the industry’s cattle marketing system in line with the objective of preventing a ‘meat famine’ and ensuring self-sufficiency in beef.

It was only at the end of 1942, however, that any surplus supplies of cattle were wiped out and the need for beef control measures assumed greater urgency. Otherwise, by the start of 1942, cattle producers could still sell their cattle in a completely unrestricted or uncontrolled market.²⁸ The CSC itself also continued to purchase cattle in the same way as its predecessor, RECSCO. For instance, to obtain its requirements, the CSC either sent “out Native runners [into the African Reserves] with large sums of money [to buy cattle]”²⁹ or alternatively, bid for cattle on the open market.³⁰ However, after 1942 and also owing to lack of beef control mechanisms, the CSC found it increasingly difficult to secure enough supplies to meet its contractual obligations. Worse still, lack of central control over the marketing of cattle in the beef industry created problems such as:

²⁶ CSC, Ninth Ann. Rep. and Acc., 1946, 20.

²⁷ Newman Commission Report, 21.

²⁸ Refer to Chapter One for details on the various methods of sale used and the problems arising therefrom. See also Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Marketing of Slaughter Cattle and Products thereof, Chairman W. E. Thomas (1942), 5. (hereinafter referred to as the Thomas Commission Report)

²⁹ Commission of Inquiry into the Cold Storage Commission of Southern Rhodesia., Chairman, Max Danziger, (1952), 6. (hereinafter referred to as the Danziger Commission Report).

³⁰ Thomas Commission Report, 6.

variation and disparity in prices paid by its buyers for the same class of cattle, in some cases they paid less, in many cases more, than the prices authorised by the Commission. Also, a lot apparently depended on the personality and prestige of the seller and the buyer.³¹

Due to lack of effective market control mechanisms, speculators ran up or bid up cattle prices against the Commission's agents at auction sales "with a view to creating a fictitious market."³² Furthermore, cattle dealers also seized on the opportunities provided by the war to form buyer's rings which, in turn, created an artificial shortage of cattle on the domestic market. It also came to the attention of the government that some speculators and dealers were hoarding cattle with the long term objective of selling such cattle at much higher prices to returning soldiers taking up farming after the war.³³ Speculation and the wheeling and dealing by cattle traders tended to push up cattle prices and made it particularly difficult for the CSC to secure enough cattle to meet its needs.³⁴ Given its contractual obligations to the government and the whole Imperial war effort programme, the CSC could, therefore, not afford to rely "on the uncertainties and vagaries of the auction market" any longer.³⁵

Thus, under pressure from the Minister of Agriculture and Lands and also at the behest of the CSC, the government agreed to invoke the War-time Emergency Powers of the Slaughter Cattle Prices Order of 1941, which required that all slaughter cattle should be sold by weight and grade. Where scales or weigh bridges were available, cattle would be sold by live-weight over the scale and where scales were not available, estimated weights were to be used in agreement between the purchaser and seller. Minimum prices were fixed at 1/- per 100 lb. live-weight less than the maxima price. The idea behind this was to "provide a margin upon which cattle dealers or agents can work" by allowing agents or dealers to buy cattle at minima prices and then selling them directly to licenced butchers, the CSC or Liebigs at the prescribed maxima price. Under the Cattle Price Order, it also became an offence for butchery operators to

³¹ Ibid.

³² Ibid.

³³ S2521/MN/2, Orderly marketing of Cattle, Minutes of Meetings, Memorandum by R. Isaacson to F. E Harris, Ministry of Agriculture, 16 November 1943.

³⁴ Danziger Commission Report, 6.

³⁵ Thomas Commission Report, 6.

purchase and slaughter beyond their set average monthly requirements.³⁶ In agreeing to these measures, the government had in mind the need to control cattle supplies in the interests of the Imperial war effort and to nip wartime inflation in the bud.³⁷

Before long however, the Slaughter Cattle Price Order ran into serious problems. Apart from the fact that the country lacked adequate weighing facilities and trained personnel to grade cattle, government control over cattle prices, spawned by the new regulations, only helped to worsen the cattle situation by slowing down the flow of slaughter cattle to the CSC's abattoirs. The slow-down in supplies forced some of the major butcheries in Mashonaland to go for days without meat. Because of these problems, the government repealed the Slaughter Cattle Prices Order within a month after it came into effect, and from March 1942, sales by auction were once again allowed to go on throughout the country.³⁸ In the meanwhile, the government turned its attention to the African cattle sector for a solution to the mounting beef crisis.

To the government, the African Reserves were not just a reservoir of cheap labour but also a vital source of cheap cattle to be requisitioned in the interests of the Imperial war effort. As early as 1940, the government, through the [C]hief [N]ative [C]ommissioner, urged all [N]ative [C]ommissioners to do their utmost to organise sales at regular intervals and by intensified propaganda to obtain increased levels of marketing of African-owned cattle both in the Reserves and the so-called "[N]ative" [P]urchase [A]reas.³⁹ Clearly, there were, of course, no altruistic intentions on the part of the government in launching this campaign. Nevertheless, in 1942, the CNC, H. H. D. Simmonds, noted that:

In addition to the meat required to supplement the reduced maize rations of African labourers, more cattle were now required as food for troops, and it is essential for the latter purpose that the processing and chilling works are kept

³⁶ S2384, Cattle marketing: Development of organised marketing of cattle, 1942; Government Notices No. 545 and 570 of 1941; [B]ulawayo [C]hronicle, 18 December 1942.

³⁷ BC, 18 December 1942.

³⁸ The repeal of this Order led to the appointment of the Thomas Commission of Inquiry of 1942. However, the recommendations of this Commission were never implemented by the government. BC, 18 December 1942.

³⁹ Thomas Commission Report, 9; S2384, Cattle Marketing: H. H. D. Simmonds, CNC, Circular Minute No. 22 (1942) to all Stations in Southern Rhodesia, 16 July 1942.

fully supplied. By selling now, Native [cattle] owners will be materially assisting in the colony's war effort, besides themselves.⁴⁰

But, due to unbridled exploitation by cattle speculators and dealers, African peasants were dissuaded from selling their cattle in quantities which the government had anticipated.⁴¹ For instance, African cattle producers complained bitterly about extremely low prices offered for their cattle and they increasingly began to resist any use of force aimed at making them sell more cattle.⁴² In some cases, when they decided to sell, some producers simply resorted to the tactic of asking for a high price for their beasts before finally settling for at least half of the original charge, even then, only after much haggling had taken place over the initial price. The editor of the Bantu Mirror, Jasper Savanhu, explained why:

[The African] always thinks the European [buyer] wants to buy [his cattle] for as little as he can: so [the seller] puts [the asking price] up, and then comes down. It is the Jew who has taught [him] that, or, I should say, the [white rural] trader.⁴³

The relatively minuscule supplies of cheap slaughter cattle from African Reserves, especially in the early years of the war, only helped to worsen the already critical beef situation in the country. For its own, the CSC found the situation unacceptable especially in view of the fact that thousands of African-owned cattle were dying of poverty in the Reserves. What made the situation worse was the failure of the white-dominated capitalist sector on its own to produce cattle in sufficiently large numbers to ease the country's strained beef supplies. This inescapable fact, which underscored the importance of the African cattle sector to the country's beef industry, led to official outcries for force to be brought to bear on African cattle producers to make

⁴⁰ Most big employers such as the Railways, and mines were forced to restrict maize rations to their labourers by the shortage of maize caused by the drought in 1941/42. For more details on this point, see S2384, Cattle Marketing: Simmons to all Stations in Southern Rhodesia, 16 July 1942.

⁴¹ Because of the cumulative deterioration in peasant productivity and restrictions on land available for African use, cattle increasingly became the main form of investment open to Africans. For more details, see G. Arrighi, The Political Economy of Rhodesia, (The Hague, 1967), 44.

⁴² S482/195/42, Meat: General; Memorandum on Prices of roller-marked meat, Recommendations of the Slaughter Cattle Commission, Department of Statistics, December 1942; One of the main problems faced was that this method of sale was open to manipulation since there were no scales to weigh cattle. All weights were estimated which resulted in the manipulation of weights and grades. See ZB J1/1/3, Oral evidence to the [N]ative [P]roduction and [T]rade [C]ommission, (NPTC.) by the Rev. Percy Ibbotson, 7 August 1944, 1734; ZB J1/1/3, Oral evidence to NPTC, by A. M. Tregold, of Red Leaf Farm, Nyamandlovu, 1944.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, J. Savanhu, Editor of Bantu Mirror, 4 August 1944, 1712.

their contribution to the country's Imperial war effort by selling more cattle. Around 1941, such cries had grown increasingly louder, as it had become painfully evident that "in spite of the [existence of] excessive herds of cattle held in the African [Reserves], the Commission and Liebigs were unable to fulfil urgent orders for the supply of tinned meats for the fighting forces."⁴⁴

It is informative here to remember that around the time when calls for Africans to sell more cattle were made, the government took the decision to set up the [N]atural [R]esources [C]ommission to investigate ways of arresting ecological deterioration in African Reserves. The Commission recommended that all 'excess' African-owned cattle be de-stocked on the basis of scientifically determined criteria based on the carrying capacity of available land. The government, which apparently, had no qualms in adopting this particular recommendation, went on to promulgate the Natural Resources Act No. 9 of 1941, purportedly, to limit the numbers of livestock owned by African families on the grounds that overstocking lay at the root of ecological degradation in the Reserves.⁴⁵

That the government sought to implement such drastic de-stocking measures at a time when the country was facing a domestic beef crisis was not just mere historical coincidence. Although the real cause of land degradation in the Reserves was the colonial government's own land alienation policy, it chose to blame overstocking for causing ecological deterioration. The truth of the matter, however, was that the recommendations of the NRC came at an opportune time and were used to justify the requisitioning of African-owned cattle for the war effort. For example, in 1942, the Thomas Commission noted with a touch of anger that:

It is deplorable that a colony which prides itself on its cattle industry should thus, have failed hitherto so lamentably in the Empire's hour of need Instead [of Africans selling more cattle] witness is borne to the fact that thousands of native cattle are likely to perish this season through poverty. This is futile and wanton waste. No better argument than the spectacle of this grim and tragic state of affairs is required to justify the early establishment of orderly distribution and marketing [of cattle]. Meantime, it is strongly urged that regulations dealing with

⁴⁴ Mlambo, "The Cold Storage Commission", 65.

⁴⁵ Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Preservation of the Natural Resources of the Colony, (Sessional Papers, CSR, 40, 1939); See also Natural Resources Act, No. 9 of 1941, Section 36.

Native cattle framed by the Natural Resources Board should be brought into force without any further delay.⁴⁶

In December 1942, and as a prelude to forced destocking, the government made sure that it had effective control over the marketing of African-owned cattle throughout the country. In 1943, the Prime Minister's Office, noted in an official statement that:

The usual scarcity of cattle at this time of the year [i.e. December to March], the [1942] drought ... and the late rains in Matebeleland this season have caused inflation in slaughter cattle prices greater even than twelve months ago and butchers have in consequence again asked to be allowed a higher selling price for 'boy's meat.' The government is not prepared to agree to this price increase, which would be reflected in the higher cost of living of Europeans and Natives and higher costs in primary and secondary industries. The Government however, realises that there is something to be said for the butcher's case, and to deal with the situation we propose, at an early date, to issue an Order to the effect that:(a) No person who is not a licensed butcher, licensed farmer or representative of Liebig's or the CSC will be allowed to purchase cattle at auction sales whether within or outside the Native reserves. (b) Persons purchasing cattle at auction sales must first apply for permits to purchase stating the purpose for which the cattle are required and no permit will be granted unless the cattle are required for bona fide farming or butcher's business.

The same statement explained further that:

The government cannot agree to varying seasonal prices for Compound [grade] cattle. Such cattle are chiefly derived from Native-owners, and the Native mind would not understand receiving 15/ per 100 lb. at one time of the year and 25/ per 100 lb. at another. On the other hand, a higher price than 20/ a head all the year round would encourage producers to continue to raise inferior stock and discourage the general improvement in our herds, which is so essential to any long-range cattle policy. The average prices throughout the year, grade for grade, ... taking effect from 1 January 1943, will be guaranteed by the government for five years, and in the case of the higher grades, may be raised after the war, should it be possible for the CSC. to sell in other markets at better prices than those obtainable in the United Kingdom At the request of the British, government have undertaken to supply a large quantity of beef to Northern Rhodesia and the Congo in the interests of copper production, and it is our intention to implement that promise even if requisitioning of cattle has to be resorted to.⁴⁷
(emphasis added)

⁴⁶ Thomas Commission Report, 4-5.

⁴⁷ S482/9/82, Slaughter Cattle and Control of Prices, Circular from the Department of the Prime Minister, Salisbury, 30 December, 1942. This Circular, which was also quoted in the BC, 1 January 1943, further pointed out saying, "Past history the world over has shown that lasting success in the world's markets can only be won and maintained by the regular output of high grade uniform products."

After the livestock carrying capacity of all African Reserves had been assessed and a five-year culling programme drawn up, compulsory de-stocking of African owned cattle then began in earnest in 49 of the 93 Reserves declared overstocked in the period between 1942/43-1945.⁴⁸ Throughout the country, de-stocking measures were ruthlessly enforced and African cattle owners were warned that unless they “co-operate[d] fully and the desired results thus obtained voluntarily, extreme measures would ... be taken.”⁴⁹ They were given only two choices: they either had to ‘freely’ sell cattle at low prices arbitrarily set by the CSC in agreement with the Native Department, or alternatively, they would simply be directed to do so by culling officers.⁵⁰ Compulsory de-stocking largely explains why there was huge increase in the number of African-owned cattle bought by the CSC from 27 000 head in 1942 to 100 000 head in 1945. (see Table 2.2 below) Having set the stage for the guaranteed flow of cheap cattle from the Reserves, “in 1944, the Native Department requested the CSC to arrange a price schedule based on a live weight basis and constant through[out] the seasons and a European schedule drawn upon a [c]old [d]reside [w]eight basis and having a seasonal factor built into it, low in the rains, highest in winter and spring.”⁵¹ The following year, 1945, “the Native Department and the CSC signed a formal agreement establishing prices and methods of sale.”⁵² Thus, the twin objectives of arresting ecological deterioration in the Reserves and the need to secure cheap cattle supplies for the Allied war effort, explain why at the height of the war, the government resorted to compulsory destocking measures against African cattle producers.

It is useless to deceive ourselves into a belief that a successful long range policy for Rhodesian agriculture can be built-up by encouraging the production in large quantities of Compound cattle, third grade butter and cheese, under-grade pigs, and so forth. Our own people have every right to demand an article of high quality. Outside markets will certainly do so ... it becomes necessary by gradual means to make the production of Inferior products unprofitable, so that the colony may enter and retain the most payable markets that become available to us when conditions are normal.” For more detail see Cattle Sales Permit Order, 1 January 1943; Government Notice No. 32, 1943; Danziger Commission Report, 6.

⁴⁸ M. Drinkwater, The State and Agrarian Change in Zimbabwe’s Communal Lands, (London, 1991), 59.

⁴⁹ Report of the Secretary for Native Affairs, Chief Native Commissioner and Director of Native Development, for the year 1943, 116.

⁵⁰ See, for example, R. G. M. Mtetwa, “The Political Economic History of the Duma People of South-eastern Rhodesia”, (University of Rhodesia, unpub. PhD thesis, 1976), 419.

⁵¹ R. M. W. Johnson, African Agricultural Development in Southern Rhodesia, 1945-1960, (Stanford, 1964), 205.

Table 2.2: Numbers of African Owned Cattle bought by the CSC at Destocking Sales, 1942-1951

Year	Total Head Purchased
1942	27 000
1943	39 000
1944	48 000
1945*	100 000
1946*	102 000
1947*	148 000
1948	87 761
1949	90 802
1950	71 708
1951	91 200

* These were the years of maximum de-stocking in the African areas

Source: Danziger Commission Report, 16

Growth and Change in the Cattle Industry

Although the Second World War helped tremendously in turning around the fortunes of the beef industry one should be careful not to paint a rosy picture of the industry's performance. Indeed, the vastly improved market situation in the country led to some significant changes in the commercial sector of the industry. This sector showed steady expansion as white-owned herds increased from 755 728 head in 1939, to 1 001 269 head in 1945. It was the first time that white-owned herds had grown to over a million head in 15 years. Because of relatively better producer prices during the war, an estimated total of 379 new producers entered the commercial sector of the cattle industry.

Table 2.3 European Owned Herds, by Grade, 1939-1945 (000 head)

Year	Pure-bred	Grade	Others	Total
1939	11 410	285 831	458 487	755 728
1940	12 995	286 263	527 010	826 268
1941	14 424	328 705	508 320	851 449
1942	12 700	344 358	522 086	879 144
1943	14 596	338 356	565 586	918 538
1944	14 492	321 588	620 137	956 217
1945	14 608	357 501	629 160	1 001 269

Source: S. Rhodesia, Ninth Reports on the Agricultural and Pastoral Production of European Farmers, 1954-55, 58.

⁵² Ibid.

This factor was shown by the increase in European herds from 3 047 in 1939, to 3 426 by 1945. Again, the number of large producers i.e. those owning over 5 000 head of cattle increased from 11 at the start of the war, to 15 by 1945, while the figure for producers in the category of those who owned between 1 001 and 2 000 head increased from 39 in 1939, to 78 in 1945. The largest increase in the number of herds occurred in the category of producers owning between 251 and 500 head. In all, this category increased by 247 new herds. On the other hand, herd sizes of between 501 and 1 000 head also increased from 173 in 1939, to 246 in 1945.

Although the various production indicators show that the commercial sector expanded somewhat during the war, the rate of growth in terms of production of the capitalist ranching sector failed to keep pace with the increase in domestic demand for beef. This is in spite of the fact that the number of white-owned cattle increased every other year after 1938.⁵³ The growth of the capitalist sector also remained sluggish in spite of the fact that, apart from their own production, white ranchers leased 'feeders' or so-called 'grazer cattle', bought cheaply from African peasants by the CSC, on very easy terms.

Table 2.4: Number of Cattle Leased to European Ranchers by the CSC, 1939-1948 (000 head)

Year	Number of Leases	Number of Cattle Leased
1939	78	3 356
1940	91	5 447
1941	56	3 516
1942	43	4 612
1943	128	7 134
1944	357	13 862
1945	607	26 703
1946	425	26 126
1947	726	39 776
1948	952	45 384

Source: S2528/14, Working Party on Beef Supplies (Economics), Cattle and Beef Marketing in Rhodesia.

While in 1939, an estimated total of 3 356 head were distributed among 78 white ranchers, a total of 26 703 head of 'grazer cattle' were distributed or leased to 607 ranchers in 1945. Just like in the 1930s, the majority of white ranchers were still

unable to improve production through supplementary feeding due to the now familiar problem of undercapitalisation. This partly explains why the average weight of all cattle slaughtered in the country during the war actually dropped by about 60-70 lb. per beast and also why calving rates in the industry remained below 50 per cent.⁵⁴ An important factor to consider was the high mortality rate in the beef industry, which consisted of almost half of total national slaughtering. Mortality was particularly high during the 1941/42 season when the country was hit by a severe drought. Not surprisingly, the largest share of national mortality was accounted for by African cattle sector in which the twin factors of land scarcity and overcrowding increasingly resulted in poverty and general deterioration of grazing conditions.

Table 2.5 : White Owned Herds by Size , 1939-1945

Year	0-250	251-500	501-1000	1001-2000	2001-5000	Over 5000	Total
1939	2 378	423	173	39	23	11	3 047
1940	2 312	470	197	53	24	15	3 071
1941	2 299	514	189	60	22	15	3 099
1942	2 320	603	200	64	16	13	3 216
1943	2 344	625	220	61	20	12	3 282
1944	2 323	631	231	75	24	14	3 298
1945	2 391	670	246	78	26	15	3 426

Source: Figures taken from Ninth Report on the Agricultural and Pastoral Production of European Farmers, 1954-1955, 58.

Table 2.6 : Calving Rates of White Owned Herds, 1939-1945

Year	Number of Cows	Calving Rate Matabeleland. (%)	Calving Rate Mashonaland. (%)	Calving Rate National Aver. (%)
1939	252 400	43.5	48.1	46.9
1940	281 207	49.0	55.4	52.8
1941	282 178	45.5	54.8	51.3
1942	286 802	40.6	51.0	47.2
1943	309 572	44.2	48.7	47.1
1944	231 876	47.9	51.3	50.1
1945	331 319	47.5	51.7	50.1

Source: Newman Commission Report, 45.

⁵³ Rhodesian Farmer, 24 March 1948.

⁵⁴ S108, Memorandum on the Cattle Industry, 29 June 1948.

An important factor which further retarded the expansion of the beef industry was the government's cheap beef policy. So as to curb rampant inflation and also to prevent an inevitable increase in the cost of living, the government put in place measures to control retail prices of beef. The result was that while the domestic demand for beef was increasing rapidly, cattle prices remained virtually static. This point is reflected by the fact that in 1941, the price of export quality beef remained at the same level as it was in 1939, and 3d. per lb. less than that in 1938. On the other hand, the price for medium quality beef also remained the same as in 1939, but was 1d. per lb. less than the 1938 price.

Table: 2.7 : National Slaughtering and Mortality, 1939-1945 (000 head - calves included)

Year	Total Slaughtering	National Mortality
1939	130 578	75 939
1940	156 658	77 953
1941	153 082	101 622
1942	185 041	102 311
1943	171 722	96 080
1944	178 130	101 265
1945	199 459	104 739

Source: Newman Commission Report, 49.

Table 2.8 : Cost of Beef at CSC Works in Price per lb, 1938-1941

Year	Export Quality (%)	Medium (%)	Compound (%)
1938	3.7	2.9	2.1
1939	3.4	2.8	2.2
1940	3.3	2.7	2.4
1941	3.4	2.8	2.6

Source: CSC Ann. Rep. and Acc., 1941.

The price for Compound or low quality meat, however, showed a marginal increase of 5d. per lb. over the 1938 price, and 4d. per lb. more than the 1939 price. (See Table 2.8 above). Although as pointed out earlier, new producers entered the capitalist sector of the beef industry, the increase in the number of herds which occurred as a result of this was obviously not matched by any capital improvements in the commercial sector of the industry. In fact, the production methods of the 1930s seem to have remained virtually unchanged during the war. The main reason for this is that while producer prices remained static, especially during the first three years of the war, the cost of inputs in the industry actually increased as shown in Table 2.9 below.

Table 2.9: Running Costs in the White Cattle Sector, 1939-1942

Item	Percentage Increase
Native Labour	23 (including rations)
European supervision	12
Dipping	19
Upkeep, Renewals, Depreciation	25
Miscellaneous, including Motor Transport	25

Source: Thomas Commission Report, 11-12.

For example, between 1939 and 1942, an increase in costs of production of approximately 10 per cent in respect of grass-fed cattle and some 20 per cent in respect of stall-fed animals was registered.⁵⁵ It is also clear from the figures drawn from the previous tables that producers' costs of production rose much faster than producer prices. Thus, because of low producer prices, only the beef industry's small core of big producers with the necessary capital and herd sizes of over 1 000 head were able to make profit during the war years. On the other hand, more than three quarters of white producers in the industry who, apparently, had smaller herds and did not have the necessary capital to intensify production, could barely make a living on cattle during those years. Not surprisingly, because of its impact on producer prices, the government's cheap beef policy drew a lot of criticism from beef industry circles.

For instance, in December 1942, the Bulawayo Chronicle noted that:

So much importance is attached to the desire that there must be no increase in the price of the people's food by the Huggins Government, that Rhodesia is in danger of missing an opportunity of rehabilitating her agricultural and pastoral industry.⁵⁶

In the same year, a government Commission of Inquiry also noted that:

under present conditions [white producers] could not expect to make a fair living from cattle alone unless they owned about 1 000 head of cattle. As 2 813 out of 3 099 European owners of cattle in 1941 owned 500 head of cattle or less, it would seem obvious from this argument that the bulk of the cattle-owners in the colony must continue to plan for some subsidiary form of income as well as cattle.⁵⁷

The same Commission of Inquiry further noted:

⁵⁵ BC, 18 December 1942.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Thomas Commission Report, 12.

The lot of the Rhodesian cattle producers today is not a happy one. Restricted markets and prices, increased costs of products and bad seasons have deprived many producers of their profits and burdened them with doubts and fears for the future. Their discontent and anxiety are intensified by comparison of their lot with that of other sections of the community [namely tobacco], whom they consider, are more prosperous.⁵⁸

But, the most scathing criticism was directed at the government's overall cattle industry policy which many blamed for the beef industry's lamentable failure "in the Empire's hour of need" and for giving rise to the "mongrel peril"⁵⁹ The above situation was not made any better by the diversion of some man-power from the beef industry and other necessary resources for the war effort.⁶⁰ As a result, some cattle ranches became neglected while many others had to be run using hired labour at extra cost to owners. One of their number, D. M. Sommerville, who owned a ranch in the south-eastern low-veldt of the country pointed out that:

We were heavily dependent on Italian [POWs.] from the [internment] camp in Fort Victoria, who were allowed out on parole to help farms and ranches. Those men worked hard and well and tided us over the worst of the staff shortage.⁶¹

The beef industry's economic problems were given an added twist by the general immobility of capital, which made it impossible for the industry to secure much needed credit to close the gap caused by the flight of big ranching capital during the 1920s and 1930s (see Chapter One). As long as producer prices remained unremunerative, there was no sufficient incentive for the return of big ranching capital into the industry.⁶² It would seem therefore, that because of the unprofitable nature of beef production, most of the new producers who chose to engage in beef production only produced beef as a sideline activity to the more lucrative tobacco crop. Moreover, it would seem that many of the 'new entrants' were actually tobacco farmers, who kept a few hundred head of cattle for their own domestic consumption and draught

⁵⁸ Quoted in *BC*, 18 December 1942.

⁵⁹ Terms such as "mongrel" and "scrubs" were in those days used to refer to severely undernourished grass-fed cattle. For more details on this point see *New Rhodesia*, 11 December 1942.

⁶⁰ Fencing material was also difficult to secure during the war not only because of the problem of securing supplies during wartime but also because the available supplies were diverted for the Empire Training Scheme and other Government public works projects. These factors forced many producers to rely on costly labour intensive methods of production. For more details on this point, see also *Southern Rhodesia: Past and Present*, 40-57.

⁶¹ D. M. Sommerville, *My life was a Ranch*, (Salisbury, 1976), 185.

power requirements.⁶³ Thus, such 'new entrants could not be expected to make any noticeable impression on the industry's existing production levels.⁶⁴

Table 2.10 Number of Cattle and Rates of Increase/Decrease, 1936-1946

Year	European cattle (a)	Increase (+) Decrease (-)	African cattle (b)	Increase(+) Decrease(-)	National Herd	National (+)/(-)
1936	753 419	- 6.7	1 547 623	- 6.4	2 301 042	- 6.5
1937	734 770	- 2.5	1 582 062	+ 2.2	2 316 832	+ 0.7
1938	739 869	+ 0.7	1 555 806	- 1.7	2 295 675	- 0.9
1939	755 728	+ 2.1	1 570 310	+ 0.9	2 326 038	+ 1.3
1940	826 268	+ 9.3	1 636 496	+ 4.2	2 462 764	+ 5.1
1941	851 449	+ 3.0	1 768 690	+ 8.1	2 620 139	+ 6.4
1942	879 144	+ 3.3	1 768 010	- 0.04	2 647 154	+ 1.0
1943	918 538	+ 4.5	1 824 521	+ 3.2	2 743 059	+ 3.6
1944	956 217	+ 4.1	1 915 534	+ 5.0	2 871 751	+ 4.7
1945	1 001 269	+ 4.7	1 911 644	- 0.2	2 912 913	+ 1.4
1946	1 020 677	+ 1.9	1 884 334	- 1.4	2 905 011	- 0.3

Notes: (a) Returned by Farmers and Ranchers only.

(b) Estimated by the Native Department.

Source: Southern Rhodesia, Statistical Year Book, 1947, 81.

An important factor governing change in the industry's production methods was the nature of wartime domestic demand itself. The main problem was that the demand caused by the war was completely indiscriminating in as far as quality of beef was concerned. Commenting on this problem in 1942, the CSC pointed out that the domestic market was absorbing "all types [of beef to the extent that] the ideal "Chiller" type, suitable for export on which the future of the industry depends, has ... lost popularity in the clamour for beef of any description."⁶⁵ By the end of 1943, virtually nothing had changed so much that the CSC was again forced to sadly point out that "the existing market requires little else that general average quality [beef]." In the opinion of the CSC, ranchers were encouraged to produce low-grade cattle

⁶² S1194/190/5, P. B. Fletcher, Minister of Agriculture and Lands to the Prime Minister, 12 January 1948.

⁶³ In fact, the diversion of resources into tobacco production, where higher incomes could be earned, was one of the major contributory factors to the decline in European food production throughout the war and even after. For more details on this see Phimister, "Discourse and Disciplines of Historical Context: Conservationism and Ideas about Development in S. Rhodesia, 1930-1950", Journal of Southern African Studies, Vol. 12, (1986), 263-75.

⁶⁴ S1194/190/5, C. A. Murray, Chief Animal Husbandry Officer, "Memorandum on the Cattle Industry, 1946".

⁶⁵ CSC, Ann. Rep. and Acc., 1942.

because of good prices which could be obtained “for anything in a hide.”⁶⁶ Of course, the main source of domestic demand for low quality beef was the expanding and severely underpaid class of black labourers, which consumed beef mostly in the form of rations from cost-conscious employers.⁶⁷ In stimulating the demand for low-grade beef, the Second World War not only discouraged capital development in the beef industry in general but also encouraged the production of grass-fed cattle, which ironically, had been the bane of the beef industry in the period before 1939. Already, in the early 1940s, the more informed members of the beef industry were expressing concern over this problem. For instance, in 1942, the CSC warned that:

quality is more important for overseas export than quantity, and ... plans should now be made for post-war conditions. If the present shortage [of export grade cattle] should lead to the production of large numbers of low-grade cattle, it would be disastrous when the time comes to re-enter world markets ... it cannot be too urged on farmers that beef of all description, but especially of the higher grades, is urgently required.⁶⁸

The above situation was not made any better by the government’s control of maize, a strategic food resource during the war, especially after the drought of 1942. In response to maize shortages caused by the 1942 drought, the government imposed restrictions on the use of maize as supplementary feed with the result that by the end of 1942, “export quality cattle [i.e. stall-fed] were practically unobtainable [in the whole country]”.⁶⁹ Although by 1945, the government had finally realised its mistake and tried to correct it by increasing the price of beef “by some four hundred percent [above] the extremely low figures of the 1920-24 period”⁷⁰, it was a question of too little too late.

⁶⁶ Ibid., 1943.

⁶⁷ During the war, African labourers were severely underpaid and worked under very poor conditions. In order to keep wages and labour costs down, employers mainly obtained lower grades of beef as ration meat. This low-grade beef or the so-called ‘boy’s meat’ was cut out from anything ranging from Good Average Quality to the Fifth Quarter. For more details on the conditions of African urban labour conditions, see Newman Commission Report, 53; P. Ibbortson, Report on a Survey of Urban African Conditions in Southern Rhodesia, (Federation of Native Welfare Societies in Southern Rhodesia, Bulawayo, 1943), 9; R. Howman, Report of the Committee to Investigate the Economic Social and Health Conditions of Africans Employed in Urban Areas, January 1944, 2.

⁶⁸ CSC, Ann. Report and Acc., 1942; See also RH 1 August 1940.

⁶⁹ Ibid

⁷⁰ The increase in beef prices was accompanied by “annual bonuses paid by the CSC for top grades animals.” For more details, see Newman Commission Report, 21.

Table 2.11 : Prices Paid by the CSC in 1945

Grade	Change in Price					
Rhodesia's Best	17.	5.	0.	-	18.	10. 0. per head
Imperial Grade	12.	12.	0.	-	14.	9. 0. per head
Grade "A"	10.	7.	6.	-	12.	0. 0. per head
[G]ood [A]verage [Q]uality	7.	7.	0.	-	8.	13. 0. per head
[F]air [A]verage [Q]uality	5.	2.	0.	-	6.	3. 6. per head
Compounds	3.	7.	0.	-	4.	5. 0. per head

Source: Newman Commission Report, 21.

Conclusion

This chapter tried to assess the role of the Second World War in the economic recovery of the beef industry in the period between 1939 and 1945. A lot of emphasis was placed on how the war marked a major benchmark in the industry's history. By stimulating the growth of the S. Rhodesian economy and the domestic market in general, the war helped the beef industry to break free from the cycle of depression which had seriously hampered its development throughout the inter-war period. Because of the expansion in domestic demand, the industry shifted its emphasis from the overseas export market to the domestic market where a voracious demand for low-grade had developed under the stimulus of the country's overall Imperial war effort. The Second World War played a fundamental role in opening up regional markets consisting of South Africa, N. Rhodesia and the Congo, some of which had, for a long time, continued to elude the local industry's best efforts to secure them. The interesting thing about the economic impact of the war was the fact that domestic demand expanded so rapidly that all surpluses of cattle, which apparently had weighed around the industry's neck like a millstone, had been wiped out by the end of 1942. Hence, in contrast to the period before 1939 and also for the first time in the history of the beef industry itself, domestic consumption far outstripped supply. With its Imperial war-effort in danger of collapsing because of the beef crisis, the government was left with no option but to implement beef control measures to ease the flow of supplies and stem the linked rise in the cost of living. When these efforts failed to achieve the desired results, the government increased its control over the marketing and distribution of cattle and instituted compulsory destocking measures as a way of

squeezing much needed supplies from the African cattle sector in the interests of the Imperial war effort.

To some extent however, the war also helped to retard development in the cattle industry in general. Because of the high domestic demand for low-grade beef, the war tended to discourage the production of better quality beef. In this way, the war did little to stimulate change in the poor production methods which had contributed much to the industry's failure to make a dent on the international market in the period before 1939. To this must be added the negative economic impact on the beef industry of such factors as the relative immobility of capital, low producer prices and high input costs during the war. These factors combined to impede increased production and capitalisation in the industry. Indeed, the failure of the white dominated-capitalist sector of the beef industry to satisfy domestic consumption could also be seen as an indictment of the government's overall cattle policy in the period between 1939 and 1945.

Chapter Three

The Beef Industry in Post-war Southern Rhodesia, 1946-1956.

The Roots of the Post War Beef Crisis

With the cessation of hostilities in Western Europe in 1945, S. Rhodesia entered a decade of unprecedented economic growth. The key to S. Rhodesia's post-war economic boom was Britain's post-war foreign currency crisis. Faced with a shortage of foreign currency to facilitate post war economic reconstruction, the British government switched the purchase of much needed raw materials such as chrome and asbestos from hard-currency US dollar suppliers to Sterling Area sources of supply such as S. Rhodesia. According to Arrighi and Saul, "asbestos and chrome were both dollar-savers and demand for them increased considerably."¹ As a result of this huge post-war demand, "the price of both asbestos and chrome doubled between 1946 and 1950, as reconstruction in Europe gathered momentum and the Korean War began."² The continued demand for S. Rhodesia's base minerals was crucial in stimulating further structural change in the fledgling economy in general. One area in which rapid expansion took place was the railway industry where external demand for locally produced chrome and asbestos:

precipitated State action previously considered but never implemented. In 1947, the government purchased Rhodesia Railways. Some 6 million [*pounds sterling*] were spent on capital equipment, and with the arrival of locomotives and rolling stock ordered from overseas, the railways' carrying capacity gradually expanded. Base mineral exports increased to the point where gold was overtaken by asbestos in 1952. During the same period, the volume of chrome transported almost trebled.³

But, even more significant was the impact the British dollar shortage had on S. Rhodesia's nascent tobacco industry:

From 1946 ... some [tobacco] planters began making fortunes as the pattern of demand, determined by Britain's own dollar shortage and the huge Sterling balances accumulated by various countries during the war, swung directly towards S. Rhodesia. Lacking in dollars, British companies were unable to buy as much tobacco as they wanted from the American markets. Instead, they

¹ G. Arrighi and J. S. Saul, *Essays on the Political Economy of Africa*, (Nairobi, 1974), 351.

² Phimister, *An Economic and Social History of Zimbabwe, 1890-1948: Capital Accumulation and Class Struggle*, (London and New York, 1988), 222.

³ *Ibid.*, 223.

were obliged to take a growing proportion of their requirements from Empire sources within the Sterling Area. The resulting interest in S. Rhodesian tobacco pushed prices up from 20d. per lb. to an average of over 32d. per lb...⁴

The result was that:

Tobacco exports which had beaten gold into second place in 1946, subsequently increased their lead as the acreage planted, the number of growers and production all boomed. By 1949-50, when 2 150 growers produced almost 107 million lbs. of Virginia tobacco on 154 511 acres, output had expanded by over 200 per cent in under a decade. International upheaval and the straightened circumstances of post-war Britain, thus, secured in less than ten years, the market which had eluded the best efforts of S. Rhodesian growers for more than a generation.⁵

With gross returns of up to five or six times greater than those from maize, tobacco increasingly attracted the "main agricultural effort" after the war.⁶ Between 1945 and 1947, an estimated seven million *pounds sterling* was invested in tobacco production alone⁷, while approximately between 17 000 and 25 000 additional black labourers found employment in the industry.⁸

The vast economic opportunities provided by the country's booming economy attracted thousands of immigrants and ex-servicemen running away from war-ravaged Britain and other parts of Western Europe. Most of these immigrants flocked to S. Rhodesia to take up employment in agriculture, mining and the rapidly expanding manufacturing sector. However, while for some immigrants, the certain hope of getting jobs and the prospects of cheaper standards of living provided the incentive to

⁴ *Ibid.*, 227.

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ *Ann. Rep. Sec. Dept. Agric. and Lands, 1948*, 1; See also *New Rhodesia*, 3 May 1946, 20 December 1946.

⁷ S108, Development Co-ordinating Commission, "Discussion on Tobacco Situation", 17 January 1948.

⁸ The total number of black labourers employed in the capitalist agricultural sector as a whole increased from 130 636 in 1945 to 147 412 in 1947. For more details on this point, see S1671/1724a, *Quarterly Review of Native Affairs to 30th June 1947*. The main factor explaining the increase in the labour force engaged in the capitalist agricultural sector even several months after victory was declared by the Allied powers in Europe was the conscription of African labour under the Compulsory Native Labour Act of 1942, which remained operational. For instance, in February 1946, there were at least 3 875 conscripts still working on European farms, and a further 4 000 had been requested for harvesting. For more details on this point, see S961/2, Minutes, 20 February 1946.

emigrate⁹, the majority of immigrants who came into the country couldn't resist the spell cast by the "Leaf of Gold."¹⁰

Immigration levels which had fallen noticeably due to war-time travel difficulties, suddenly "shot up to new heights" as post-war economic destitution forced hundreds of Europeans to turn their backs on war-torn Europe.¹¹ In 1948, the highest number of immigrants was recorded "when over 17 000 persons were admitted into the country."¹² Under the heavy influx of immigrants, the white population in the country more than doubled from 82 386 in 1946, to 177 124 in 1956.¹³ In turn, the increase in the country's white population created demand for goods and other services such as housing. Owing to this factor and others mentioned in the preceding paragraphs, the number of "Africans in wage employment rose from 254 000 in 1936, and 377 000 in 1946, to more than 600 000 in 1956."¹⁴

While, the tobacco boom and the influx of immigrants, mainly "accounts for the permanence of [the] sustained rate of growth between the end of the war and the late 1940s"¹⁵, the impetus for sustained growth after 1948, was provided by the inflow of British capital from the Union of South Africa and the United Kingdom.¹⁶ The influx of British capital into S. Rhodesia from the South Africa was caused by the fear of possible extremist policies spawned by the rise of the Afrikaner National Party to power in 1948.¹⁷ Thus, because of these factors, the amount of foreign investment in S. Rhodesia which stood at 13.5 million *pounds sterling* in 1947 more than doubled in 1949, and finally reached 50.7 million *pounds sterling* by 1951.¹⁸

⁹ B. M. Shutz, "European Population Patterns, Cultural Persistence and Political Change in Rhodesia," *Canadian Journal of African Studies*, Vol. 7 No. 1 (1973), 16.

¹⁰ Clements and Harben, *Leaf of Gold*, 151.

¹¹ Mlambo, "Building a Whitemen's Country: Aspects of white Immigrations to Rhodesia, 1890-1970," (University of Zimbabwe, unpub. paper, 1997), 9.

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ Shutz, "European Population Patterns", 14, 20.

¹⁴ Arrighi and Saul, *Essays on the Political Economy of Africa*, 351.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 351.

¹⁶ For more details on the causes for the out flow of British capital from the United Kingdom, see M. Barrat-Brown, *After Imperialism* (London, 1963), Chps. 7-8.

¹⁷ Arrighi and Saul, *Essays on the Political Economy of Africa*, 351; L. H. Gann and M. Gelfand, *Huggins of Rhodesia* (London, 1964), 212.

By widening the domestic market even further, the country's post-war boom "more than off set the effects of the closure of the Empire Air Training Scheme"¹⁹ and helped to sustain expansion in domestic demand for the beef industry. In fact, post war domestic demand for beef had reached a stage where the difference between consumption and supply had to be satisfied increasingly at the expense of the export trade.²⁰ The expansion in domestic demand largely explains why the country's beef exports fell from 3 692 tons in 1946, to 349 tons by 1950, before finally increasing to 674 tons in 1953. As can be seen from the table below, all beef exports to Britain stopped completely in 1946, while those to South Africa were stopped in 1951. At the same time, local consumption increased from 17 071 tons in 1946, to 27 698 tons 1953.

Table 3.1: Beef Exports and Local Consumption in Post War Rhodesia, 1946-1953 (tons - 2 000 Ibs.)

Year	Exports to N. Rhod.	Exports to S. Africa	Exports to Congo	Exports to Britain	Total Exports	Local Consumption
1946	1 562	305	1 325	500	3 692	17 071
1947	1 102	1 300	1 162	-	3 564	20 332
1948	753	6	509	-	1 268	18 531
1949	498	-	530	-	1 028	21 982
1950	-	31	316	-	349	23 649
1951	-	500	250	-	750	27 063
1952	-	-	652	-	652	28 718
1953	139	-	535	-	674	27 698

Source: Newman Commission Report), 20.

By the end of 1946, the beef industry's annual slaughter rate reached an all-time peak of 7.9 per cent, up from the war-time figure of 6.7 per cent. Ten years later i.e. in 1955/56, the total number of mature cattle and calves slaughtered in the industry reached a record 260 430 head in 1955.²¹ This high off-take rate in the beef industry

¹⁸ Ibid. C. H. Thompson and H. W. Woodruff, Economic Development in Rhodesia and Nyasaland (London, 1954), 173.

¹⁹ E. Mufema, "The Impact of Second World War on Rhodesian Settler Agriculture", 39.

²⁰ Beef exports to the region declined in spite of the fact that the industry's economic prospects on the regional export markets remained bright, especially after South Africa signed a Customs Agreement with Rhodesia in 1948. Under this agreement, Rhodesian cattle could enter the South African market free of past quota restrictions for five years. For more details on this point, see Phimister, "Secondary Industrialisation in Southern Africa: the 1948 Customs Agreement between Southern Rhodesia and South Africa", Journal of Southern African Studies, Vol. 17, No. 3, (1991), 435, especially footnote 24.

²¹ S. Rhodesia, Ninth Report on the Agricultural and Pastoral Production of European Farmers, 1954-1955, (Central Statistical Office, Salisbury 1957), 20.

was actually in excess of the rate of annual increase of the national herd itself.²² In spite of the fact that by 1946, 68 percent or a total 5 415 of all white capitalist farmers in the country owned cattle, the capitalist sector alone could still not sustain post-war levels of domestic demand for beef.²³ Indeed, domestic demand was partly being met by slaughtering immature breeding stock, a factor which led to a shrinkage in the size of the national herd.²⁴ What gave this untenable situation an added twist was the deplorably low calving rate which averaged 47 per cent throughout the late 1940s and early 1950s. Furthermore, the industry's production level was affected by a combination of low slaughter weights, which stood at 420 lb. per beast and high mortality rates which averaged 5.4 per cent per year.

Table 3.2 : Calving Rates for White Owned Herds, 1939-1952

Year	Number of Cows	Matabeleland (%)	Mashonaland (%)	National (%)
1946	336 373	45.9	49.5	47.9
1947	339 073	40.2	50.0	46.3
1948	373 431	45.9	49.2	47.9
1949	403 226	47.5	50.8	49.5
1950	392 960	37.4	47.5	42.4
1951	377 673	42.1	48.3	47.1
1952	400 916	45.2	48.4	47.1

Source: Figures taken from Ninth Rep. Agric. and Pastoral Prod. Europ. Farmers, 1954-1955, 59, Table 21.

Part of the explanation to the beef industry's failure to expand production in line with the increase in domestic consumption lay in the unbalanced nature of the country's post-war economic boom. Apart from the fact that some profits generated from the tobacco industry may have provided some new ranchers with much needed capital to buy fencing material, acquire breeding stock and establish pasture irrigation facilities²⁵, the post-war tobacco boom, as one would expect, did not have any other positive impact on white-owned herds. To a large extent, the tobacco boom actually represented "a shift of [economic] resources to tobacco from [cattle and] the lower

²² S1194/190/5, C. A. Murray, [C]hief [A]nimal [H]usbandry [O]fficer, "Memorandum on the Cattle Industry." (Hereafter referred to as the Murray Report).

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ For more details on this point, see F226/1321/8, Chairman of Cattle Sales Permit Committee to Secretary for Agriculture, 7 February 1948.

²⁵ Clements and Hamben, Leaf of Gold, 152.

value crops.”²⁶ Thus, it would seem that increased tobacco production actually took place at the expense of food production in the country in general. This had the unintended result of having food production in the country initially falling behind domestic consumption. For example, in connection with this point, Phimister has observed that

larger and more efficient tobacco producers generally out-bid medium and small-sized cattle ranchers and maize growers for capital and labour. For example, when tractors and artificial fertilisers were at a premium immediately after the war, tobacco growers were usually the only farmers who could afford them. Similarly, inflated land prices due to the tobacco boom deterred many potential ranchers from entering the cattle industry. Even those who could afford the initial capital outlay found it difficult to absorb the effect of the annual capital charges on the cost of production. ²⁷ (emphasis added)

Table 3.3 : National Slaughtering and Mortality, 1946-1952.(calves included)

Year	National Slaughtering	National Mortality
1946	228 776	110 203
1947	255 262	137 004
1948	173 634	82 992
1949	174 408	127 936
1950	200 458	152 620
1951	234 105	101 258
1952	238 944	96 096
1953	227 923	62 486
1954	256 271	57 251
1955	260 430	65 043

Source: Figures taken from Ninth Rep. Agric. and Pastoral Prod. Europ. Farmers, 1954-1955, 59, Table 21.

While in 1945/46, both African and White-owned cattle holdings remained stationary²⁸, in the period between 1946/47 and 1948/49, the whole of the beef industry suffered major setbacks from droughts. Indeed, it was during the devastating

²⁶ Dunlop, The Development of European Agriculture, 14; See also Phimister, Economic and Social History of Zimbabwe, 232.

²⁷ Phimister, Economic and Social History of Zimbabwe, 232; For more details on the impact of tobacco production on the agricultural sector see also W. J. Barber, The Economy of British Central Africa, (London, 1961), 133-34; Clements and Hamben, Leaf of Gold, 151; New Rhodesia, 23 March 1945, 8 September 1950, 20 December, 1946, 24 December 1948; Weinmann, Agricultural Research and Development in Southern Rhodesia, 171-72; “Report of the Cattle Cost Investigation carried out by the Economics and Markets Branch”, Rhodesia Agricultural Journal Vol. 48, (1951), 520; Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Cost of Living on Cattle and Beef Prices (Salisbury, 1955), 16; S987/1, Evidence of T. B. Simpson, 25 June 1942; and Tenth Annual Report of the Natural Resources Board, 1951, 4.

²⁸ Newman Commission Report, 39-40.

drought of 1947, which killed thousands of cattle in Matabeleland, that “the extent to which the cattle industry had been living on borrowed times became apparent.”²⁹ In fact, the situation in the cattle industry in the aftermath of that drought was summarised for the S. Rhodesia Cabinet thus:

Indiscriminate slaughter of immature animals and of animals suitable for breeding ...linked to unsatisfactory conditions in the industry and accentuated by losses and necessary slaughterings during the drought, has led to a position in which [the] total cattle population has become stationary if not decreasing ... It is unlikely even with the cessation of exports that demand can be fully met in the years immediately ahead.³⁰

Coming as they did on the heels of three good rainy seasons i.e. between 1943 and 1945, two successive droughts completely reversed any gains the industry had made in the last three years of the Second World War or from the post-war tobacco boom, for that matter. The impact of the droughts was reflected by the noticeable drop in the percentage of calves born per year from 1947 onwards. For instance, in 1947, only 37 per cent of the cows in Matabeleland, the country’s prime ranching district, were able to bear calves as compared to 47 per cent in 1946.³¹ During the same drought, an estimated 74 000 African-owned cattle died while thousands of others had to be quickly sent to CSC’s abattoirs for immediate slaughter to avoid losses.³² Also, during a government rescue operation spanning a period of seven weeks, some 81 000 head of cattle were moved from drought-prone areas of Matabeleland to Mashonaland where grazing was better.³³ Thus, owing to heavy losses from drought and a marked decline in African cattle deliveries to the CSC from 1948 onwards, the government ordered the CSC to ration local beef supplies to its butcher retailers by as much as 50 per cent in 1949. In fact, so critical was the beef situation in 1949 that a total of 3 500 head had to be imported from neighbouring Bechuanaland to ease shortages over the Christmas and New Year festive seasons in the country’s major cities of Bulawayo and Salisbury, and to some extent, other major industrial centres as well.³⁴ However, rationing had to be maintained throughout January 1950 before supplies again

²⁹ Phimister, *Economic and Social History of Zimbabwe*, 233.

³⁰ S2225/2, Cabinet, “Food Supplies”, quoted in Phimister, *Economic and Social History of Zimbabwe*, 233.

³¹ *Newman Commission Report*, 18.

³² BC, 21 February 1947; F226/1321/8, Permits for the Purchase of Slaughter Stock for Liebigs, Chairman of Cattle Sales Permit Committee, to Secretary for Agriculture and Lands, 7 February 1948.

³³ BC, 25 April 1947.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 10 February 1950.

returned to normal at the end of February 1950.³⁵ There is no doubt that the critical cattle position in the years 1947, 1948 and 1949, directly translated into a meat shortage in the period from 1951 to 1953.³⁶ As was always the case, the coming of the first rains following a severe drought actually tended to bring more sorrows than economic joy for many cattle producers. Indeed, as one rancher lamented:

poisonous weeds, including the tulip plant spring up and the hungry cattle, cropping voraciously, eat them with grass. Some weeds kill within eight hours. Cattle caught in the mud while watering are often too weak ... to drag themselves free, they eventually fall and die of starvation, or of pneumonia brought on by the rain. [Although] it does not last long, it is expensive while it lasts and shows that a farmer's worries are not over just because the rains have come."³⁷

Post-war Beef Control

The problems confronting the beef industry in the post war years coupled with the critical beef situation in the country forced the government to extend, and even to strengthen beef control measures introduced during the war in order to stabilise domestic beef supplies. In particular, the realisation that the white dominated capitalist sector on its own could not produce enough beef to meet the country's increasing needs, in itself, led the government to seek a short term solution to the beef crisis by firstly, increasing legal control over peasant livestock production and secondly, intensifying its assault on the African cattle sector.

In 1947, the government passed the Native Cattle Marketing Act, No. 23, of 1947, "to provide for the control of the purchase and sale of stock owned by Natives and matters incidental thereto."³⁸ Under this Act, the Minister of Native Affairs was given the power to determine the methods of sale, the areas for organised sales and the person or persons or class of persons allowed to purchase African-owned cattle at organised sales. Most importantly, the Act guaranteed the CSC a 50 per cent and 33.3 per cent

³⁵ CSC, *Ann. Rep. and Acc.*, 1950, 13.

³⁶ Just like in most parts of the world, it took four years to raise and prepare a beast for slaughter in S. Rhodesia. For example, in terms of cattle age groups and starting with 1948 as the base year, cattle supplies in the period 1949 and 1951 would have been as follows: Cattle aged three to four years in 1948, would be available for slaughter in 1949; those aged two to three in 1948, would have been three to four years in 1949 and available for slaughter in 1950, while yearlings would have been available for slaughter only in 1951. For more details on this point, see S. Rhodesia, *Rep. Agric. and Pastoral Prod. of Europ. Farmers, 1948/49*, 29.

³⁷ *BC*, 10 December 1950.

³⁸ *Native Cattle Marketing Act No. 23, (1947) (Preamble)*.

quota of all slaughter stock brought for sale in districts regarded as the most severely 'overstocked', such as Bulawayo, Fort Victoria and Gwelo (excluding Sebungwe, Charter and Buhera districts), and in the remainder of the districts subject to destocking in the country, respectively. While also granting the CSC a cattle buying monopoly at all organised sales, the Act stipulated that all private buyers of African-owned cattle, such as Liebig's, bona fide farmers, mine operators and mission stations only be allowed to buy cattle under government licence or permit. The Act also required that the CSC act as a residual buyer at all organised sales. This meant that the CSC was also entitled to buying all cattle remaining unsold at the conclusion of each sale. Any violation of the Act's provisions by cattle buyers attracted a fine not exceeding 50 *pounds sterling*, or in default of payment, imprisonment for a period not exceeding six months.³⁹

Having put in place the legal mechanisms which would, in essence, maximise the flow of cattle to the CSC's abattoirs, the government then unleashed incredible pressure on Africans by means of destocking legislation. In fact, so much pressure was brought to bear on the African peasantry "that the [destocking] programme exceeded its own target. Altogether, more than one million head of cattle were disposed ... at which point the government decided that destocking had gone far enough and brought the exercise to a close in [1948]."⁴⁰ By the time the process of compulsory destocking was suspended, it had already had devastating effects on African herds in general. For instance, in January 1948, the [C]hief [N]ative [C]ommissioner, E. H. Beck, pointed out that the process of de-stocking had resulted in the sale of "good type bulls which

³⁹ For more details on this point, see provisions contained in the above mentioned Act; Danziger Report, 6; S1217/9, Native Production and Marketing Council Meetings, 1948; M. J. Moyo, "The Marketing of African Produce, with particular reference to Cattle and Maize in the 1940s." (University of Zimbabwe, unpub. paper, 1986), 10.

⁴⁰ With reference to this point, Phimister has argued: "By then the state had begun to realise that destocking was only a temporary expedient. Writing in 1947 the Chief Native Commissioner reflected that his Department's difficulties were 'more those of overpopulation than overstocking. 'To reduce to the carrying capacity of many reserves, on the present population, will make the holdings quite uneconomical, so some solution will have to be found elsewhere ... The solution appears to be to appoint a Royal Commission to examine the land problem, from all its angles, and make a final allocation of land. After that a Native will either become a peasant farmer only, adopting proper agricultural and soil conservation methods, or become an industrialised worker, with his tentacles pulled out of the soil.' " For more details on this point, see Phimister, Economic and Social History of Zimbabwe, 237-38.

should have been retained for breeding purposes.”⁴¹ Again, in November 1948, the Assistant Marketing Officer in the Native Department, W. H. H. Nicolle, reported that:

In nearly all the Reserves where the Native stock-owners have been de-stocked down to four animals, the ratio of oxen exceeds 30 per cent and in two of these Reserves, it stands at 49 per cent and 58 per cent, respectively.... From the point of view of increasing Native cattle production, this is a serious matter because if de-stocking causes this tendency to increase and there is every indication that it does, then unless some other means of cultivation power is found, we must anticipate the Native dropping out of the production of beef and in due course, due to a decrease in replacements, a serious shortage of trek oxen will arise.... It seems, therefore, that if we are to encourage the increase of Native cattle production, and yet maintain progress in crop production, we must first find a solution for replacing or reducing the need for trek oxen.⁴²

The timing of the government’s destocking measures left no doubt as to the real intention behind them i.e. that of securing enough cattle to stave off the country’s post war beef crisis at little cost to the government itself. This is clearly reflected by the huge disparity in prices obtained by African cattle producers in Reserves subject to compulsory destocking and prices obtaining in areas not subject to destocking. In fact, it would seem that the need to offset the post war beef crisis opened yet another chapter of exploitation of the African peasantry in post war S. Rhodesia.⁴³

⁴¹ S2384/3032, De-stocking: General, E. H. Beck, Chief Native Commissioner, Circular, No. 29, 7 January 1948.

⁴² Ibid., W. H. H. Nicolle, Assistant Marketing Officer, Native Department, “Report on the composition of Native Cattle Herds”, 18 November 1948.

⁴³ The threat of punishment was used to force those Africans who resisted attempts to force them to sell cattle. Since culling of de-stocked cattle took place at the dip tanks, some Africans responded by refusing to dip their cattle. Many others tried to minimise the impact of the Government’s de-stocking measures by using the age-old system of *Kuronzera* or “herding out”. Through this system, which in the pre-colonial days was used to avert the effects of poor grazing in certain areas in order to take advantage of greener pastures elsewhere, cattle were either loaned to clients or put in the custody of relatives who held them in trusteeship in return for draught power and milk. During the de-stocking years, cattle were registered with the ‘new owners’, thereby facilitating an equalisation of cattle holdings which just fell in line with the regulations set out by the Natural Resources Board. For more details on this point, see Drinkwater, *The State and Agrarian Change*, 63.

Table 3.4 : Districts Not Subject to Destocking, 1947

District	Number of cattle sold	Average Price Realised
Gwaai	3 571	6. 16/. 0d.
Lupane	2 877	6. 0/. 0d
Wedza	496	5. 15/. 0d
Shangani	6 490	5. 8/. 0d.
Que-Que	3 193	5. 6/. 0d.
Nyamandhlovu	1 745	5. 5/. 0d.
Beitbridge	8 760	4. 15/. 0d.
Mrewa	2 394	4. 12/. 0d.
Mazoe	459	4. 8/. 0d.
Fort Rixon	4 205	4. 3/. 0d.
Buhera	6 273	3. 10/. 0d.

Source: S1217/9, Native Production and Marketing Council Meetings, 1948.

In order to cover costs incurred by the Department of Native Affairs in developing facilities for the marketing of African owned cattle, the government imposed a ten per cent levy on all peasant marketed produce under the Native Development Fund Act, No. 48 of 1948. The levy was deducted from the price of each head of cattle sold at all organised sales.⁴⁴ Thus, between 1949 and 1952, the government raised over 150 000 pound sterling for such purposes.⁴⁵ Predictably, the Native Development Fund Levy had a deleterious impact on African cattle prices, especially in view of the fact that the grading system outlined in the prescribed government price schedule used by the CSC as a guide to the value of cattle on sale, placed the bulk of grass-fed cattle into the already poorly paid bottom grades, namely [F]air [A]verage [Q]uality, Compound and Inferior.

⁴⁴ Native Development Fund Act, No. 48, 1948

⁴⁵ The African in Southern Rhodesia: Marketing, (High Commissioner) No. 4, (1952), 7

Table 3.5 : Districts Subject to Destocking, 1947 (Prices in *pounds sterling*)

District	Number of Cattle Sold	Average Price Realised
Bubi	3 544	5. 5/ 0d.
Inyanga	834	5. 4/ 0d.
Chilimanzi	3 740	5.3/ 0d.
Belingwe	11 723	4.19/ 0d.
Lomagundi	515	4.16/ 0d.
Bikita	1 722	4.14/ 0d.
Nuanetsi	4 342	4.14/ 0d.
Gwelo	5 800	4.13/ 0d.
Selukwe	5 338	4.10/ 0d.
Matopo	10 988	4. 9/ 0d.
Charter	5 111	4. 9/ 0d.
Sipolilo	503	4. 5/ 0d.
Gutu	8 388	4. 5/ 0d.
Essexvale	3 274	4. 5/ 0d.
Gwanda	14 923	4. 4/ 0d.
Insiza	7 083	4. 3/ 0d.
Makoni	3 625	4. 2/ 0d.
Plumtree	13 622	4. 2/ 0d.
Shabani	4 304	3. 16/ 0d.
Chibi	15 945	3. 15/ 0d.
Umtali	5 755	3. 14/ 0d.
Hartley	3 274	3. 11/ 0d.
Marandellas	2 205	3. 11/ 0d.
Goromonzi	2 607	3. 10/ 0d.
Ndanga	6 574	3. 5/ 0d.
Fort Victoria	7 823	3. 3/ 0d.
Mtoko	7 348	2.15/ 0d.

Source: S1217/9, Native Production and Marketing Council Meetings, 1948.

The above situation was worsened by the fact that organised sales were conducted during the dry seasons when most cattle in rural areas had already lost their condition due to poverty. Although Africans bitterly complained of low prices at government organised sales, the predominant thinking in official circles was that African peasants did not deserve prices similar to those awarded to white ranchers. For instance, an official report succinctly summed up this official thinking when it noted that:

there can be no doubt [that] it costs [the African peasant] practically nothing to produce cattle; he has no capital expenditure on land or water development, erects no fencing, his children herd the animals and the grass of the veldt provides the feed. An African rarely supplements this with roughage or concentrates... [African peasants are] only receiving a fair price, but are, if anything, over-rewarded for the small amount of time and trouble they put into the production of

cattle ... The African with his simple and elementary pastoral methods is largely but not entirely sheltered from the effect of cost index variations.⁴⁶

Although the government had chosen to make compulsory de-stocking as the magna-carta of its African cattle policy, it was, no doubt, fully aware of the fact that a lasting solution to the country's post war beef crisis lay in increasing production in the largely inefficient white dominated capitalist sector and not in the African cattle sector whose expansion was now increasingly being checked by the twin factors of land scarcity and overcrowding. Thus, the actual solution lay in a production policy aimed at tackling the now familiar problems of undercapitalisation, gross inefficiency and poor nutrition management techniques, all of which were responsible for the capitalist ranching sector's dismal production performance.

Post War Production Policy: Late 1940s and Early 1950s

It is important to note that S. Rhodesia's post war economic boom had the unwelcome effect of causing the traditional balance of economic and political power to shift away from capitalist agriculture to manufacturing or secondary industry. For instance, from 1946 onwards, the country experienced tremendous expansion in the manufacturing sector, which was concentrated in textiles, foodstuffs and processed tobacco. In fact, manufacturing exports for these three industries rose from 3.6 million *pounds sterling* in 1946, to 15.2 million *pounds sterling* in 1953.⁴⁷ These developments led to a situation where, "maize growing and cattle ranching declined in relative economic importance, [and as] farmers dwindled in electoral significance the State gave more of its attention to secondary industry."⁴⁸ This shift in the balance of political forces in the country partly caused the beef industry's expansion to be stymied by official negligence.⁴⁹ The country's agricultural planners were mesmerised by the 'leaf of gold' to the extent that they:

hesitated at throwing their weight behind maize growers and cattle ranchers. The cause of balanced agricultural development had to be

⁴⁶ Newman Commission Report, 39-40.

⁴⁷ M. Golberg, "Commercial Agriculture in Rhodesia, 1965-1980: Consolidation and Change," (University of London, unpub. MA thesis, 1982), 4.

⁴⁸ Phimister, An Economic and Social History of Zimbabwe, 234.

⁴⁹ For the role of the state in the development of the settler capitalist sector of cattle industry, see Chapter One.

weighed against the ‘outstanding importance of tobacco in the national economy’, especially as it accounted for over one third of export earnings.⁵⁰

However, even though S. Rhodesia’s post war economic policy in general was largely forged by the imperatives of secondary industrialisation, the government did not lose sight of the fact that the success of post war industrialisation was hinged inexorably upon the country’s capacity to feed an increased population, especially a permanently urbanised black labour force. In as far as the beef industry was concerned, the Government’s plan of action was shaped by the “disquieting”⁵¹ findings of the “Memorandum on the Cattle Industry” drawn up by C. A. Murray, the country’s Chief Animal Husbandry Officer in 1946 and the publication of the Engledow Reports in 1949 and 1950. In his “Memorandum on the Cattle Industry”, Murray estimated that by 1952, domestic beef consumption would have risen by 44 per cent or some 116 million lbs. of beef. This was equivalent to annual national slaughterings of approximately 331 000 head.

Table 3.6 : Estimated Consumption Versus Number of Cattle Slaughtered, 1946 and 1952 (1b.)

Year	Consumption (000 lb.)	Total Slaughter Stock (head)
1946	Local - 68 000 000	194 000
	Export - 13 000 000	36 000
	Total - 81 000 000	230 000
1952	Est. Consumption - 116 000 000	331 000
	Increase over 1946 - 35 000 000	101 000
	Percentage increase - 44%	44%

Source: S1194/190/5, C. A. Murray, “Memorandum on the Cattle Industry”, 1946, 4.

Murray argued that if the findings were translated into practical farming, then the beef industry would have to produce a total of 101 000 head of more slaughter cattle every year over the 1946 slaughter figures and to achieve this target, the national cattle inventory would have to expand by an estimated 150 000 head every year. In order to improve production, the Murray proposed that local beef prices be raised by at least 20 per cent. He also called for an improvement in methods of production, better disease

⁵⁰ Phimister, *An Economic and Social History of Zimbabwe*, 230; See also *Rhodesian Farmer*, 15 September 1948.

⁵¹ S1194/190/5, P. B. Fletcher to Prime Minister, 12 February 1948.

control methods, improvement in slaughter weights, and the removal of taxes which tended to discourage the entry of large capital into the industry and the proper protection and development of land.⁵²

On the other hand, the publication of the Engledow Reports on teaching, research, advisory work and agricultural development, presented to the Legislative Assembly in 1949 and 1950, respectively reminded the government of the need to boost post-war food production in the country.⁵³ But, just before the publication of the Engledow Reports, the government had taken measures to re-organise the Agricultural Department into six different specialist departments: Research and Specialist Services; Forestry; Conservation and Extension; Lands; Veterinary Services and Irrigation in 1948. Three specific departments i.e. Research and Specialist Services under the directorship of J. K. Chorley, Conservation and Extension (CONEX) directed by C. A. Murray, and the Veterinary Department, under the directorship of P. D. Huston, were to play a critical role in the government's attempts to revamp and modernise the methods of production in the beef industry.⁵⁴

The government moved swiftly to implement some of the recommendations made by the various reports mentioned above. The first step which was taken in anticipation of an increase in slaughter cattle was the establishment and modernisation of the CSC's abattoirs throughout the country. New abattoirs and cold stores were built at Umtali and Que Que in 1946, Gwelo in 1947 and Fort Victoria in 1951.⁵⁵ With the beef shortage at its height between 1947 and 1948, the Minister of Agriculture and Lands wasted no time in approving an increase in producer prices in 1948. Two years later, in 1950, the Government entered into the first of a series of Five Year Price Guarantee Agreements with the [R]hodesia [N]ational [F]armers [U]nion. Under this agreement, the basic producer price was to be guaranteed for five years and was to be reviewed in accordance with a government prescribed price schedule. It was hoped that guaranteed

⁵² S1194/190/5, Murray Report, 5-6.

⁵³ S. Rhodesia, Report to the Minister of Agriculture and Lands on Agricultural Teaching, Research and Advisory Work, (Presented to the Legislative Assembly, 1949); Rep. Min. of Agric. and Lands on the Agric. Dev. of S. Rhod., 1950 Chairman, F. Engeldow ; Ann. Rep., Dir. of Research and Spec. Serv., 1948.

⁵⁴ Weinmann, Agricultural Research and Development in Southern Rhodesia, 5.

⁵⁵ CSC, Ann. Rep. and Acc., 1938-1947.

prices would bring much needed stability in the industry. The government prescribed price schedule, which showed a substantial disparity between prices for higher grade and lower grade beef, was aimed at stimulating production of quality beef by putting a substantial premium on better grades.

As from 1949, a weight bonus of 10s. per 100 lb. c.d.w was also to be paid on cattle exceeding the following weights: Rhodesia's Best, 600 lb.; Imperial, 600 lb.; 'A' Grade, 550 lb.. and Good Average Quality, 650 lb.. and cows, 450 lb., respectively.⁵⁶ All cattle classified as Compound or Inferior were not eligible for the weight bonus. In fact, each time the government reviewed producer prices to cater for increases in costs of production and other over-head costs, the margin of increase on Compound and Inferior cattle was very small, the idea being to discourage their production. There is no doubt that this pricing policy was meant to benefit white ranchers who had more resources at their disposal and were better placed to produce better quality and heavier animals. At the same time, the pricing policy victimised African cattle producers, who, owing to poor grazing conditions arising out of the government's own colonial land policy and lack of financial support, could only produce Compounds at the best of times. In particular, white ranchers were substantially rewarded for fattening and adding weight to 'grazer cattle' leased to them, often at little cost to themselves, by the CSC.⁵⁷

⁵⁶ CSC, *Ann. Rep. and Acc.*, 1950, 3.

⁵⁷ The Grazer Cattle Scheme was only open to white ranchers who had the land and resources to fatten cattle. As pointed out in Chapter Two, Grazer Cattle were bought from Africans by the CSC usually at very low prices at Government organised sales.

Table 3.7: Authorised Cattle Purchase Prices, 1948 and 1950 (Sh. per 100 lb. c.d.w)

Grade	1948	1950
Rhodesia's Best	41/. 1d.	95/ -
Imperial	33/. 6d.	88/ -
Grade 'A'	25/. 11d.	73/ -
Good Average Quality	27/. 1d.	66/ -
Fair Average Quality	17/. 9d.	49/ -
Compound	11/. 0d.	46/ -
Inferior	8/. 5d.	25/ -

Source: Figures taken from, S1217/9, Native Production and Marketing Council Meetings, 1948; CSC, Ann. Rep. and Acc., 1950, 3.

In 1948, the government drafted a Five Year Plan for the beef industry under which water infrastructure was to be built in the country's drought prone southern white ranching areas of Matabeleland.⁵⁸ Side by side with plans to boost beef production in Matabeleland, were government efforts to secure land for post war white settlement and labour for the both the agricultural and manufacturing sectors. Thus, soon after the Five Year Plan to provide water to the southern ranching areas was drawn up, the government wasted no time in reactivating the draconian Land Apportionment Act to squeeze out all African peasant residing as labour tenants on both European and unalienated Crown land.⁵⁹ Those evicted from white owned land were resettled on previously unassigned Crown land, most of which lay deep inside known tsetse-fly belts.⁶⁰ It was under these circumstances that the dry north-western Sebungwe District was opened up for African settlement, while the relatively better-watered Lomagundi District was specifically opened up for newly arrived white settlers, mainly ex-servicemen, interested in cattle ranching.⁶¹

⁵⁸ S1194/190/5, P. M. Maviland, Director, Department of Irrigation, to Secretary for Agriculture and Lands, 26 February 1948.

⁵⁹ Arrighi and Saul argue that "In 1948, close to 300 000 Africans were either residing on European land or were occupying land within areas marked for European use, and in the post-war years 85 000 African families were shifted in organised expulsions." For more details on this point see, Arrighi and Saul, Essays on the Political Economy of Africa, 352.

⁶⁰ Dunlop, "Land and Economic Opportunity in Rhodesia", Rhodesia Journal Economics, Vol. 6, (1972), 3; S1194/190/1, Ad-Hoc Reports: Agriculture More Land for Native occupation., Chief Native Commissioner, Circular Minute (No. 15/46) to Native Department Stations in S. Rhodesia, 16 March 1946.

⁶¹ S1194/190/5, R. R. Staples, Chairman of Standing Committee on Agricultural Production to Secretary, Department of Agriculture and Lands, 23 February 1948.

The speedy process of post-war white settlement was assisted by the work of the reconstituted Land and Agricultural Bank of Rhodesia and the Land Settlement Board. Through these two bodies, the government advanced cheap loans “on approved security for the purchase, development and improvement of land, for the purchase of livestock and machinery.... The rate of interest charged was 4.5 per cent until 31st December 1950, when it was raised to 5 per cent.” Although in 1950, about 613 000 *pounds sterling* had been issued for 690 loan applications, a staggering 4.5 million *pounds sterling* had actually been earmarked for loans in that year alone.⁶² With new cash injections for research and other purposes, the stage was set for increased agricultural research and the provision of advisory services. In 1950/51, the government voted 341 394 *pounds sterling* for research and specialist services, 274 544 *pounds sterling* on conservation and extension and 134 834 *pounds sterling* on veterinary services.⁶³

Also, from the late 1940s onwards, work on pasture research at the country’s premier research stations at Grasslands and Matopos became more co-ordinated. In particular, Grasslands and Matopos, which were suitably located in different ecological regions of Mashonaland and Matabeleland respectively, were engaged in research aimed at promoting appropriate farming systems in the country. While the Matopos Research Station, suitably situated in the drier southern part of the country, specialised and concentrated on animal husbandry research, Grasslands Research Station focused on pasture research, animal husbandry and agronomy. Since the area around Grasslands was located in an area in which rainfall was higher and reliable, and the soil arable, deep and sandy, research there focused on the development of intensive mixed farming. Also, since the Grasslands station was situated in the heart of the country’s tobacco belt, work at the station was directed at encouraging the cultivation of pastures in rotation with tobacco. It was hoped that crops and ley pastures would play a complementary role in an agricultural system wholly devoted to intensive livestock production. On the crop section of the station, maize, wheat and silage crops such as mhunga, and leguminous hay or fodder crops such as velvet beans and soya beans

⁶² Weinmann, *Agricultural Research and Development in Southern Rhodesia*, 197; *Official Year Book of S. Rhodesia*, No. 4, (1952).

were tested. In each case, trials were done using beef and dairy cattle and since early results were found to be encouraging, work with legumes at the station began to get increased attention.⁶⁴ Another major research station in the country was the Henderson situated about 33 km north of Salisbury along the Mazoe road. Experimental work at this station was started in 1949 by Dr. E. D. Bumpus, Senior Pasture Research Officer, who established a nursery for pasture grasses and legumes to test their suitability for local use, particularly for ley pastures. In 1951, Dr. J. W. Rowland, a pasture expert from South Africa, was appointed Officer-in-charge of the station, and under his direction the station developed along with Grasslands and Matopos into the third largest research station in the country, with sections for crops, pasture, animal husbandry and fisheries research.⁶⁵

Since 1948, a lot of experiments were started at Matopos and Grasslands in which the effect of different levels of nutrition on the growth and carcass quality of beef cattle was investigated. Special attention was paid to the response of indigenous cattle breeds under different systems of management and their potential for beef production.⁶⁶ In all these experiments, it was revealed that veldt pasture in the high rainfall areas of the country was lacking in several minerals and as a result of this, more elaborate experiments which involved the use of a combination of different protein, energy and mineral supplements, were carried out over a period of years to help shed more light on this problem.⁶⁷ In general, pasture research was carried out in tandem with an expanded programme of cattle breeding experiments designed to identify the most suitable breeding system to be followed in improving the beef production qualities of both white-owned and African owned cattle.⁶⁸ In 1949, these

⁶³ S. Rhodesia, Estimates of Expenditure to be Defrayed from the Revenue Funds and Loan Funds, 1951.

⁶⁴ N. Murombedzi, "Pasture Research at the Grasslands Research Station and Veldt Management and their Contribution to the Cattle Industry of Southern Rhodesia, 1930-1980," (University of Zimbabwe, unpub. BA Hon thesis, 1988), 10.

⁶⁵ For more details on this point, see S. Rhodesia, Ann. Rep. Sec., Dept. of Agric. and Lands, 1947; 1948; Ann. Rep. Dir. Research and Spec. Serv., 1948; 1949; 1950; 1951; Guide to the Branches, Research and Stations and Colleges of Dept. Research and Spec. Serv., 1969.

⁶⁶ J. C. Raath, Summary of Ann. Rep. Acting Chief Animal Husbandry Officer, 1948; Rhod. Agric. Journal, Vol. 46, (1949), 739-749.

⁶⁷ Murombedzi, "Pasture Research at the Grasslands Research Station", 10; See also, S. Rhodesia, Ann. Rep. of the Dir. Res. and Spec. Services, 1948; 1949; 1950.

⁶⁸ S. Rhodesia, Ann. Rep. Chief Animal Husbandry Officer, 1945; Rhod. Agric. Journal, Vol. 43, (1946), 299-305;

experiments showed that under ranching conditions, the genetic variations between the different breeds were, to a large extent, obscured by the prolonged nutritional deficiencies of the winter pastures.⁶⁹ To facilitate livestock improvement and breeding experiments, an average of 4 000 head of pure-grade cattle valued at an estimated approximating 78 000 *pounds sterling* were imported annually between 1945 and 1950. By 1950, some 40.8 per cent or 469 000 head of white-owned cattle were classified as Grade cattle, i.e. cattle with at least three quarters pure-bred blood in them.⁷⁰ The most popular cattle breeds in the capitalist ranching sector included the Afrikander, Friesland, Hereford, Aberdeen Angus and Sussex.

Table 3.8 : White Owned Cattle by Grade, 1946-1955 (000 head)

----- Number of Cattle -----				*-Net Annual Increase/Decrease (%)-*				
Year	Pure-bred	Grade	Other	Total	Pure-bred	Grade	Other	Total
1946	14093	329359	669729	1020677	- 3.5	- 5.8	+ 6.4	+ 1.9
1947	16470	336855	669729	1020677	+ 16.9	- 2.2	+ 3.5	+ 1.8
1948	19766	472485	617232	1109483	+ 20.0	+ 43.5	- 10.9	+ 6.8
1949	20057	512362	655682	1188101	+ 1.5	+ 8.4	+ 6.2	+ 7.1
1950	19485	469106	660121	1148712	- 0.3	- 8.4	+ 0.7	- 3.3
1951	19785	459148	675927	1154860	+ 1.5	- 2.1	+ 2.4	+ 0.5
1952	24272	488798	686506	1199576	+ 22.7	+ 6.5	+ 1.6	+ 3.9
1953	23718	460172	712680	1196570	- 2.3	- 5.9	+ 3.8	- 0.3
1954	24425	463885	738756	1227066	+ 2.9	+ 0.8	+ 3.7	+ 2.5
1955	26465	534149	685640	1246254	+ 8.4	+ 15.1	- 7.2	+ 1.6

Source: Ninth Rep. Agric. and Pastoral Prod., Europ. Farmers, 1954-1955, 58.

Table 3.9 below shows that the overall total of white-owned herds in the first post war decade i.e. between 1946 and 1955/56, increased by 1 138. By 1955/56, about 26 per cent of white-owned cattle belonged to small producers owning less than 250 head. Although the increase in the number of herds was reflective of the fact that new producers entered the industry between 1946 and 1956, the increase in the number of new producers in the capitalist ranching sector made no significant impact on the beef industry's production levels.

⁶⁹ S. Rhodesia, *Ann. Rep. Dir. Res. and Spec. Services...*, 1949.

⁷⁰ Weinmann, *Agricultural Research and Development*, 155.

Table 3.9 : White Owned Herds by Size, 1946-1955

Year/Herds & No. of Cattle	Up to 250	251-500	501-1000	1001-2000	2001-5000	Over 5000	Total
1946-Herds	2 647	671	251	78	27	15	3 689
1947-----	2 887	716	235	88	28	10	3 964
1948-----	3 016	712	272	101	28	13	4 142
1949-----	3 190	767	312	95	29	15	4 408
Cattle-----	310 601	267 226	214 562	127 208	817 621	186 742	1 188 101
1950-Herds	3 328	696	306	104	24	15	4 473
Cattle-----	315 358	240 470	205 181	135 285	66 687	185 731	1 148 712
1951-Herds	3 403	717	291	96	34	11	4 552
Cattle-----	315 489	252 513	199 265	128 575	95 905	163 113	1 154 860
1952-Herds	3 495	729	306	108	36	14	4 688
Cattle-----	309 564	253 509	211 638	143 869	96 915	184 081	1 199 576
Percentage	26	21	18	12	8	15	100
1953-Herds	3 557	717	313	110	36	13	4 746
Cattle-----	315 195	247 667	216 563	145 615	102 625	168 908	1 196 570
Percentage	26	21	18	12	12	14	100
1954-Herds	3 530	764	331	104	37	15	4 781
Cattle-----	308 844	264 017	227 450	141 470	102 167	183 118	1 227 066
Percentage	25	21	19	12	8	15	100
1955-Herds	3 594	734	338	108	39	14	4 827
Cattle-----	320 736	257 985	232 178	149 889	110 557	174 909	1 246 254
Percentage	26	21	18	12	9	14	100

Source: Ninth Rep. Agric. and Pastoral Prod., Europ. Farmers, 1954-1955, 58.

Problems

In spite of the increased scale of technical and financial assistance from the government, nothing much was achieved in improving the levels of production of white dominated capitalist ranching sector. The greatest limitation of stations-based research was the cost factor. "The amount of capital necessary for cattle production on a reasonable scale, especially taking into consideration the inflated price of land ... ruling [around 1950] must have deterred many potential cattle producers who ... preferred other enterprises giving better and quicker returns."⁷¹ For instance, by 1956, the initial capital cost of establishing a small ranching enterprise stood in the region of 35 000 *pounds sterling*, which at current producer price levels was out of reach of many ranchers.⁷² The main cause of the high price of land in the post-war years was the tobacco boom which caused the value of all other land to rise, irregardless of

⁷¹ "Report on the Cattle Cost Investigation carried out by the Economics and Markets Branch, July 1950 to June 1951," *Rhod. Agric. Journal*, Vol. 48, (1951), 518.

whether it was prime tobacco land or not.⁷³ The increase in the price of land was also caused by heavy demand and “reduced land supply”⁷⁴, especially in the early 1950s. For example, by the end of the war in 1945, the total area available for white settlement had already shrunk from over 35 million acres in 1937, to 16.5 million acres. By 1950, the largest percentage of the remainder of this land had already been taken-up by the settlement of approximately 496 ex-servicemen. The result was that by 1951, very little free Crown land suitable for settlement still remained to enable the government to process any new applications for land.⁷⁵ For example, in 1956, the RNFU acknowledged this fact when it told the Turner Commission that:

There is very little good land left in S. Rhodesia for alienation to Europeans and the RNFU considers that future expansion of the cattle industry is dependant on a gradual intensification of the system of husbandry. This involves heavy expenditure on fencing, water, dipping facilities and development of farms for the provision of winter keep.⁷⁶

Thus, unlike the period before the Second World War when increased production in the beef industry had been dependent largely on the availability of unlimited quantities of cheap land resources, by the early 1950s, the industry had reached a stage where increased production could only be achieved by utilising more efficient and capital intensive methods of production.

The shortage of land led to speculation, particularly in areas located in Matabeleland and Victoria districts, where some big land-owners, seized upon the opportunity to make money, by selling off large blocks of unutilised land at exorbitant prices to interested buyers. For instance, commenting on the rise in property and land prices in Matabeleland, a prominent local property journal, the RPF, excitedly noted that:

the confidence the investor and speculator has in Salisbury, with the colourful tobacco farmer almost as an insurance, is becoming a phenomenon. It is a moot point however, whether prices of both city property and farmland have not reached their peak in this area.⁷⁷

⁷² F478/2/2, RNFU, Written evidence to the Cattle Marketing Commission, 12 January 1956, 2-3.

⁷³ Newman Commission Report, 16.

⁷⁴ H. D. Nelson, et al (eds.) Area Handbook for Southern Rhodesia, (Washington D.C, 1974), 284.

⁷⁵ Weinmann, Agricultural Research and Development, 190, 192; See also, Ann. Rep. Sec. Dept. Agric. and Lands, 1944; Statistical Year Book of S. Rhod., 1938; 1947; Ann. Rep. Land Settlement Board, 1945; Official Year Book of S. Rhod., No. 4, (1952).

⁷⁶ F478/2/2, Written evidence to the Cattle Marketing Commission, (1956) from the RNFU, 12 January 1956, 2.

⁷⁷ RPF, No. 21, November 1957, 1.

The journal went on to report that property investors and speculators alike were taking a more lively interest in developments in Bulawayo, where, in the period between 1946 and 1956, there had been a gradual but impressive rise in the values of ranch land:

In 1946, 6 000 acre farms in the Plumtree district were on offer and remained unsold at 7s. 6d. per acre. In 1948, a block of five farms totalling 30 000 acres in this area was sold for 5s. per acre and resold in 1956 at 25s. per acre. In 1948, a ranch 39 000 acres in extent on the Bechuanaland border, fully fenced and paddocked was bought for 7s. 6d. per acre and is on offer now for 25s. per acre. A well known Northern Transvaal rancher bought 21 000 acres near Antelope Mine for an average of 20s. per acre profit to a speculator who had bought it the previous year for 10s. per acre. It was this rancher who remarked that, when once communications improved in this excellent ranching district, no land would remain unsold and some spectacular prices would be paid by genuine ranchers from the United States of America. During the war, there were naturally, many land bargains to be found, especially large tracts of land. For instance, 83 000 acres halfway to the Victoria Falls [were] bought for 1s. 6d. per acre and sold in 1952 for 11s. per acre and resold the following year for 16s. 3d. per acre.⁷⁸

Even unimproved ranch land at the time was also doing very well on the property market. For example, the:

Shabani and Belingwe [districts] attracted many rancher buyers. 44 000 acres of unimproved mountainous country was bought by a Queenstown farmer for 12s. 6d. per acre after it had remained unsold for many years. It is interesting to note that he [the Queenstown buyer] would not part with this land for double the price. Two ranches in Belingwe district have been sold this year [1957], 27 000 acres of unimproved land for 19s. per acre and 39 000 acres fenced at 25s per acre. The prices would appear to be ridiculously low, but the acreage involved must be taken into account. Smaller farms suitable for mixed farming have been changing hands at much higher prices.⁷⁹

As part of its concluding remarks on the land issue, the RPF could not contain its optimism when it noted that:

There is no doubt that the price of ranching land is rising more rapidly than most people would believe. The days of near sub-economic prices for large tracts of land are over; in fact, there is little land reasonably accessible which can be bought for less than 20s. per acre, which is a far cry from 5s. per acre as was the case ten years back.⁸⁰

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ Ibid., 26.

Surprisingly, showing an almost complete disregard of the impact speculation and high land prices would have on the development of the beef industry the property journal further noted:

There is no doubt that despite the ups and downs of the cattle industry in the past, nothing of great import has happened to cause alarm. It is true to say that each crisis has been overcome and the cattle industry has emerged even stronger and surer. The rancher is unspectacular by comparison with his counterpart in tobacco, but one thing is certain, there will still be cattle roaming the ranches of Matabeleland long after tobacco is a forgotten product.⁸¹

The Nuanetsi Ranch, which before the First World War was reputed as one of the largest surveyed ranches in the world, also became a victim of land speculation in the early 1950s. In 1956, no less than 125 198 acres of this huge ranch were sold by the owners, Nuanetsi Ranch Ltd, to seven buyers at a price of 49 813 *pounds sterling* or an average of 7s. 6d. per acre. During these sales, the Merrivale ranch of 37 551 acres in extent, was bought by R. G. Paul for 14 118 *pounds sterling*. Soon after that sale, the same ranch was then sold to P. Dros for 22 000 *pounds sterling* or 11s. 6d. per acre. Another section of Nuanetsi, Sonop, also changed hands to Goronye Ranch Ltd. for 7 735 *pounds sterling*, and later re-sold at 15 095 *pounds sterling* to J. C. Warington. The average acreage involved in this transaction was 20 574 acres, the price being 14s. 6d. per acre. Nuanetsi's 26 380 acre Rutenga Ranch also fetched 18s. 6d. per acre on resale, having originally been bought for 7s. 6d. per acre. Another re-transfer by Nuanetsi Ranch Ltd. was the small 6 910 acre Rinette Ranch which was sold to A. Snyman for 2 742 *pounds sterling*. Less than two years later, the same ranch was re-sold to A. F. Kock for 12 000 *pounds sterling* or an average of nearly 35s. per acre.⁸² In the end, worried about the sale of such uneconomic ranching blocks and obviously, the negative implications of speculation on the beef industry, the government was forced to put in place legislative measures limiting the minimum size of saleable blocks to 15 000 acres.⁸³

Apart from the issue of high land prices, the beef industry's growth during the period under consideration was also hamstrung by the unprofitable nature of beef production

⁸¹ *Ibid.*

⁸² *Ibid.*, No. 5, July 1956; No. 11, January 1957.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, No. 26, April 1958.

in the early 1950s. Unlike government research stations which relied on public grants and thus did not confine their operations to the profit motive, ranchers produced beef for a living and thus needed remunerative prices to increase their production. Although the average minimum guaranteed price had been increased three times between 1948 and 1956⁸⁴, experts in the industry were still of the opinion that current producer prices were pegged 21.5 per cent below the industry's average costs of production. Part of the problem was the government's own cheap beef policy which resulted in producer prices being arbitrarily fixed without taking into consideration production cost estimates in the industry as a whole.⁸⁵ In 1956, Mr Bourdillon, a De Beers ranch official, lodged a complaint about low prices with the Turner Commission, when he noted:

It is quite obvious that unless there is a better return, my company [De Beers] will consider whether it is worthwhile carrying on. We have done a tremendous amount of development in the way of fencing and so on. It has been going on at a rate of 10 000 [*pounds sterling*] a year. The size of the paddock has been cut down making it easier to run cattle on the veldt. The expenses are terrific. Fencing is expensive. Dam building is going on every year.⁸⁶

Also, one of the country's biggest ranching families, the Greenspan Brothers, complained about rising costs of production, when they maintained that:

No new capital has been introduced into the ranching business in this country for the past five years [1950-1955] Everything that we use in our ranching business has gone up more than 25 per cent. [We] would suggest an increase at least of 25 per cent. That will for some time, everything being equal, induce people to start breeding cattle again ...You cannot get new blood into the country if you offer 3 or 4 per cent. You have to do something sensational.⁸⁷

Even the RNFU, which was a signatory to the government's Five Year Guaranteed Price Agreement, voiced its concerns on the industry's unremunerative prices. Charging that the producer price was at least 22 per cent below costs of production, the RNFU maintained that due to low prices "the established rancher [could] just

⁸⁴ Horwood Commission Report, (1963), 44.

⁸⁵ F478/1/2, Oral evidence to the Cattle Marketing Commission, (1956), from C. M. Newman, 31 January 1956, 1.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, Oral evidence from Matabeleland ranchers, evidence specifically from Mr Bourdillon, 8 February 1956, 4.

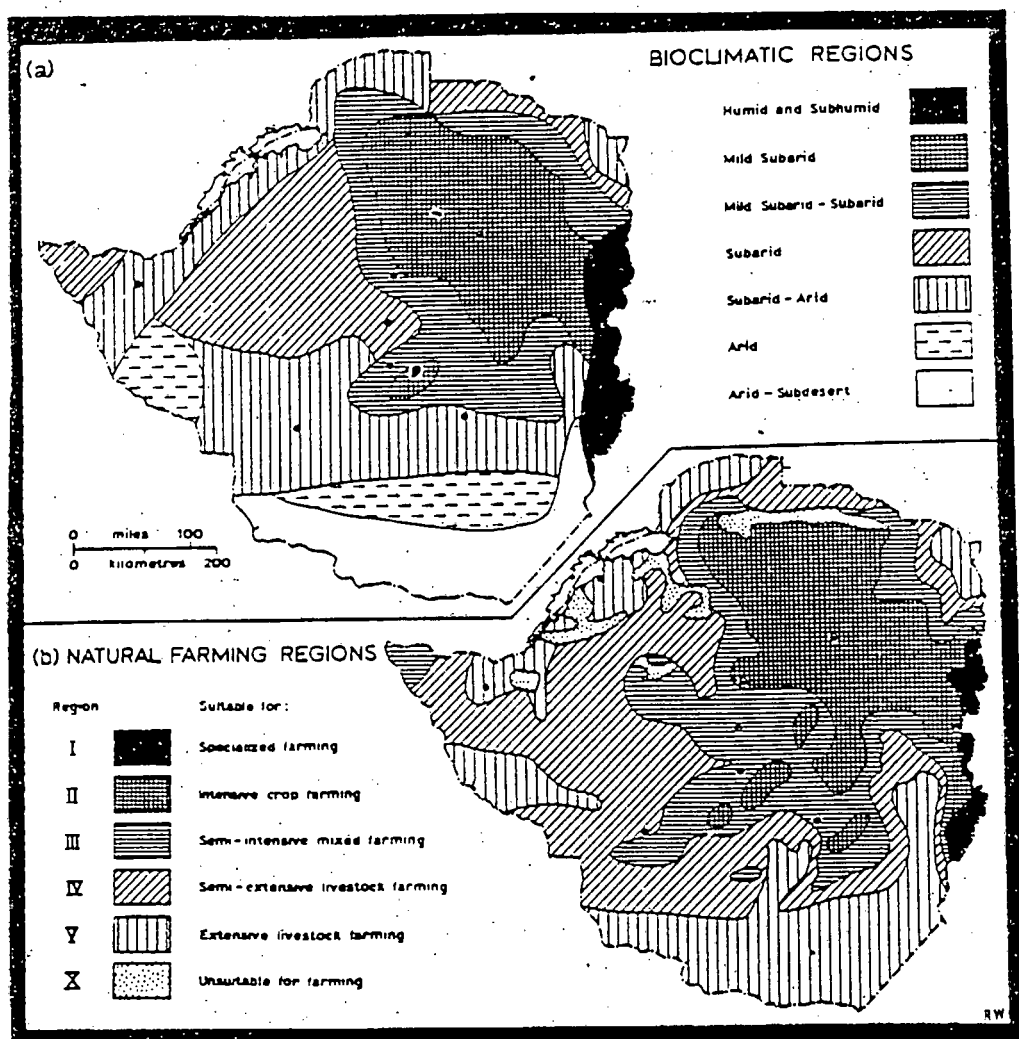
⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, Oral evidence to the Cattle Marketing Commission, (1956), from the Greenspan Brothers, 8 February 1956, 5.

about afford to remain in production,” while for newcomers beef production was not a viable economic proposition.⁸⁸

The lack of remunerative prices not only slowed down breeding programmes in the industry but also led to the inefficient utilisation of the country’s grazing capacity. Though this position varied markedly between regions, in the early 1950s, only about 60 per cent of potential grazing capacity in the country was being utilised efficiently. Although in the drier Natural Regions IV and V, the recommended stocking rate was in the region of between 15 and 40 acres per head, many ranchers simply exceeded this grazing capacity in an attempt to maximise output. (For rainfall patterns see Map 1 below) By trying to maximise profits in this way, most ranches in Matabeleland were faced with the problem of overstocking and ecological deterioration. In contrast to the situation in the south, the higher rainfall areas in the north, which had a recommended stocking rate of 10 to 15 acres per head, were often severely understocked despite the fact that grazing was better and larger herds could be carried on ranches there. In 1954, a Federal government appointed committee drew the government’s attention to the fact that about one third of white-occupied land (both farm and ranch land) in the country was severely under-utilised. In light of this problem, the Committee suggested that “if other means fail to produce the required result, [whether] the question of a land tax with the object of persuading owners of unused land to put it to productive use, or to sell it to someone who will ... [shouldn’t] deserve very serious consideration [by the government].”⁸⁹

⁸⁸ F478/2/2, Written evidence to the Cattle Marketing Commission, (1956) from the RNFU, 12 January 1956, 2-3.

⁸⁹ Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland, Report of the Federal Cattle and Beef Marketing Committee, 1954, Chairman, C. A. Murray, 32. (Hereinafter referred to as the Murray Committee Report)



Map 1: Bio-climatic and Natural Regions of S. Rhodesia.

However, the common denominator of efficient land-use in both the north and south of the country was the price of beef itself: “in the low rainfall areas which depended almost wholly on cattle ranching, the low return induced over-stocking in order to achieve higher productivity per acre in the short period; in the arable areas, the comparative returns to capital from beef and cropping made the former unattractive and it was generally more profitable not to use available grazing areas.”⁹⁰ Thus, the unprofitable nature of beef production made it difficult for any complementarity to develop between the country’s dry southern range lands and the maize and tobacco belt in the northern higher rainfall areas. For example, comparing the country with other major beef producing countries in the world, L. T. Tracey, a local rancher, told the Turner Commission that:

in other beef producing countries with a longer tradition in animal husbandry, the business has been fragmented and a mature slaughter bullock rarely finishes his life in the place where he was born. Breeding stock is mainly kept on cheap land at some distance from the consuming centres. At weaning or at some time thereafter, they are passed to farms more suited to rearing and, where the economy warrants it, they pass on as forward stores to the feeding farms where they are finished.⁹¹

Tracey further painted a sorry picture of the country’s utilisation of land resources when he submitted that:

there are a great many farms which are mainly occupied with the production of tobacco, which at present carry little, if any beef stock. The grazing potential is at present wasted and the fixed interest charges have to be carried by the tobacco returns. It is on farms such as these that a floating herd of steer stock could advantageously be keptTo induce such farmers to utilise their grazing in this way and to undertake the risk and work involved, they will have to be satisfied that the scale of prices for slaughter stock, two to three years after their purchase of stores, will show a reasonable return.⁹²

Because of the unprofitable nature of beef production, the production methods in the industry remained largely based on veldt pasture, which was deficient of minerals crucial to the growth of beef cattle. With the exception of a small core of large ranchers who had the necessary means to use supplementary feeding, the majority of small and under-capitalised ranchers could simply not afford to use protein supplements especially during the long dry season when veldt pasture suffered from a

⁹⁰ Dunlop, *Development of European Agriculture in Rhodesia*, 51.

⁹¹ F478/2/2, Written evidence to the Cattle Marketing Commission, (1956), from L. T. Tracey, undated, 1.

⁹² *Ibid.*, 3.

drastic fall in its protein content. Thus, due to prohibitive costs, supplementary feeding especially in the breeding sector was less widespread in the industry as whole. This is supported by the failure of the industry to achieve average calving rates of more than 50 per cent at any other time during the period under consideration here. On the other hand, the average slaughter age of cattle in the beef industry also remained pegged between four and six years while the average carcass weight averaged a low 480 lb. c.d.w. throughout the early 1950s.⁹³ In turn, low calving rates coupled with the significantly high mortality rates in the industry made it extremely difficult for small ranchers to even out in their operations. As one industry expert pointed out:

It is the calving percentage of any herd which decides the profit or the loss of the enterprise [and] it is because the cows produce so few calves [and lose so many] that so many farmers cannot make a living out of cattle.⁹⁴

What made the situation worse, according to the Murray Committee, was the “very superficial [cattle management knowledge] ... frequently not acted upon” in the industry which resulted in the fact that, “annual per acre production of beef [was] in the vicinity of only 2-3 lb., whereas there [was] no reason why it should not be doubled at little extra cost or effort.”⁹⁵ The Murray Committee maintained that:

unsound breeding policies which, even under good management, [would] not lead to maximum and most economic production the vitally important effect of environment, which include[d] the factors of climate nutrition and management, [were] not appreciated sufficiently, and ... [were] responsible ... for the low production experienced from so many herds in different parts of the Federation as well as from the industry as a whole.⁹⁶

In spite of the fact that throughout the early 1950s the beef industry did not experience the outbreak of any major cattle epidemics reminiscent of those in the early 1930s, high mortality and low calving rates suffered by the cattle industry were nevertheless caused by diseases. Despite the country's historical experience with virulent cattle epidemics, the Department of Veterinary Services was still severely understaffed by the 1950s. For example, in 1954, this Department had a small staff establishment of 21 professional Veterinary Officers and 68 Animal Health Inspectors only and the ratio of Veterinary staff to cattle in the cattle industry as a whole was 1 to 141 000

⁹³ Dunlop, *Development of European Agriculture in Rhodesia*, 51.

⁹⁴ Schalk Viljoen, *Beef Cattle in Rhodesia : A Guide to Increased Calving Rates, Heavier Weaners and Better Veldt Utilisation for Southern Africa*, (Salisbury, 1966), 9.

⁹⁵ *Murray Committee Report*, (1954), 31.

head.⁹⁷ Although during the early 1950s the beef industry was not affected by major epidemics, its production levels were still largely determined by less visible but equally destructive ailments such as contagious abortion, epivaginitis, calf-hood ailments, internal parasites and a variety of nutritional diseases. Less virulent and therefore largely ignored by undercapitalised ranchers, such ailments largely caused the industry's low calving rates and were also major causes of beef production wastage.⁹⁸

From the early 1950s onwards, trypanosomiasis and nagana or sleeping sickness also continued to pose a threat to the cattle industry. Not only did this epizootic disease and others mentioned in the previous paragraph limit the full utilisation of the country's ranching capacity but they also caused mortality rates to rise, and occasionally, forced the evacuation "of cattle from valuable stock-raising areas."⁹⁹ No doubt, the African sector of the beef industry was the most affected by these diseases. For example, by 1954, no veterinary services existed for the African stock-owner, who ironically, produced at least two thirds of the beef consumed in the country.¹⁰⁰

Table 3.10: Number of White-owned and African-owned Cattle in the Federation, 1953-1956 (000 head)

-- Federation -- *-- S. Rhodesia --* *-- N. Rhodesia --* *-- Nyasaland --*

Year	Europ.	Afric.	Europ.	Afric.	Europ.	Afric.	Europ.	Afric.
1953	1 337	2 937	1 197	1 832	129	843	11	262
1954	1 367	2 988	1 227	1 850	130	855	10	283
1955	1 381	3 069	1 344	1 901	125	871	10	297
1956	1 493	3 110	1 444	1 910	139	872	10	308

Source: S. Rhodesia, Ann. Rep. Sec. Fed. Min. Agric. and Lands, 1953-1956.

Throughout the early 1950s, the situation in the white-dominated capitalist sector did not change. In fact, the sector owed much of its growth to the influx of 'grazer cattle' from the African cattle sector and not white production itself.¹⁰¹ For example, between

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ In comparison, South Africa's ratio was 1: 41 000; Northern Rhodesia 1: 70 000; Nyasaland 1: 39 000; Britain 1: 2 700 and Denmark 1: 2 100. For more details on this point, see Murray Committee Report, Summary of Recommendations, 6-7.

⁹⁸ S87/2, Memorandum by the Director of Veterinary Services, "Diseases Affecting Beef Production, 1952-1953.", 1.

⁹⁹ Ibid., 2.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 6; Murray Committee Report, Summary of Recommendations, 6.

¹⁰¹ F478/1/2, Oral Evidence by Matabeleland ranchers who included: Commander Cobbold - rancher; T. Bourdillon - De Beers ranch, Shangani; Major Errington - small rancher; Mrs Rushmore - Stud

1946 and 1953, the capitalist ranching sector owed its growth to the yearly “importation of cattle from African areas of 36 000 [grazer] agreement cattle and 13 000 breeding stock”.¹⁰² Because of lack of profitability, many white ranchers cut down their breeding herds and instead, chose to live on ‘grazer’ cattle leased to them by the CSC.¹⁰³ Indeed, one rancher, who claimed to have been one of “the largest Native cattle speculators” in the country before the Second World War, and whose family was subsequently, “put out of business by the laws introduced by the CSC”, if only to become one of the largest rancher families in Matabeleland owning at least 300 000 acres of land, explained to the Turner Commission how such speculation in ‘grazer’ cattle had affected the growth of the beef industry in the post-war years:

I came back from the war [i.e. Second World War]. We had very few cattle. My brother had made a start again. We speculated in [grazer] cattle largely with the help of the CSC. They handed over 1 500 head of cattle to us in the 1947 drought. We speculated in cattle but it was controlled speculation. Although it was controlled speculation it had adverse effects on the cattle industry. Everybody liked getting grazers from the CSC. It was fine for everybody, but the effect was that people stopped buying breeding stock and they stopped producing cattle and we are feeling the effect of it now. It was a double-edged sword.¹⁰⁴

The reasons why many white ranchers preferred to obtain feeder cattle under the CSC’s grazer scheme rather than breed cattle of their own were purely economic. Under the scheme, cattle bought at low prices from the African sector were leased to white ranchers for fattening and then recalled later when required for slaughter. To secure the lease, a rancher or farmer submitted an application which was rarely turned down, as its success did not depend on the merit of the application itself but on the numbers of ‘grazer cattle available for lease or distribution. The applicant did not need any capital outlay to purchase the cattle, nor did he/she have to bear the burden of losses incurred due to mortality. For their time and trouble white ranchers were:

compensated for the “value added,” when they returned the leased livestock to the Commission. The value added was considerable. The grading and price

breeder; General Shapland - Willoughby’s ; Mr Forbes - Kenilworth Estates (Ltd.), Bulawayo, 8 February 1956, 2.

¹⁰² F478/2/2, Written Evidence from the public,(1955-56) to the Cattle Marketing Commission, 1956, Evidence submitted by the RNFU, 12 January 1956, 1.

¹⁰³ F478/2/2, Written Evidence to the Cattle Marketing Commission , (1956) submitted by Cattle producers in Matabeleland, 31 January 1956, 3

¹⁰⁴ F478/1/2, Oral Evidence to the Cattle Marketing Commission from the Greenspan Brothers, Bulawayo, 8 February 1956,1, 7.

system was such that there was a wide spread between prices paid for lower and higher grades. Europeans [obtained] low-grade, cheap livestock, then returned the fattened animals to the Commission. The animals [were then] reclassified into high-priced grades and the European [ranchers] received a handsome profit.¹⁰⁵

Little wonder, then, that after assessing evidence from white ranchers in 1956, the Turner Commission came to the conclusion that the CSC's 'grazer' scheme had been instrumental "in assisting a number of under capitalised farmers to get [back] on their feet."¹⁰⁶ However, the irony of the situation was that neither the continued leasing of cheap 'grazer' cattle to white ranchers nor the government's revamped cattle policy, managed to ease the beef shortage in the country.

Government Policy and the Beef Supply Crisis, 1953-1956

The failure of the government's post-war production policy to stimulate increased beef production meant that beef remained in short supply on the domestic market as late as 1953 and even after. The establishment of the Central African Federation in 1953 ushered in a period of further rapid economic expansion, thereby exerting tremendous pressure on the local beef industry. The beef situation remained critical until economic expansion eventually began to give way to recession in 1956/57.¹⁰⁷ Between the end of the war in 1945 and formation of Central African Federation in 1953, the number of cattle slaughtered per annum by the CSC had increased by some 34 per cent from 101 351 head in 1945 to 135 748 head.¹⁰⁸ The situation was made worse by the extremely poor rainy season in 1953, which had a further negative impact on the average weight of cattle brought for slaughter. For example, in 1953 alone, the average weight of Compound and Inferior grade animals fell by an estimated 20 per cent, forcing the Government to ration the country's supply of low-grade beef to 75 per cent of normal supplies.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁵ M. Yudelman, Africans On the Land: Economic Problems of African Agricultural Development in Southern, Central and East Africa with special reference to Southern Rhodesia, (London, 1964), 191.

¹⁰⁶ Turner Commission Report, (1956), 11.

¹⁰⁷ F429/41/1091, Agricultural Prices and Market Conditions, (5 February 1955 - 4 January 1956): Agriculture in the Federation, W. E. Arnold, Chief Agricultural Economist to the Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Economics and Markets Branch, to Director of Information, Federal Department of Information, 25 August 1955, 1; B. Miller, Zimbabwe: Agricultural and Economic Review, (Harare, 1982), 15.

¹⁰⁸ CSC, Ann. Rep. Acc., 1953, 6.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., 7.

Although the country exported approximately 3 845 tons of high grade beef in 1954¹¹⁰ the government had to cut supplies of low grade beef to the railways and mines¹¹¹ between 1953 and 1955.¹¹² Local beef supplies were difficult to balance especially during the off-season i.e. November to December, when deliveries of cattle to the CSC's abattoirs declined because of the onset of the rainy season. Because of this, the country tended to experience severe shortages during the annual festive season when the domestic demand for beef was very high. For example, during the 1955 Christmas week alone, supplies of Standard beef on the domestic market had to be cut by between 75 per cent and 100 per cent.¹¹³ (See table 3.11 below for the rationing pattern in 1955).

Table 3.11 : Percentage of Rationing by Grades of Beef, 1955.

Period	Prime Beef (%)	Standard Beef (%)
1 January - 31 May	100	75
1 June - 15 August	Full requirements	100
16 August - 15 Sept.	Full requirements	75
16 Sept. - 25 Sept.	75	50
2 Sept. - 6 November	75	66.1
7 November - 31 December	75	75

Source: CSC, Ann. Rep. and Acc., 1955.

On the whole, the beef situation in the country became critical enough to sway government policy in the beef industry more towards control and intervention, especially in the sphere of marketing in the years 1953-1956.¹¹⁴ Since the CSC's operations were subsidised by profits made on the lower grades of beef, the continued shortage of low-grade beef directly threatened the very foundation on which government policy in the industry was based. Thus, in order to avoid plunging the beef industry into a deeper crisis the government allowed the CSC to sell two grades of beef only, i.e. Choice and Standard, under which all other grades were now classified or bracketed. What this meant was that the three top grades i.e. [Rhodesia's] Best, Imperial and "A" Grade were to be sold as Choice beef. The CSC was also

¹¹⁰ RPE, June 1964, 33.

¹¹¹ CSC, Ann. Rep. Acc., 1953, 13.

¹¹² Ibid., 1954; 1955.

¹¹³ Ibid., 5; S2528/7, Meat Shortage in Southern Rhodesia: Press Statement on Immediate Reductions in Beef Supplies, Federal Information Department, Salisbury, 31 August 1955, 1.

¹¹⁴ The government statistician had estimated that due to increased domestic consumption the country would face a shortage of slaughter of 48 000 head or 17 per cent by 1951; 64 000 head or 20 per cent by 1952 and 80 000 head or 25 per cent by 1953. For details on this, see "Report on the Cattle Cost Investigation", 521; RPE, June 1964.

given the latitude to reclassify [G]ood [A]verage [Q]uality beef as Choice beef to stabilise its finances whenever this became necessary.¹¹⁵

The bracketing of all grades of beef into two main ones enabled the CSC to sell low-grade beef such as GAQ beef at the price of higher grades of beef such as Choice or Standard or vice-versa. But, in doing this, the CSC actually created more problems. For example, once carcasses were classified either as Choice or Standard beef, the meat immediately lost its identity and this caused a lot of confusion. There was nothing to stop the unscrupulous butchery operators from buying GAQ beef and then selling it to the consumer at the guaranteed price for Choice beef. Likewise, the same butchery operators could also buy Compound beef and then retail it as Standard beef.¹¹⁶ In these and other ways, the butcher exploited the consumer of low-grade beef and ensured that government control over prices did not make a dent on his profits.

What made the above situation worse was the lack of specific mechanisms to enforce retail price control in the industry. For example, explaining how butchers evaded price control in the industry, A. E. Cowie, an Agricultural Marketing Officer in the Economics and Markets Branch of the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Lands said:

It boils down to ... to a case of experts dealing with people who know very little about the commodity they are buying. The butcher has a very wide variety of methods of cutting up beef.... [We] have found that it is possible for him to cut up beef in such a way as to pass it off on to an ignorant consuming public under a designation which brings in substantial profit to himself.¹¹⁷

Cowie further pointed out that customers failed to report such illegal practices for fear of losing their accounts with their butchers.¹¹⁸ For example, during its own investigations on the issue the Economics and Marketing Branch had:

come across ... cases where the butchers have suspected that people have complained to the Price Controller and they have simply told them to take their

¹¹⁵ F478/2/2, RNFU, Evidence submitted to Cattle Marketing Commission, 12 January 1956, 3.

¹¹⁶ F478/2/3, Written Evidence from Civil Servants to the Cattle Marketing Commission, January - February 1956: Native Affairs Department, (Highly Confidential) undated Memorandum, 4.

¹¹⁷ S89/1/1, Evidence from Cattle Producers to the Cost of Living Inquiry Commission, 1955: Evidence by A. E. Cowie, Marketing Officer, Economics and Markets Branch, Federal Department of Agriculture, 1955, 5.

¹¹⁸ In this situation, the customer's bargaining position was seriously undermined and often customers had to accept what butcheries sold to them or alternatively do without meat.

accounts elsewhere. We know too that although ...[a] side of beef [can show] approximately two per cent of fillet, an analysis of butchers' invoices at one time showed that the percentage of fillet sold was approximately 25 per cent and it simply meant that the butcher was selling all sorts of meat as fillet. We know that today he is calling all sorts of cuts brisket in order to get a few pence extra per lb.. [of beef sold].¹¹⁹

Cowie's evidence was corroborated by the RNFU in its submission to the Turner Commission in 1956.¹²⁰ The RNFU argued that:

in 1951, a Survey into the Cost of Living showed that the European population lived almost entirely on fillet and rump steak. With a highly indiscriminating consuming public it was all too easy to classify the entire hindquarter as rump or fillet [steak].¹²¹

While ill-considered and inadequate, the bracketing of grades coupled with retail price control measures, no doubt led to the exploitation of consumers, especially the black labourers who consumed low grade beef in the form of meat rations. The two major links in the labourer's meat supply chain, the employer on the one hand, bent on cutting labour costs, and the butcher on the other, keen on evading retail price controls and raking in handsome profits, all connived to deprive black workers of decent beef. The above situation was obviously made worse by the lack of legal mechanisms governing the quality of meat rations in the country. Just as the RNFU indicated to the Turner Commission, there was nothing to stop unscrupulous butchery operators from picking or cutting out the best parts from their usual inventory of low grade beef and then selling the cut-out meat as fillet or for that matter, some other higher grade of beef fetching a higher price. Under the circumstances, the same butchery owners could still turn in a good profit by selling the remainder of the meat as what many employers of black labour commonly referred to as "boy's meat."¹²² For example, in 1956, an official report could not have been further from the truth when it noted that:

where Africans buy their own meat, there is every indication that many demand a reasonably good cut and are prepared to pay for it. But, much of the meat given out as rations, particularly by large employers [who apparently included the state itself], can only be described as a disgrace to those responsible. Not only are the rations based on Compound and Inferior grades only, but even from these the better cuts are sometimes removed and sold

¹¹⁹ S89/1/1, Evidence submitted by A. E. Cowie to the Cost of Living Commission of Inquiry, Marketing Officer, Economics and Markets branch, Federal Department of Agriculture, 1955, 5.

¹²⁰ Turner Commission Report, 1956.

¹²¹ F478/2/2, Written Evidence submitted to Cattle Marketing Commission, (1956) by the RNFU, 12 January 1956, 4.

¹²² This was a term commonly used even by government officials to describe low grade meat which no doubt, constituted the bulk of ration meat issued to African labourers.

separately. The resultant issue consists of anything up to 50 per cent bone plus a good proportion of inedible parts - ears, heads, tail switches, etc. The African consumer in such instances is in a very weak position to complain ... the ... Government should take the lead in this matter: firstly, by raising the minimum standards for its own [beef] contracts; secondly, by enforcing legal standards for all contract beef. Such standards should include provision for a maximum bone content of 25 per cent.¹²³

K. S. Ainslie, a local rancher, also added that:

A further contributory factor is that most of African labour is still provided with rations rather than cash-in-lieu thereof. The employer, whether at the small domestic level or at the large industrial level, very seldom shows any discrimination with regard to the beef included in these rations. It is frequently stated that the purchasing power of the bulk of the [African] community is too low to allow them to purchase adequate meat. In fact, this group does not purchase meat, and it is the unwillingness of the employers to purchase suitable meat which maintains the high demand for the lowest grades.¹²⁴

The other problem with the blurring of grades was the creation of an artificial surplus of high grade beef which, by virtue of its value, could not be sold profitably on the domestic market. For example, between 1954 and 1955, the CSC found itself in the absurd position where, while deliveries of Standard beef were being rationed throughout the country, it was simultaneously forced to export 5 000 tons of Choice beef at a loss.¹²⁵ The irony of the situation was that while the CSC was being forced to export what was clearly poor quality beef (classified as Choice beef), the country itself was facing a severe shortage of low-grade beef on the domestic market.¹²⁶

The problem of artificial surpluses of higher grade beef was complicated by government's own pricing policy which offered incentives for the production loss-making higher-grade beef at the expense of low grade beef which the local market badly needed. As the government's policy arm in the beef industry, the CSC often found itself burdened by such surpluses. The CSC's position was even made more difficult by the fact that government marketing policy required it to buy cattle offered for sales at all organised sales in a residual capacity. This situation allowed private

¹²³ Rep. on Agric. Policy, Fed. of Rhod. and Nyasaland, (1956) Chairman, R. R. Staples, 54-55.

¹²⁴ F259/1, Evidence submitted to Commission of Inquiry on the Cattle Industry, 1956, 2.

¹²⁵ F478/2/3, Written Evidence from Civil Servants to the Cattle Marketing Commission, January - February 1956: Native Affairs Department, (Highly Confidential) undated Memorandum, 4

¹²⁶ F259/1, Evidence submitted to the Commission of Inquiry on the Cattle Industry, 1963 by K. S. Ainslie, 25 May 1963, 2.

abattoirs operators and auctioneers to “pick the eyes out of the market” by buying all low grade cattle, whose meat was in demand on the domestic market, thereby throwing upon the CSC a high proportion of top grades which could not be disposed of save at a loss.¹²⁷ As a result of this, beef from the CSC’s abattoirs could not compete on the domestic market with that coming from private butchery operators. For example, by virtue of the fact that they retained the ‘Fifth Quarter’, composed of hides and offal which commanded ready sales on the domestic market, private butchers were in a better position to undercut Commission butchers who obtained supplies of relatively expensive beef from the CSC’s abattoirs. What made the situation untenable was that while Commission butchers could not avoid rationing their customers, private butchery operators could avoid rationing their customers throughout the year simply by buying slaughter stock during the flush season and then storing their beef ‘on-the-hoof’ until the onset of the off-season, when cattle deliveries declined. Thus, while Commission butchers could only offer frozen meat which was less palatable to the domestic consumer during the off-season, private butchers on the other hand, could offer fresh meat throughout the year.¹²⁸

It was largely because of the increasing surplus ‘burden’ created by loopholes in government industry policy, which forced the CSC to continuously turn the screw of exploitation on the African peasantry in the interests of white ranching. The situation also explains why the CSC became increasingly dependent on government subsidies to cover losses arising from its operations. On its own, the government itself had no choice but to continue dishing out more subsidies because without the CSC the white dominated capitalist sector of the industry would definitely collapse.¹²⁹ But, given the economic importance of the beef industry to the economy in general, there was no way the government could let any contradictions in its policy threaten the future of the industry. So, in May 1954, the government allowed the CSC to introduce the “All or Nothing” marketing strategy when buying cattle and selling beef on the domestic market.¹³⁰ Under this strategy, all cattle producers willing to deal with the CSC either had to deliver all their cattle to its abattoirs or alternatively, deliver nothing at all. The

¹²⁷ Murray Committee Report, 46.

¹²⁸ Ibid., 7.

¹²⁹ CSC, Ann. Rep. and Acc., 1954, 2.

¹³⁰ Ibid., 2.

same conditions were applied to butchers retailers wishing to obtain supplies from the CSC. They too, had to undertake to purchase all their supplies from Commission's abattoirs or again, none at all. By introducing these stringent measures, the government wanted to create conditions in which the CSC could reduce its losses by enabling it acquire a fair proportion of the lower and middle grades of cattle which commanded a ready market inside the country.¹³¹

Predictably, the "All or Nothing policy" turned out to be the keg which ignited a whole array of other problems in the industry. For example, the new measures drew heavy criticism from white ranchers, butchers and auctioneers alike. Many ranchers felt that the "All or Nothing" policy gave the CSC a monopoly and they were particularly worried about the generally low prices which it paid for grass fed cattle. Thus, much to the discomfort of the government, the real victim in this conflict of interest was the relationship between white ranchers and the CSC itself. At the time, relations between the CSC and producers was severely strained over the price issue that some ranchers started calling for the scrapping of the CSC altogether and the establishment of an open and more competitive market offering higher prices in its place.¹³² However, the RNFU was quick to warn its members against the dangers of again exposing the industry to the vagaries of an uncontrolled market which, it said would eventually be taken over by private monopolies. In 1956, the RNFU Cattle Committee, led by a number of prominent low-veldt ranchers, who included the owner of Ruware ranch, one the largest ranches in the area, Ian de la Rue, noted that the removal of the CSC would be tantamount to:

handing us over to the very worst form of monopoly, people who are going to corner the market for their own benefit, not to the benefit of the producer but to themselves. We have had it before. We ... got a Cold Storage [Imperial Cold Storage Company] and unfortunately, it was private enterprise which did not suit the country one little bit, and the same men that were in charge and held that monopoly and held us where they wanted us; are the same men who will operate today and we do not trust them one little bit.¹³³

Even so, a leading private cattle auction company, Gilchrist Private Ltd., made a brutal attack on the CSC's operations when it noted that:

¹³¹ Murray Committee Report, 7.

¹³² S2528/13, Federal Cattle and Beef Marketing: General, Confidential Evidence submitted to the Commission of Inquiry into Cattle and Beef Marketing, 1956, (undated), 2.

Restrictive regulations such as the entire ... Permits system [limiting the purchase of cattle by private individuals] and the 'All or Nothing' are measures aimed largely at discouraging cattle producers from selling any slaughter stock at [private] auction [sales]. Where they succeed in dissuading or preventing cattle-owners from availing themselves of the open market, they provide the government with an easy means of keeping down the price of cattle.... Many cattlemen still mistakenly believe that the CSC and [it] alone, pulled them out and saved them from the bad old depression days and it has been their safeguard ever since. It is however, wrong to say it saved the cattle industry. The cattle industry was saved and should be flourishing today because of the sudden enormous and ever increasing demand in our local meat consumption bracketed by with the ever increasing external demand and a general rise in meat prices throughout the world. For a number of years [the CSC] has contributed nothing towards obtaining higher prices but has been the effective means of preventing any major rise in cattle prices.¹³⁴

T. E. Nelson, a rancher from Norton, a small town to the south-west of Salisbury, also angrily blasted the government's policy towards the beef industry. Blaming the government's policy for all his misfortunes Nelson noted that:

After 12 years as a regular officer in the Royal Air Force and two years as a candidate for the British Parliament, I came to Rhodesia and started farming as a beef producer. I may say at once that my efforts for the past seven and a half years would have been very much better spent financially had I put all my capital into Southern Rhodesia's four and a half per cent stock [shares] and taken life quietly.... It is obvious why there is a shortage of meat [in the country]. The large risks run in breeding cattle deserve far more attention in the price structure. Whereas everyone else in the Federation, with very few exceptions has been allowed to trade on the basis of supply and demand, the cattle industry has been controlled to such an extent that it is now almost suffocated. As a producer, I am sick and tired of the continual cry that Southern Rhodesia has the cheapest meat in the world ... the policy of the ... government has been, in my opinion very short-sighted and parochial.¹³⁵

In response, the CSC defended government policy by maintaining that:

Notwithstanding any possible practical defects in a producer price structure not directly related to consumer demand, it is imperative for the future development of the cattle industry of the country to pay to the producer prices which contain an adequate incentive for the production of the better grades of beef in order to ensure that ... there will be sufficient supplies of beef to meet

¹³³ F478/1/2, Oral Evidence to Cattle Marketing Commission, RNFU Cattle Committee, led by Messrs L. W. Mitchell, P. P. Boenders, A. C. Black, T. E. Bourdillon and Ian de la Rue, 11 February 1956, 3.

¹³⁴ F478/2/2, Written Evidence to the Cattle Marketing Commission, 1956, submitted by Gilchrist (Pvt) Ltd., Amalgamated Auctioneers : Cattle Circular, October 1955, 1-2.

¹³⁵ F478/2/2, Written Evidence submitted to the Cattle Marketing Commission, 1956 by T. E. Nelson (undated), 1-2.

the increasing demand. It is axiomatic that in order to produce more beef the industry must be given the necessary incentives so to do.¹³⁶

The main problem was that the government had adopted the beef industry's policy for political reasons and not for its economic sense. The policy had been tailor-made to benefit white ranchers, for whom the government poured resources to produce expensive export grade beef. However, the irony was that from the early to the mid 1950s, the government's policy was beginning to defeat its own objectives and was actually becoming a financial liability to the CSC. The main contradiction in the policy was that while only an estimated one fifth of all beef produced, mostly high quality, was consumed by the tiny but relatively highly paid white community and the remaining four fifths by lowly paid majority Africans, the pricing policy still encouraged the production of export grades which practically had no domestic market. The interesting thing was that the policy discouraged the production of low grade beef demanded by the African market and major employers of African labour such as the mines and the government itself.¹³⁷ Although one has to admit that the future of the industry lay in the production of quality beef, there was no blinking to the fact that government policy was largely responsible for the shortage of beef in the country and the heavy losses suffered by the CSC.¹³⁸

The problems spawned by the government's pricing policy were not just restricted to the capitalist ranching sector alone. Under the Native Cattle Marketing Act, No. 23 of 1947, Africans were required by law to sell their cattle at government organised weight and grade sales only. This policy, which obviously placed them at the mercy of the CSC, virtually remained unchanged in the period under consideration in this Chapter. The regulations governing the marketing of African owned cattle were deliberately designed to fit in with the government's price stabilisation policy in the whole industry, the ultimate objective of which was to ensure the prosperity of white

¹³⁶ S2528/13, Federal Cattle and Beef Marketing: General: CSC's Evidence to Cattle Marketing Commission, 1963, (Confidential), 5.

¹³⁷ Turner Commission Report, (1956), 4; F478/1/2, C. A. Newman, Oral Evidence to the Cattle Marketing Commission, (1956), 31 January 1951, 4.

¹³⁸ Murray Committee Report, 14; S4842, [A]gricultural [M]arketing [C]ouncil, CSC, Ann. Rep. and Acc., 1953-1955, A. G. Cowling, Secretary to the AMC to Secretary, Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Lands, "Report on the CSC's Ann. Rep. and Acc., 1953, 4 October 1954".

ranchers.¹³⁹ However, from the early 1950s onwards, this arrangement came under threat as Africans also became more openly resentful of the policy, which they correctly associated with destocking and thus, stopped selling cattle to the CSC, altogether.¹⁴⁰ The major source of concern for the authorities was that African resentment of the policy of destocking directly threatened the country's beef cattle inventory which, as a matter of tradition, had come to depend largely on the uninterrupted flow of cheap grass fed cattle either for lease to white ranchers or for slaughter at the CSC's abattoirs.¹⁴¹

Because of the increase in African resentment toward the marketing policy, the [N]ative [A]ffairs [D]epartment, on whose hands the problem of destocking and marketing of African-owned cattle fell, called for the removal of all controls governing the marketing of African owned cattle. In particular, the NAD called for the deregulation of African cattle marketing and the introduction of auctions sales in the Reserves. "Price determination by the present means", argued the NAD in 1956, "has become the battle ground of sectional and political interests and it provides fertile ground for the seeds of racial economic conflict."¹⁴² In evidence submitted to the Turner Commission of 1956, A. Pendered, a senior official with the NAD, noted that:

The CSC has given sterling service in this regard over the past ten years and the NAD is the first to pay tribute to this. But it must equally be borne in mind that these same [African-owned] cattle are the indispensable basis of the CSC's business in the meat trade; [they] provide a ready reserve for slaughter stock when the European cannot or will not deliver; and by their large numbers and relatively low prices have, so far made it possible to pay to the producers [i.e. white ranchers] of higher grades higher prices than the overall prices realised by the Commission for its meat, whilst the 'Selected Stock' are the

¹³⁹ F478/2/1, Written Evidence from the Native Affairs Department, 1955-1956: A. Pendered, Under Secretary, Native Economic Development and Marketing, Native Affairs Department, Confidential: Cattle Marketing Notes for the Minister's Proposal in Relation to the Federal cattle Report and the Cost of Living Commission Report on Cattle and Beef Prices, 31 March 1955, 3.

¹⁴⁰ A major source of this political resentment was the [N]ative [L]and [H]usbandry [A]ct of 1951 which was being implemented in areas where earlier Government efforts to de-stock had not been successful. In fact, since its introduction, the NLHA increasingly became a source of strength to an emergent rural African nationalism. The NLHA was, in the opinion of George Nyandoro, a leading nationalist, "the best recruiter [the African National] Congress ever had.", For a full discussion on this, see I. R. Phimister, "Rethinking the Reserves: Rhodesia's Land Husbandry Act Reviewed", *Journal of S. Afric. Studies*, Vol. 19, No. 2, (1993), 228.

¹⁴¹ F478/2/2, Written Evidence to the Cattle Marketing Commission, 1956, Evidence from the RNFU, 12 January 1956, 2.

¹⁴² F478/2/1, Written Evidence from the NAD, 1955-1956, Reasons for NAD Proposals for more freedom in Cattle Marketing, 16 January 1956, 1.

equally indispensable foundation of what is too well recognised by the whole European farming community as a highly lucrative business of grazer fattening. This is only too clearly evidenced by the fact that in 1954, there were 1115 applications from European farmers for 150 000 [head of grazer cattle] whereas the number available for distribution was only 30 000 head.¹⁴³

Pendered further maintained that African owned cattle were crucial to the CSC's business, as they enabled it to "even out supplies and to fill in any unforeseen shortfalls" in its abattoir in-flow patterns, especially during the off season. For example, when the capitalist sector failed to deliver sufficiently large numbers of cattle during the festive season in December 1954, the CSC had to "call in 2 000 head of [African owned] cattle ... to stem the rot in December bookings."¹⁴⁴ Pendered again informed the Turner Commission that:

Differential legislation is always regarded with disfavour by those Africans sufficiently sophisticated to be aware of it and when it is closely restrictive as well, it is always a potential cause of trouble. Criticism against the different method of selling from that of the European is a stock complaint at Council meetings and other gatherings of Africans and a ready stick for agitators to beat the administration with and these restrictions become increasingly hard to justify. The coming of Federation and the comparison of the various controls in the three constituent territories of the Federation by the professional African politicians has accentuated this.¹⁴⁵

Not surprisingly, the [I]nstitute of [A]uctioneers and [E]state [A]gents, whose members were apparently also finding it difficult to secure sufficiently large numbers of cheaper cattle from African Reserves because of onerous permit requirements, shared Pendered's sentiments on the issue of African cattle marketing. For example, representing the IAEA, J. Gilchrist, a leading auctioneer himself, denounced the Native Cattle Marketing Act of 1947 as "the most glaring piece of racially discriminatory legislation." Gilchrist maintained that "a great deal of the profit margin made available through this complete monopolistic hold upon the Native cattle went in subsidising the European producer."¹⁴⁶

¹⁴³ F478/2/1, Written Evidence to the Cattle Marketing Commission, A. Pendered, Under Secretary and Native Economic Development and Marketing Officer, Native Affairs Department, 31 March 1955, 3.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 5.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁶ F478/1/2, Oral Evidence to Cattle Marketing Commission, (1956), by J. Gilchrist on behalf of the Institute of Auctioneers and Estate Agents, February 1955, 1.

It is important to highlight that, in its call for the de-regulation of African cattle marketing, the NAD's position was determined not by economic altruism but by the fact that it found itself burdened with political and economic problem capable of jeopardising the country's fragile beef industry. Part of the NAD's worries arose from the fact that African peasants were dodging the payment of the 17 per cent [N]ative [D]evelopment [F]und levy by selling cattle on the black market where prices were relatively higher than at government organised.¹⁴⁷ The problem was that if the black market was not eliminated two things would happen: firstly, the implementation of the [N]ative [L]and [H]usbandry [A]ct of 1951, which depended on the NDF would be jeopardised, and secondly, by attracting cheaper cattle away from government's CSC, the black market would inevitably subvert the very basis on which the industry's pricing policy was hinged upon thereby weakening the government's control on a very crucial source of cheap beef. In the end, faced by the pressure of resistance from both Africans, private auctioneers and white ranchers themselves, the government was left with no choice but to deregulate the marketing of cattle in the industry as a whole.

Although the need for deregulation in general had become apparent with the formation of the Central African Federation in 1953, matters then had been complicated by the critical shortage of beef in all three member territories of S. Rhodesia, N. Rhodesia and Nyasaland. In fact, the shortage of beef in the three territories had rendered the concept of Federal integration of the beef industry nonsensical. The matter was left to rest until the mid 1950s when serious problems mentioned earlier made de-regulation and integration an inevitable option and not a choice. Nevertheless, the complexity of the problems surrounding both issues can perhaps be measured by the number of occasions in which the newly formed Federal government found it necessary to appoint public commissions and committees of inquiry to examine and report on the problems attendant on the Federal beef industry in the three short years between 1953 and 1956. During those three years alone, two major commissions and one committee of inquiry were appointed to investigate the problems facing the Federal beef

¹⁴⁷ The NDF levy was deducted from every head of cattle sold at organised sales and to avoid paying this levy an increasing number of African cattle-owners simply stopped selling their cattle at government organised sales. They sold their cattle on the black market where no levies were charged.

industry.¹⁴⁸ It was however, only after a third commission, i.e. the Turner Commission of Inquiry, had submitted its findings to the Federal government in 1956, that visible action towards a freer and integrated Federal cattle marketing policy slowly began to take place.¹⁴⁹

The Turner Commission called for the removal of controls over all cattle purchases, slaughterings, and retail prices. Furthermore, the Turner Commission called for the replacement of government organised weight and grade sales, as the method of sale in the marketing of African owned cattle, with public auction sales. As a solution to the now familiar profitability crisis in the beef industry, The Turner Commission also called for an increase in the producer price of 18.6 percent, of which 15 percent would go towards meeting the producer's increased costs of production.¹⁵⁰ Although the Turner Commission also called for replacement of the government guaranteed price schedule with a "more realistic schedule of prices ... consistent with market realities", the government chose to maintain its old system of scheduling prices.¹⁵¹ Perhaps the most far-reaching recommendation the Turner Commission made was that all cattle and beef supplies in the three territories be regarded as available for the Federation as a whole and also that a Federal Meat Marketing Committee be set up to allocate cattle supplies wherever necessary.¹⁵²

In line with these recommendations, auction sales were introduced in June 1956, causing an immediate improvement in African producer prices.¹⁵³ For example, by

¹⁴⁸ Murray Committee Report; Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Cost of Living on Cattle and Beef Prices, (1955), Chairman, C. R. Newman; Turner Commission Report.

¹⁴⁹ Turner Commission Report.

¹⁵⁰ CSC, Ann. Rep. and Acc., 1956, 5-6; R. M. W. Johnson, African Agricultural Development in Southern Rhodesia, 1945-1960 (Stanford, 1964), 206.

¹⁵¹ Turner Commission Report, Chapter 17, paragraph, 2.

¹⁵² Ibid., 25.

¹⁵³ The CSC reported in 1956 saying: "the success of [auctions] ... held in June was so striking that the Department was left with no alternative to instituting auction sales wherever it was possible to do so. After that the old-type sales were cancelled and August saw the launching of auction sales in all areas except those which could not be opened for veterinary reasons. In the sales which took place between 1 August and 31 December 1956, the Commission bought 48 percent of the slaughter stock and 43 per cent of the non-slaughter stock auctioned. In the pre-auction days ... the Commission bought about 75 per cent of the slaughter stock sold by Africans and 100 percent of the non-slaughter stock. Since it was from the latter category of stock that grazers were issued at easily determined prices, it was inevitable that the Commission's grazer scheme would have to be reduced very considerably, for not only were supplies diminished but prices at auction sales were unpredictable." For more details on this point, see CSC, Ann. Rep. and Acc., 1956, 6.

the end of 1956, African cattle producers were receiving an average of 2. 19s. 3d. more per beast than they would have received under the old weight-and-grade system.¹⁵⁴ A month later, the Federal government called the first meeting of the Federal Cattle and Beef Advisory Committee in July 1956. The Advisory Committee, whose members were drawn from producer, consumer and government interests, was to act as sole advisor to the Federal Minister of Agriculture with a view to promoting the smooth marketing of cattle and beef within the Federation. The Committee was also designed to keep a watching brief on the marketing of cattle and beef, advise the Federal government and the Federal Minister of Agriculture and Lands on the movement of cattle or beef between territories and the control of imports and exports of cattle or beef, respectively.¹⁵⁵

However, while deregulation went smoothly on the domestic front, the process of Federal integration faced various obstacles stemming from the continued shortage of beef in the three territories of S. Rhodesia, N. Rhodesia and Nyasaland. Although before the Second World War, S. Rhodesia produced beef surpluses which had sustained inter territorial trade between N. Rhodesia and itself, lack of internal self-sufficiency in beef in the post-war years had led to the dwindling of such exports. It was only after the S. Rhodesian beef industry began to produce artificial surpluses of so-called export-grade beef that only limited beef exports to both N. Rhodesia and Nyasaland were resumed from 1953 onwards.¹⁵⁶

Northern Rhodesia itself had long been a deficit area, drawing supplies of live cattle and slaughtered beef from the Bechuanaland Protectorate and S. Rhodesia, respectively. In 1956, its imports constituted almost half of its domestic beef requirements. Beef was also a relatively scarce commodity in Nyasaland, where annual slaughterings of up to 30 000 head were needed to satisfy domestic demand. By the time the Federation was established in 1953, its total annual slaughterings could supply only a fraction of the needs of its estimated two and a half million

¹⁵⁴ Johnson, African Agricultural Development, 206.

¹⁵⁵ S. Rhodesia, Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Beef Cattle Industry of Southern and Northern Rhodesia (1963), Chairman, O. P. F. Horwood, 19. (Hereinafter referred to as the Horwood Commission Report).

¹⁵⁶ CSC, Ann. Rep. Acc., 1955, 13.

people. Because of lack of internal self-sufficiency in beef, people in Nyasaland supplemented their protein requirements by consuming fish.¹⁵⁷ Because of the shortage of beef in the Federation as whole, some 4 000 tons of fresh, frozen and chilled meat, mostly beef were imported in 1956. In addition to this, some 4 000 head of slaughter cattle had to be imported from Bechuanaland to supplement domestic supplies.¹⁵⁸

Given the above scenario, it came as no surprise that the process of Federal integration should be bedevilled by a clash of interests and fear of competition over scarce beef resources between the various organisations already involved in the Federation's meat business. For example, mutual hostility soon emerged between the CSC and private butchery operators in N. Rhodesia, making it extremely difficult for the Federal Cattle and Beef Advisory Committee to carry out its task of allocating fairly slaughter cattle resources between the territories. Neither the private butchers in N. Rhodesia nor the CSC, wanted to surrender their monopoly privileges in the interests of the Federal integration. In particular, the CSC, which enjoyed the sole import and export rights for frozen and chilled beef in S. Rhodesia, resisted any attempts by N. Rhodesian butchers to buy cattle inside the country by simply muscling out unwelcome competition on the domestic market.¹⁵⁹ On the other hand, it so happened that N. Rhodesian butchers, who traditionally had also enjoyed monopoly import and export rights within N. Rhodesia, reciprocated by demanding sole access to supplies offering from their domestic sources.¹⁶⁰ The result was that a commercial battle for scarce beef supplies developed between the N. Rhodesian butchers and the CSC much to the detriment of smooth Federal integration.¹⁶¹

The main problem was that both the CSC and the N. Rhodesian butcheries were wary that integration would erode their monopoly-hold on scarce beef supplies thereby causing them to lose capital and business. Thus, friction between these organisations only served to undermine the ability of the Federal Cattle and Beef Advisory

¹⁵⁷ Fish was by far a much cheaper source of protein than beef. For more details on this point, see Stapples Report on Agricultural Policy, 52.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid.

¹⁵⁹ Horwood Commission Report, 19

¹⁶⁰ Ibid.

Committee to function effectively. Left without any other option, the Advisory Committee “put forward proposals for its reconstitution with executive powers to become the nucleus of a [F]ederal [M]eat [M]arketing [C]ontrol [B]oard.”¹⁶² But, claiming the right to continue with their operations unhindered, both the CSC and the N. Rhodesian butchers, successfully blocked the establishment of the FMMB so much that by the end of 1956, the issues at hand still remained unresolved and the various marketing systems in the Federal beef industry continued to operate independently of each other.

Conclusion

This chapter has tried to show how S. Rhodesia’s post-war economic boom, which was largely caused by Britain’s post war dollar crisis, heavy influx of British capital from South Africa and the influx of European immigrants and ex-servicemen into the country, generated even heavier domestic demand for beef than that which the country experienced during the Second World War. In fact, so heavy was domestic demand that the beef industry’s production capacity was stretched to the limit and the country internal beef needs had to be satisfied at the expense of exports and the slaughter of younger stock. The beef industry’s inability to satisfy domestic demand was largely a result of the capitalist ranching sector’s failure to improve production. In order to ensure that its booming manufacturing, tobacco and base mineral industries were not jeopardised by a shortage of cheap meat rations for their labour force, the government intensified its assault on the African peasantry by invoking both the 1942 Land Apportionment Act and the Native Land Husbandry Act of 1952. During the implementation of these two Acts, not only were thousands of much-needed cheap cattle squeezed out of the Reserves, but more land for post-war white settlement was made also available through mass evictions of Africans from both white-owned and unalienated Crown Land.

However, since by the end of 1948, all the so-called ‘excess’ cattle in African Reserves had been de-stocked, the government was forced to shift its emphasis towards boosting white capitalist agriculture in general and beef production, in

¹⁶¹ Ibid.

¹⁶² Ibid., 20.

particular. To achieve this longer-term objective, the Agricultural Department was completely revamped to make it more efficient, while more government money was voted for the importation of pedigree stock, pasture and animal research programmes. At the same time, new ranching areas such the Lomagundi district were opened up for the settlement of ex-servicemen willing to start a career as ranchers. Furthermore, in order to restore stability in the beef industry, the government signed the first of a series of five year guaranteed price agreements with the RNFU in 1950, while the second agreement between the two parties was also signed in 1955.

But, for all they were worth, the government's measures failed to achieve the desired results mainly because of the unprofitable nature of beef production vis-à-vis tobacco production, prohibitive post war land prices and lack of capital on the part of most white capitalist ranchers. The failure of these efforts to boost capitalist beef production caused the country's post war beef crisis to worsen even further, thereby forcing the government to reintroduce beef control measures through which it hoped to reconcile the ever widening gap between production and domestic consumption. But, again such arbitrary control measures coupled with the contradictory nature of the government's own pricing policies, further dampened confidence in the industry and defeated the objective of achieving self-sufficiency in beef. The main problem was that the government's pricing policy was inconsistent with the demands of the local market. It encouraged the production of higher quality beef which could only be sold on the local market at a loss to the CSC. The above situation forced the CSC to increasingly rely heavily on government subsidies for its operations. In the end, however, the government finally realised its mistakes and was forced to loosen its arbitrary control measures and reintroduce competition as a way of restoring confidence in the beef industry in general. There is no doubt, however, that S. Rhodesia's failure to achieve self-sufficiency in beef production especially in the first ten years after the Second World War, was one of the factors which delayed the creation of an integrated Federal beef industry in the first half of the 1950s.

Chapter Four

Federal Policy and the S. Rhodesian Beef Industry, 1956/7-1964

Federal Industry Policy, 1957-1960

From 1957 onwards, and also owing to the decontrol measures introduced by the government, the CSC was compelled to accept deliveries of cattle from white ranchers, irrespective of their other disposals and to purchase African cattle at public auction sales at minimum reserve prices based on the government's prescribed guaranteed price schedule. Although these changes loosened the CSC's grip on cattle marketing in the country and allowed some measure of competition on the domestic cattle markets, its continued control over service slaughtering for independent butchers at its own abattoirs and other measures such as conditional selling still gave it a *de facto* monopoly over the local beef trade in S. Rhodesia.¹

Despite its many weaknesses, the CSC's role in the S. Rhodesian beef industry had long been the subject of envy of N. Rhodesian and Nyasaland cattle producers who wanted a similar body to market their cattle. For these producers, many of whom had been at the mercy of the Copperbelt based private monopolies for years, the extension of the CSC's operations held the promise of long-term economic stability associated with the lucrative grazer schemes and the prospect of higher guaranteed prices. However, much to their anger, all Federal government efforts to integrate the territorial industries and thus pave the way for the CSC's take-over of the meat business in the two northern territories, had so far been stiffly resisted by private meat monopolies especially those operating on the Copperbelt.

It was only after the establishment of the [C]olonial [D]evelopment [C]orporation had begun to alter the pattern of the meat trade between the Bechuanaland Protectorate and N. Rhodesia, that the position of the N. Rhodesian monopoly was softened and the scales decisively tipped in favour of the S. Rhodesian CSC. Once the CDC had

erected its abattoir at Lobatsi in 1956, all live cattle exports from Bechuanaland to N. Rhodesia were stopped. This situation forced the N. Rhodesian butchers to replace live cattle imports with imports of beef. It was this change in the pattern of the meat trade between the two territories, coupled with the demands by Copperbelt mine labourers for the replacement of meat rations with cash-in-lieu, which eventually weakened the position of the N. Rhodesian butchers.

The final breakthrough, however, came in 1958, when the CSC was given monopoly control over the importation of beef from the Bechuanaland Protectorate, and also the permission to supply meat to smaller butcheries on the Copperbelt. Early in 1959, the major N. Rhodesian butcheries together with the CSC “concluded contracts for the latter to supply all N. Rhodesia’s import requirements of beef.”² In the same year, one of N. Rhodesia’s two principal butcheries, Werner and Company Ltd. of Livingstone, finally threw in the towel when it suggested that the CSC “assume their function ... of buying cattle and distributing beef at wholesale level.”³ This proposal meant that the CSC would buy Werners’ Livingstone abattoir and all its beef distribution and storage plants. In turn, this development pulled the rug from under the group, Copperfields Cold Storage Commission, as well as from small-scale producer-butcher retailers, paving the way for the CSC to begin operations in N. Rhodesia. However, while the CSC began operations at Blantyre-Limbe in Nyasaland towards the end of 1959, operations in N. Rhodesia only started on 1 January 1960.⁴ After operating from its business from its Bulawayo and Fort Victoria plants for some time, soaring costs coupled with the difficulty in maintaining continuity of supplies at such great distances, made sure that the CSC wasted no time in commencing operations on N. Rhodesian soil itself. The new plants helped the CSC to integrate its meat works under uniform management thereby cutting operational costs significantly. More importantly, the plants provided the CSC with new facilities from which beef exports to the Congo could be carried out without serious logistical problems.⁵ Under an Act

¹ Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland, Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Beef Cattle Industry of Southern Rhodesia and Northern Rhodesia, (1963), Chairman - O. P. F. Horwood - hereinafter referred to as Horwood Commission Report)

² Ibid., 20.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ann. Rep. Sec. Fed. Min. Agric., 1960, 7.

⁵ Horwood Commission Report, 20.

of the Federal Parliament passed in January 1960, the CSC finally became a Federal Commission.⁶ The extension of the CSC's operations into N. Rhodesia and Nyasaland meant that S. Rhodesia's beef industry policy automatically became the Federal industry policy.

Growth and Change in the Beef Industry, 1957-1964

While one cannot underestimate the significance of decontrol measures of the mid 1950s in restoring confidence in the beef industry, it is clear that the capitalist sector of the beef industry's development during this period was shaped more by the economic down-turn in S. Rhodesia in the late 1950s and early 1960s. At that time, not only was the country's economy sliding into a recession in the late 1950s⁷, but the future of the capitalist agricultural sector itself, increasingly became uncertain because of over-production and limited markets for the tobacco industry.⁸ S. Rhodesia's post-war agricultural prosperity had largely been anchored on the performance of the 'leaf of gold', and because of this many white capitalist farmers had come to rely heavily on tobacco production for their economic survival. The extent to which white farming community had been mesmerised by tobacco was reflected by the fact that even those farmers operating in the marginal tobacco areas such as the Midlands, which apparently were more suited to cattle ranching, had been tempted to defy the law of comparative advantage by trying their hand at tobacco production.

⁶ Federal Government Act No. 9, 1960: This new Act did not change the provisions of the old CSC Act of 1937 and neither did it change provisions put in place by subsequent amendments to the original Act. In fact, this new Act merely gave the CSC legislative or statutory power to extend its operations into N. Rhodesia as well as into Nyasaland.

⁷ After experiencing a period of rapid growth in the first ten years after the war i.e 1946-1956, the S. Rhodesian economy ran out of steam and began to slide into recession as post war migration slowed down to a trickle. By 1960, dividends and interest payments were beginning to exceed the receipts of capital, while "by 1964, payments abroad had reached \$51.8 million, higher than capital inflows in all but six years since the war, and amounting about 7 per cent of GDP." For more details on this point, see C. Stoneman, *Zimbabwe's Inheritance*, (London, 1981), 120; In connection with the same point, Arrighi also argues that "The stabilization of the European population since 1960... and especially the low income elasticity of demand for food, has been seriously limiting expansion in [the processing of local farm production]. African food consumption, on the other hand, 'is dominated by the cheapest foodstuffs: mealie meal, low quality meat, dried and fresh fish, bread and sugar, account for roughly 80 per cent of the food outlays of African families.' Hence, for this sector too, the growth of the purchasing power of the Africans and their rapid proletarianization, especially urbanization, became a condition for expansion", Arrighi and Saul, *Essays on the Political Economy of Africa*, 354; Shutz, "European Population Patterns and Cultural Persistence", 20; W. J. Barber, *The Economy of British Central Africa*, (London, 1960), 171.

⁸ Dunlop, *Development of European Agriculture in Rhodesia*, 24.

Richard Hodder-Williams has argued that “problems beset the agricultural community from the end of the 1950s, and only the most efficient and most capitalised farmers could cope with altered markets, increases in fertiliser and fuel prices, and erratic weather.”⁹ Thus, prosperity in the capitalist agricultural sector began to fade “as profits were curtailed and the burden of indebtedness increased.”¹⁰ The economic problems facing the capitalist agricultural sector from the late 1950s onwards, were mainly reflected by fluctuating farm incomes and stagnating agricultural commodity prices. (See table 4.1 and 4.2 below).

Table 4.1 : Average Real Income Per Active White Capitalist Farmer, 1954-1964

Year	Income (Pound strlg.)	Year	Income (Pound strlg.)
1954	1 200	1960	1 600
1955	1 100	1961	2 200
1956	1 400	1962	2 000
1957	1 300	1963	1 850
1958	1 150	1964	1 800
1959	1 400	1965	-

Source: RPF, No. 26, August 1966, 6.

Table 4.2 : Producer Prices in the Capitalist Agricultural Sector, 1960/61-1964/65

Year	Tobacco (d. / lb.)	Maize (s. / bag)	Cotton (d. / lb.)	Dairy (d. / gal.)	Pigs (s. / 100 lb.)	Beef (s. / 100 lb.)
1960/61	34.16	36.00	9.50	36.07	207.25	121.18
1961/62	33.82	31.50	8.00	35.68	199.53	120.71
1962/63	34.96	31.42	8.50	34.62	187.14	117.53
1963/64	41.62	39.85	8.50	34.42	200.00	116.66
1964/65	25.94	38.00	8.00	34.49	200.00	123.00

Source: Figures taken from J. A. Mackenzie, “Commercial farmers in the Governmental System of Colonial Zimbabwe, 1963-1980”, (University of Zimbabwe, unpubl. D.Phil. thesis, 1989), Appendix Two, Table A, 455.

It was the bursting of the post war tobacco bubble and the urgent need to improve economic returns, which in the end forced the country’s tobacco ‘barons’ to diversify and move towards mixed agricultural production. Rather than specialise in arable production alone, an increasing number of white capitalist farmers in the country’s northern maize and tobacco belt began to show an interest in beef production or production ‘on the hoof’. For example, following the production of a Virginia tobacco

⁹ R. Hodder-Williams, *White farmers in Rhodesia, 1890-1965: A History of the Marandellas District* (London, 1983), 213.

crop surplus in the 1963/64 season, the S. Rhodesian Ministry of Agriculture urged farmers to start diversifying away from tobacco.¹¹ Again, at a meeting held with farmers at Umvuma, in the Midlands in January 1964, N. Cambitzis, President of the [R]hodesia [N]ational [F]armers [U]nion, told those present that beef production held a promising future, and that farmers should aim at producing beef for export. Cambitzis further called on farmers to emulate the example of tobacco producers who had formed their own commodity association, i.e. the [R]hodesia [T]obacco [A]ssociation, to protect and look after their interests.¹² Two months later, similar calls were to come from K. Ainslie, a local livestock consultant, who cautioned farmers that cattle were the best option only in areas where tobacco potential had already been fully realised.¹³

Not surprisingly, the first to heed the call for diversification were tobacco growers in the marginal areas such as the Midlands.¹⁴ But, even those farmers situated in areas deep inside the tobacco belt such as Marandellas District, also gradually took the call to diversify away from tobacco to cattle. With special reference to the Marandellas District, Hodder-Williams has argued that:

there was a definite tendency to diversify more and concentrate on cattle, rather than crops. There was a marked up-turn in the head of cattle kept on Marandellas farms and more attention paid to veldt management. Some of the longer-established farmers felt that a separate association should be formed to devote more time and effort to the well-being of the cattle industry and they bought land from the Marandellas Farmers' Co-operative Association to establish their own auctions, on alternate Tuesdays, in Marandellas.¹⁵

The shift to beef cattle production, however, was by no means a predominant trend across the length and breadth of S. Rhodesia's northern tobacco belt. In fact, a significant number of tobacco farmers stuck to their tobacco and tried to increase production efficiency through improved techniques, careful supervision, the eradication of bugs, diseases, and establishment of irrigation facilities. For a short while, their efforts improved "yields greatly, to well over 1 000 lb. an acre."¹⁶ But, such farmers were the

¹⁰ H. D. Nelson, et al Area Handbook for Southern Rhodesia (Washington D.C, 1974), 285.

¹¹ S.Rhodesia, Ministry of Agriculture, Crop and Livestock Production Policy, 1964 -1965, 8.

¹² Rhodesian Farmer, 1963-64, Vol. 35, (34), 20.

¹³ Rhodesia Tobacco Journal, Vol. 16, (3), 67-71.

¹⁴ RH, 5 June 1964; Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland, Ann. Rep. Sec. Dept. Agric. and Lands, 1963, 142; CSC, Twenty-Sixth Ann. Rep. and Acc., 1964, 3.

¹⁵ Hodder-Williams, White Farmers in Rhodesia, 212.

¹⁶ Ibid.

exception and not the rule, because the route they took was only “a wealthy man’s course of action” and the majority simply did not have this kind of money to increase efficiency.¹⁷ The result was that “from about 1963 ... the better and richer farmers laid hold of more land ... much of [which] was used, not always fully, for the expanded cattle herds.”¹⁸

The trend towards diversification, though not so rapid, was reflected by certain structural changes which occurred in the capitalist ranching sector from the late 1950s onwards. These changes included an increase in the country’s national herds and an increase in the production of fodder crops. For example, after the annual rate of increase of S. Rhodesia’s national herds had slowed down to an all time low of 1.67 per cent in 1958/59 over the previous years’ figure, its rate of expansion rose to 2.06 per cent in 1959/60, and 2.31 per cent in 1960/61, respectively. By contrast, N. Rhodesia and Nyasaland’s herds registered the highest annual rates of increase. The expansion in the national herds in the two northern territories was a direct result of improved returns brought about by the introduction of the system of guaranteed prices which boosted confidence in their relatively smaller cattle industries.

Table 4.3 : Percentage Annual Rate of Increase in Cattle Numbers Expressed as a Percentage of Previous Year’s Figures, 1957-1963

Year	S. Rhodesia	N. Rhodesia	Nyasaland	Federation
1957-1958	4.83	3.53	4.57	4.53
1958-1959	1.67	4.61	4.08	2.48
1959-1960	2.06	6.08	0.00	-1.07
1960-1961	2.31	6.65	4.76	3.31
1961-1962	-	-	-	-

Source: Ann. Rep. Sec., Fed. Min. Agric. and Lands, 1963, 23.

The expansion of S. Rhodesia’s national herds was also caused by the introduction of beef production in the north of the country. This development was evidenced by a noticeable shift in the structural outlook of the capitalist agricultural sector in general. For example, by the early 1960s, an estimated 5 020 or some 80.5 per cent of the country’s white commercial farmers, out of a national total of 6 234, at least kept

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid.

some cattle on their properties. What this meant was that during the period between 1955/56 and 1962, the number of white owned herds actually increased by 193 herds or some four per cent from 4 827 in 1955/56 to 5 020 herds in 1962. Also, while in 1963, only 757 commercial farms or some 12 per cent of all commercial farms in the country, were classified under the category of 'Specialised Farms' or as cattle ranches, more than half or some 53 per cent of commercial farms had become effectively 'Mixed'. These farms now produced a variety of agricultural products ranging from arable crops such as maize and tobacco to cattle. (refer to table tables 4.4 and 4.5 below).

Table 4.4 : Analysis by Farm Type, 1963/64

Type of Farm	Number of Farms
Specialised Farms: Flue-cured tobacco	1 628
Maize	220
Sugar	14
Cattle ranching	757
Dairy farming	125
Other	209
Mainly maize with flue-cured tobacco	54
Mainly flue-cured tobacco with maize	389
Other 'mainly' farms	1 713
Other farms	1 125
Total	6 234

Source: Europ. Agric. Prod., (CSO, 1964), 6.

The structural shift from tobacco to beef production was also reflected by the increased interest in the production of fodder crops. For example, in 1959, V. W. Brelshford, the Director of Information in the Federal government, wrote to W. M. Wardsworth, the Chief Agricultural Economist, acknowledging that:

the past four years [i.e. 1956-59] have been marked by a notable increase in the use of grass leys in arable rotations. Work at the research stations has established the great value of the pasture both for the production of food for animals and for the building of the fertility of cultivated soils.¹⁹

¹⁹ F226/104/F1, (Volume 2) W. V. Brelshford, Director of Information, Federal Government to V. M. Wadsworth, Chief Agricultural Economist, Salisbury, 23 June 1959.

Table 4.5 : Analysis by Size of European/White Owned Herds, 1962

Size of Herd	Number of Farms/Herds	Number of Cattle
Under 50	1 285	27 002
50-99	794	57 953
100-149	606	74 946
150-199	424	73 089
200-249	330	73 918
250-299	261	71 412
300-399	371	127 196
400-499	235	105 261
500-599	146	79 434
600-699	107	69 365
700-799	85	63 332
800-899	71	59 830
900-999	56	52 382
1 000-1 999	173	234 137
2 000-2 999	36	87 654
3 000-3 999	16	55 513
4 000-4 999	6	26 208
5 000-9 999	10	59 829
10 000 and over	8	153 633
Total	5 020	1 552 097

Source: Federation of Rhodesias and Nysaland, Report of the Advisory Committee on the Development of the Economic Resources of Southern Rhodesia with Particular Reference to the Role of African Agriculture, 1962, 174.

At another level, irrigated pastures began to receive greater attention from farmers, especially for purposes of dairy production.²⁰ The production of fodder crops on the northern maize belt itself marked an important step towards introducing the animal element into arable farming areas. By 1960, the acreage planted to fodder grasses, cotton and groundnuts had increased tremendously. For instance, the area planted under fodder and grasses more than doubled from 96 960 acres in 1956, to 225 090 acres in 1960, while the area under pasture grasses increased from 27 070 acres in 1956 to 69 690 in 1958, 94 780 in 1959, and 125 790 acres in 1960. Apart from yielding the much needed supplementary food for animals, the increased production of

²⁰ Ibid.

pasture grasses had the added advantage of enabling the farmers to maintain soil fertility and to combat eel worm in tobacco.²¹

Table 4.6: Area in Acres Planted to Fodder, Pastures, Groundnuts and Cotton, 1956-1960

Crop	1956	1957	1958	1959	1960
Fodder	69 890	66 350	77 190	77 250	99 300
Grasses	27 070	31 240	69 690	94 780	125 790
Groundnuts	5 270	5 510	5 400	4 720	5 800
cotton	1 220	600	1 310	1 030	2 010

Source: Vorster, "Factors Influencing the Growth, Production and Reproduction of Different Breeds of Beef Cattle", 9.

Apart from the decline in the profitability of tobacco, an important factor which catalysed the change in the structural outlook of the capitalist agricultural sector was the problem of persistent droughts which hit the country's major cattle producing districts of Matabeleland and Victoria from the early 1960s onwards. Drought had the effect of worsening the already existing problems of profitability, ecological deterioration and over-grazing in those districts. Because of persistent droughts, the role of these southern range lands as the country's premier cattle regions was radically altered,²² as thousands of cattle had to be evacuated from the south to the north to avoid losses through poverty. The evacuated cattle were placed with either tobacco or maize producers for feeding prior to slaughter.²³ This de-regionalization of production resulted in a general increase in stall feeding in the higher rainfall areas. For example, the Secretary for Agriculture and Lands noted excitedly that:

The wave of enthusiasm for high energy feeding has been the most remarkable recent development in beef production. An estimated 25 000 head of cattle were fed [in 1963] in this manner, many by individuals with no previous experience of fattening cattle. In African areas there is evidence of a greater interest in livestock production, particularly feeding and selling of cattle direct to the CSC. In this connection a real break through has been established in the Fort Victoria province where in 1963, only 13 head were fattened and sold directly to the Commission whereas, some 800 head will be fattened and sold to the CSC.... Stall feeding of three to four year old bullocks in the sugar production areas [sic] is fast increasing and the need for another abattoir is now very apparent and

²¹ T. H. Vorster, "Factors Influencing the Growth, Production and Reproduction of Different Beef Cattle under Range Conditions in Southern Rhodesia," (University of Stellenbosch, unpub. D.Sc. thesis, 1962), 10.

²² According to J. Handford, "Rhodesia experienced many droughts in the early 1960s." For more details see Handford, *A Portrait of an Economy under Sanctions, 1965-1975* (Salisbury, 1976), 108.

²³ CSC, *Twenty-Sixth Ann. Rep. and Acc., 1964*, 3.

immediate if we are to be able to handle all slaughter animals on offer as export potential in the near future.²⁴

Export Growth

The gradual shift away from tobacco and the introduction of the animal element in the higher rainfall areas had a direct impact on the quantity of export quality beef produced by S. Rhodesia in period between 1959 and 1964. In April 1959, the Federal government renewed its five year price agreement with the RNFU and increased producer prices by a substantial margin.²⁵ The most notable thing about the new price agreement was that it offered bonuses and incentives for heavier carcass and top-grade beef.(see table 4.7 below). Thus, spurred on by declining tobacco returns, payment of bonuses on heavier beef carcass, the availability of grazer cattle and the abundance of crop residue, white farmers in the higher rainfall areas began to actively participate in the CSC's fattening schemes.

Table 4.7 : Average Prices Payable to Cattle Producers in terms of the Agreement Between the Federal Government and the RNFU, 1st April 1959

Year	Basic Price	Incentive Price	Export Bonus	Average Price	Percentage rise in costs
1959/60	113/ -	10/ -	nil	123/ -	1.24
1960/61	113/ -	10/ -	nil	123/ -	2.67
1961/62	117/ 1d.	5/ 11d.	5d.	123/ 5d.	1.50
1962/63	118/ 10d.	4/ 2d.	5d.	123/ 5d.	1.65
1963/64	120/ 10d.	2/ 2d.	5d.	123/ 5d.	N/A.

Source: Horwood Commission Report, 45.

The irony was that these factors combined to create a situation where the beef industry produced a surplus of high-grade beef at a time when the country and indeed, the Federation as a whole was facing a critical shortage of low-quality beef on the domestic market. Between 1959 and 1962, the S. Rhodesian industry exported a total of 79 484 lb. or an annual average of 19 871 lb. of beef, mostly in the form of frozen, chilled and canned beef.

²⁴ S. Rhodesia, Ann. Rep. Sec. Agric. and Lands, 1965, 117 and 151.

Table 4.8 : Federal Imports and Exports of Beef (Ib.), 1956-1962.

Year ending 31 September	- Imports - Fresh,Frozen , Chilled	- Imports - Live Cattle (a)	- Exports - Fresh,Frozen , Chilled	- Exports - Canned Meat	Net Exports(+) Imports(-)
1956	10 133	4	4 759	953	(-) 4 425
1957	6 928	2 518	5 293	1 728	(-) 2 425
1958	5 523	3 450	4 631	1 408	(-) 2 934
1959	927	1 113	20 445	6 198	(+) 24 603
1960	464	4 554	14 147	6 880	(+) 16 009
1961	151	6 750	18 593	7 609	(+) 19 301
1962	295	10 633	20 528	9 971	(+) 19 571

Note: Canned beef imports not shown separately in trade returns, but were very small.

(a) Converted from live cattle imports from Bechuanaland Protectorate at 450 Ib. beef per head.

Source: Horwood Commission Report, (1963), 11,

The percentage of total beef sales represented by exports in the Federation as a whole trebled from a mere five per cent in 1957/58, to 16.8 per cent by 1962/63. By the time the Federation was dissolved in 1963, the CSC was disposing about 16.8 per cent of its total export sales on the Federal domestic common market. Much of the beef trade in the Federation, which was between N. Rhodesia and S. Rhodesia, was largely self-balancing and mainly based on differential quality requirements of the two territories. While on the one hand, S. Rhodesia exported higher grade beef to N. Rhodesia to make good the deficiency of this grade of meat in that territory, N. Rhodesia, on the other hand, would export its surplus low-grade beef to the S. Rhodesian domestic market where this grade of beef was in short supply.²⁶ Imports from Bechuanaland, which were often significant in some years, were used by the CSC to augment supplies of low grade meat either on the Federal common market or for re-export to the Congo market.²⁷

²⁵ The last price agreement between the government and the RNFU was signed in 1955. In the agreement the basic price was fixed at 97s. per 100 Ib. c.d.w, up from 70s. per 100 Ib. c.d.w in 1950, when the first five year agreement was concluded.

²⁶ Vorster, "Factors Influencing the Growth, Production and Reproduction of Different Beef Cattle," 58.

²⁷ F226/1310/F7, Cattle Imports and Exports from the Bechuanaland Protectorate: Policy Memorandum, S. A. Cloete to the Acting Secretary, Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Lands, 7 November 1963; F226/1320/F9, Meat Supplies to the Belgian Congo, N. Rhodesia and Portuguese East Africa, (1962), Confidential Report of the Federal Mission to Belgian Congo, Chairman, T. S. Bell, 1958.

Table 4.9 : CSC's Disposal of Beef in the Federation (Short tons.)

Year	S. Rhodesia	Northern Rhodesia	Nyasa-land	Federal Market	Exports	Aggregate sales	Exports as % of sales
1952	28 718	-	-	28 718	652	29 370	2.2
1953	27 698	139	2	27 839	1 305	29 144	4.5
1954	26 378	1 297	8	27 683	6 034	33 717	17.9
1955	25 345	1 188	40	26 573	4 370	30 943	14.1
1956	23 835	2 557	60	26 452	2 602	29 054	9.0
1957/58	31 576	3 622	135	35 333	1 877	37 210	5.0
1958/59	34 641	3 305	537	38 483	9 544	48 027	19.9
1959/60	38 089	4 285	638	43 012	7 719	50 731	15.2
1960/61	37 382	5 329	717	43 428	7 917	51 345	15.4
1961/62	41 023	8 768	847	50 638	10 263	60 901	16.9
1962/63	41 765	14 517	946	57 228	11 592	68 820	16.8

Source: CSC, *Ann. Rep. and Acc., 1963*, Table 11.

From the late 1950s onwards, the United Kingdom's Smithfield market had become S. Rhodesia's largest export market. In 1958/59, this market took about 48 per cent of the country's exports, while three or four years later, it absorbed approximately 83 per cent of the country's total beef exports. Initially, the trade was concentrated in chilled and frozen carcasses beef, mainly higher value hindquarters, but with time, boneless beef and beef cuts began to constitute a significant part of overseas exports. The increased demand for S. Rhodesian beef in the United Kingdom was caused by a combination of factors which included higher incomes, improved standards of living and the failure on the part of major suppliers of beef such as Argentina and New Zealand to meet that country's increased beef needs.²⁸

By the end of the Federation, the country's beef industry had come to depend heavily on the Smithfield market for most of its chilled and frozen beef exports. Because of the industry's success on the export front, the beef industry began to play an increasingly critical role in the country's balance of payments. The value of exports in

²⁸ F226/1320/F10A, *Export of Meat to the United Kingdom, West Germany and Other Countries*, Volume 2, 1960, "Report to the CSC of S. Rhodesia on the Visit to the United Kingdom," 12

1962/63, was estimated at 1.75 million *pounds sterling*, by which time “the Rhodesias [were] currently accounting for approximately 2.5 per cent of British imports of beef [excluding offal], by value, and Commonwealth as a whole, for between 17 [and] 18 per cent.”²⁹ On the whole, the significance of these exports can be seen from the fact that by 1962:

exports of cattle hides brought in 875 000 [*pounds sterling*]; fresh, frozen and chilled beef and offal 1 622 000 [*pounds sterling*]; canned meat (mainly beef) 1 662 000 [*pounds sterling*]; and other meat preparations, including small amounts of pork products, 407 000 [*pounds sterling*]; a total of 4 566 000 [*pounds sterling*].³⁰

Table 4.10 : CSC's Exports by Country of Destination (Short tons)

Year	Aggregate Exports	Congo	South Africa	Other	United Kingdom	U.K as % of Total
1952	652	652	-	-	-	-
1953	1 305	535	-	770	-	-
1954	6 034	1 314	863	3 485	12	0.2
1955	4 370	2 205	645	1 497	23	0.5
1956	2 602	2 602	-	-	-	-
1957/58	1 877	1 776	-	101	-	-
1958/59	9 544	1 457	-	3 484	4 603	48.0
1959/60	7 719	1 442	-	291	5 986	78.0
1960/61	7 917	790	8	386	6 733	85.0
1961/62	10 263	970	102	278	8 913	87.0
1962/63	11 592	1 874	62	36	9 620	83.0

Source: CSC, *Ann. Rep. and Acc.*, 1963, Table 11.

Table 4.11 : Gross Value of European Production and African Sales, Southern Rhodesia, 1954-1962. (Million *pounds sterling*).

Product/ Year	Euro- pean	Afric- an	Total	Euro- pean	Afric- an	Total	Euro- pean	Afric- an	Total
	-----	1954	-----	-----	1958	-----	-----	1962-	-----
Maize	5.0	1.6	6.6	6.7	1.0	7.7	7.2	0.6	7.8
Tobacco	19.3	-	19.3	22.4	-	22.4	31.5	-	31.5
Oth.crops	1.4	1.0	2.4	2.0	0.7	2.7	5.3	1.7	7.0
Cattle	3.2	1.7	4.9	4.0	2.6	6.6	7.3	1.8	9.1
Dairy	1.3	-	1.3	2.1	-	2.1	2.6	-	2.6
Others	1.5	0.5	2.0	3.5	0.9	4.4	2.1	0.5	2.6
Total	31.7	4.8	36.5	40.7	5.2	45.9	56.0	4.6	60.6

Source: *Horwood Commission Report*, (1963), 14,

September to 12 October 1959, Chairman, A. L. Bickle; Report on the Exports of Beef the United Kingdom, Fed. Min. Agric. and Lands, 25 November 1959.

²⁹ *Horwood Commission Report*, 1963, 59.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 11.

The country beef's exports had a significant impact on the beef industry's overall contribution to the value of total national agricultural output. As can be seen from table 4.11 above, the contribution of white owned cattle to total agricultural sales increased from 3.2 million *pounds sterling* in 1954, to 4.2 million *pounds sterling* in 1958, and 7.3 million *pounds sterling* in 1962. Excluding the value of African owned cattle, the capitalist sector of the industry alone represented a capital investment of 70 million *pounds sterling* at 1963 prices.³¹

The Failure of Federal Policy

The reason why the S. Rhodesian market continued to suffer from lack of self-sufficiency in beef throughout the Federal period lay in the flawed nature of government's pricing policy which placed emphasis on production not geared towards the needs of the domestic market. Furthermore, the government's pricing policy was detrimental to the development of the African beef industry, which had traditionally acted as the industry's main source of low grade beef. In as far as the capitalist ranching sector was concerned, government policy failed to eliminate inefficient production.

White Dominated Capitalist Sector

By 1964, the annual output or off-take from white owned herds amounted to only 13 per cent as compared to United States' annual figure of over 40 per cent. Also, while the calving rates in the capitalist sector remained below 50 per cent, the average mortality rates in the same sector stood at six per cent or nearly half of the sector's annual off-take. Despite the fact that the government channelled so much of its resources to this sector, it still took white ranchers between four and five years to raise a beast to the required slaughter weight.³² Worse still, most government attempts to improve production efficiency through guaranteed pricing, protein nutrition research, conservation measures and better cattle management standards, largely met with

³¹ RPF, June 1964.

failure.³³ The extent of inefficiency in the capitalist sector was highlighted by the Horwood Commission in 1963 when it noted that:

research, extension and veterinary services are doing splendid work in both territories, but there is evidence that in some areas involving many producers, their efforts are not having the hoped-for impact. Comparisons are said to be odious, but it is a fact that in the United States 68 tons of beef are produced per 1 000 head of cattle per annum. This means that 14 or 15 animals are required for the production of one ton of beef a year. In the Federation, by contrast, 53 head have to be kept to produce one ton of beef, as 1 000 head produce only 19 tons a year.³⁴

Table 4.12: Number of Cows and Calves in White Owned Herds in S. Rhodesia

Year	Total Number	Cows*	Calves	Losses
1957	1 434 155	524 304	270 114	57 443
1958	1 506 199	563 426	269 384	62 567
1959	1 552 880	555 620	267 134	60 614
1960	1 552 097	575 607	256 085	81 667
1961	-	-	-	-
1962	-	-	-	-
1963	-	-	-	-

Note: Figures for 1961-1963 not available.

* Total included dairy cows.

Source: Ann. Rep. Sec., Fed. Min. Agric. and Lands, 1957-1963.

Table 4.13 : Calving and Mortality Rates: S. Rhodesia, 1956-1963

Year	Calving Rates	Mortality Rates
1955/56	48.4	4.0
1956/57	51.5	4.0
1957/58	47.8	4.2
1958/59	48.1	3.9
1959/60	44.7	5.3
1960/61	45.3	3.8
1961/62	-	-
1962/63	-	-

Note: Figures for 1962-1963 not available.

Source: Ann. Rep. Sec., Fed. Min. Agric. and Lands, 1962.

Much to the Federal government's annoyance, production methods remained largely rudimentary and extensive in nature especially in the country's premier ranching districts Matabeleland and Victoria where arable crop production could not be carried

³² Ibid.

³³ Dunlop, The Development of European Agriculture in Rhodesia, 51.

³⁴ Horwood Commission Report, 101.

out in-loco because of low rainfall patterns. Furthermore, the “relatively low cost of grazing as opposed to arable production did in effect, only stimulate territorial expansion in preference to more intensive and efficient methods of cattle husbandry.”³⁵ In these remote southern regions, cattle were often left to survive on extensive ranches of unimproved pasture with the attendant risks of malnutrition, insect infestation, disease, infertility and calf mortality. In particular, malnutrition was responsible for sterility of cows, slow rate of sexual maturation and the prevalence of low calving rates in those regions.

Even though the need for supplementary feeding had long been recognised, the practice remained generally less widespread particularly in the breeding sector of the industry. Because of lack of complementarity between the drier southern districts and the northern higher rainfall areas, it was generally not uncommon for steers to be raised from birth purely on veldt grazing. Where cattle fattening took place, most if not all of the cattle involved were often very old and they were fed on conserved roughage such as silage, legume and grass-leys and a little concentrate food as was necessary to achieve the desired fat cover.³⁶ In most cases, however, because of prohibitive costs, supplementary feeding essentially remained as a ‘topping-off’ process for cattle that would otherwise have been kept on the veldt pasture for many years before being sold.

The persistence of calving rates of less than 50 per cent meant that more than half of the breeding herd in the capitalist sector of industry in general was kept on ranches at great cost to the owner. The presence of unproductive stock on ranches gave rise to the deterioration of natural grazing and the problem of erosion, especially in the southern ranching districts where overstocking was already a serious problem by the late 1950s. The situation was worsened by the fact that most properties in this region were often inadequately fenced and watered and, when drought occurred, stock losses from poverty were heavy.³⁷ The already bad state of the capitalist sector was made

³⁵ Vorster, “Factors Influencing the Growth, Production and Reproduction of Different Breeds of Beef Cattle”, 5.

³⁶ Report of a Committee of Inquiry into the Zimbabwe Beef Industry, 1981 Chairman, R.C. Elliot, 21.

³⁷ Ibid.

desperate by declining profitability in the industry, especially at the close of the Federal period. For example, in 1964, the Rhodesian Recorder, pointed out that:

The return on certain capital employed in Southern Rhodesia in the cattle industry is 5 per cent per annum. Due to economic factors alone, we can expect a decline, within a short period of time, in the number of farmers investing money in cattle, with a consequent detrimental effect on Southern Rhodesia's balance of payments. Every farmer who owns cattle would do better, at the present time, to dispose of his entire herd and invest in shares like Wankie, which would yield him approximately 20 per cent gross. He would not be worse off, because his pay allowed for in the cost structure of beef is 365 [*pounds sterling*] per annum, whereas a realistic figure today would be 2 000 [*pounds sterling*] per annum.³⁸

The only lasting solution to the capitalist sector's profitability crisis lay in cutting down production costs to the lowest possible level. For example, there was no point in increasing producer prices, especially in view of the falling domestic purchasing power in the late 1950s.³⁹ Besides, any increase in local beef prices would simply put local beef beyond the reach of the severely underpaid class of African labourers who constituted the industry's largest section of the domestic market. The situation was not helped by the fact that African wages rose slowly from the mid 1950s onwards.⁴⁰ In fact, in their analysis of the Federal period as whole, many scholars have shown persuasively that any income gains which Africans enjoyed in the early 1950s were wiped out by rising costs of living and more importantly, by the need to transfer money into the declining rural economy in the late 1950s and early 1960s.⁴¹ Thus,

³⁸ Rhodesian Recorder, June 1964, 53. I owe this important point and reference to Professor Ian Phimister who sent me a copy of the report from the Rhodesian Recorder.

³⁹ A major contributory factor to the crisis of profitability was the country's economic recession in the late 1950s. In connection with this point Arrighi has argued that "The stabilization of the European population since 1960 (the natural increase [had] hardly offset net immigration), and especially the low income elasticity of demand for food, has been seriously limiting expansion in [the processing of local farm production]. African food consumption, on the other hand, 'is dominated by the cheapest foodstuffs: mealie meal, low quality meat, dried and fresh fish, bread and sugar, account for roughly 80 per cent of the food outlays of African families.' Hence, for this sector too, the growth of of the purchasing power of the Africans and their rapid proletarianization, especially urbanization, became a condition for expansion", See Arrighi and Saul, Essays on the Political Economy of Africa, 354; Shutz, "European Population Patterns and Cultural Persistence", 20; Barber, The Economy of British Central Africa, 171.

⁴⁰ Overall the average annual wage for employed Africans rose from 64 *pounds sterling* per year in 1954 to 114 *pounds sterling* in 1963. In terms of constant prices, however, this growth amounted to just over one *pound sterling* per year. For more details on this point, see National Accounts and Balance of Payments of Northern Rhodesia, Nyasaland and Southern Rhodesia 1954-1963 (Salisbury, Central Statistical Office, 1964), Tables 140 and 161.

⁴¹ For more details on this point, see Barber, The Economy of British Central Africa; Johnson, African Agricultural Development in Southern Rhodesia, 165-223; Yudelman argues that output per family in rural areas had not increased for 50 years. See Yudelman, Africans on the Land (Cambridge, 1964), esp. 237-246.

responding to clamours by capitalist ranchers for higher producer prices in 1958, the CSC was quick to warn “cattle farmers to exercise care that their demands for increases in beef prices do not result in outpricing the product and the creation of unsaleable surpluses.”⁴² It was precisely because of the recession and the fact that Africans could not afford expensive beef which explained why domestic beef consumption had only increased by a mere 26 per cent while the consumption of fish, a cheaper source of protein, had soared by 112 per cent by 1963.⁴³ The Horwood Commission explained this phenomenon by saying:

fish accounts for a major share of the diet of African families who were examined in recent Family Budget Studies.... Fish consumption has more than doubled at a time when beef sales rose by only one quarter [and] there are several reasons for this change. Fish [from lake Kariba] is cheaper than beef of equivalent edible quality. Again, we have received evidence that dried fish presents no problem of storage to African consumers - an important advantage over beef. But overriding all these is the basic factor of price.... We have had evidence pointing two ways on this matter. In the first instance, we are informed that many people in the lower income groups are being forced by their present economic circumstances to purchase less beef or beef of lower grades, and/or to divert their purchases to fish. This is a factor tending to depress the future growth in demand for beef.⁴⁴

The interesting thing was that beef, which was being heavily subsidised by the government, was being displaced from the domestic market by fish, which was an unprotected product. The above situation was compounded by the fact that Federal policy was geared towards satisfying the needs of the export market and not those of the domestic market. This contradictory policy resulted in higher grade beef being disposed of at a loss on the domestic market. These losses made on top grades were then subsidised by profits made on the lower grades of beef. In 1958, G. D. Carlisle, a senior official in the Department of Native Economics and Marketing complained that:

What is mainly wanted are grown medium finished cattle at a price which the African can afford. At 1957 price and wage levels, this would appear to be equivalent to a maximum producer price of about 120-125/ per 100 Ib. [c]old [d]ressed [w]eight.⁴⁵

⁴² RH, 23 April 1959; CSC, Ann. Rep. and Acc., 1958.

⁴³ Horwood Commission Report, (1963), 28.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 31.

⁴⁵ F226/1091/3, Agricultural Marketing Council: Cattle, G. D. Carlisle for the Under Secretary, Department of Native Economics and Marketing to the Secretary, Agricultural Marketing Council, “Evidence on the Principle that Producer Prices of Various Grades of Cattle should reflect Market Values,” 5 June 1963, 2.

In 1961, even the CSC itself noted that:

In a healthy economy, production is tied to the purchasing power of the public, and in the cattle industry the producer price, and therefore, the type of beef produced should be tied to the ability of the consumer to purchase the product. Recognition must be given to the fact that on the local market the higher income group [mainly European] is infinitesimally small compared with the millions of the lower income group [mainly Africans] who simply cannot afford to pay the high price at which this quality product must sell to be economic. The result is that the bulk of this production is exported to overseas markets where it comes into world competition and is subject to price fluctuations depending on supply and demand.⁴⁶

A year later, the Phillips Advisory Committee called for the revision of the guaranteed price schedule when it noted that:

there can be little doubt that the guaranteed prices of the Compound and Inferior grades are unrealistic in relation to their market values. Also the market values of these grades are not being accurately reflected through the marketing system, since these two grades provide the CSC with its greatest profit margin - very much larger than on any higher grades... Thus, it would seem that it is the poorer section of the community, both producers and consumers, who would gain most from a revision of the grading price pattern on more realistic lines. The industry as a whole also gains, by avoiding losses on the higher grades and reducing their over-production. If such a policy results in persistent and increasing losses, both for export and at home, and raising production of types of beef which the [domestic] market has shown over the years it does not want, it is an indication that the price emphasis on those grades and in certain seasons is too great.⁴⁷

Thus, the policy which the government ironically regarded as the mainstay of the cattle industry, increasingly turned the CSC into an expensive albatross, as its operations had to be constantly subsidised against losses made on the domestic market. Not surprisingly, the policy came under heavy criticism from all three territorial governments which made up the Federation.⁴⁸ For example, putting its case

⁴⁶ CSC, *Ann. Rep. and Acc.*, 1961, 8.

⁴⁷ *Report of the Advisory Committee on the Development of the Economic Resources of Southern Rhodesia with Particular Reference to the Role of African Agriculture*, (1962), hereinafter referred to as the *Phillips Advisory Committee Report*, Chairman J. Phillips, 274-75.

⁴⁸ It is important to remember that the Federal and Territorial governments were separate political entities with different functions. The Federal government generally assumed functions that pertained to the entire area of defence, external affairs, economic growth and development, of which Federal agricultural policy was a part, commerce, and nearly all revenue responsibilities: the territorial government was left with more limited, but ultimately crucial, responsibility for handling African affairs. For more details on this see L. W. Bowman, *Politics in Rhodesia: White Power in An African State*, (Cambridge, 1973), 21.

against the policy to the [A]gricultural [M]arketing [C]ouncil in 1963, the S. Rhodesian government argued that:

present policy of determining cattle prices unrelated to their real market values is against the long-term interests of all producers and consumers. The subsidisation of high grades by the low grades ... is morally unjustifiable, economically unsound, and impracticable as long term government policy.⁴⁹

Similar criticism came from the S. Rhodesian Ministry of Internal Affairs which argued that the policy was not only unreasonable, but, “morally untenable and economically dangerous.”⁵⁰ In response, the Federal Ministry of Agriculture adamantly maintained that:

It is in the national interest to encourage beef production by appropriate pricing policies. The development of the cattle industry can largely be brought about by ... sound and good husbandry ... so that the low grades must to some extent, eventually become the by-product of an industry producing cattle on sound husbandry lines It must be basic to any pricing policy, which has, as its aim, the stability and/or the development of the cattle industry, that there is an incentive to produce high grade cattle.⁵¹

While something could be said for both sides of the argument, there was no doubt that the Federal government’s cattle pricing policy was counter productive. By preventing producers from responding to domestic market needs or market forces, the Federal policy encouraged uneconomic production in the industry. Table 4.14 below shows that the industry’s three top grades, i.e. Rhodesia’s Best, Imperial and Standard ‘A’ were being sold at a loss on the domestic market while lower grades, i.e. [F]air [A]verage [Q]uality, Compound and Inferior were sold at a substantial profit.

⁴⁹ F226/1091/3, [A]gricultural [M]arketing [C]ouncil: Cattle, R. Dawson, Secretary, AMC, “Summary of Evidence Concerning Cattle Producer Prices and an Attempt to Define the Problem,” June 1963, 2.

⁵⁰ F226/1091/3, AMC: Cattle, Ministry of Internal Affairs, “Evidence to the AMC on the Principle that the Producer Prices of the various Grades of Cattle should reflect their Market Values,” 6 May 1963, 2.

⁵¹ F226/1091/3, AMC: Cattle, R. Dawson, Secretary to AMC, Summary of Evidence Concerning Cattle Producer Prices and an Attempt to Define the Problem,” 1 June 1963, 3.

Table 4.14 : Relative Profitability of Grades to the CSC, 1961/62 (All values per 100 Ib. c.d.w)

Grade	Average Producer Price (A)	Average Local Selling Price (B)	Gross profit <u>OR</u> Loss	Plus Fifth Quarter Returns (C)	Less Average Operati- ng costs (D)	Net Profit Per 100 lbs	Net profit as a % of Producti on Price
Rh.'s Best	175/ 5d.	135/ 2d.	-40/3d.	27/1d.	17/10d.	-31/-	-18
Imperial	157/5d	132/7d.	-24/10d	27/1d.	17/10d.	-15/7d	-10
Std. A	139/5d.	129/7d.	-9/10d.	27/1d.	17/1d.	-7d.	-0,4
GAQ	120/3d.	118/-d.	-2/3d.	27/1d.	17/10d.	+7/-	+6
FAQ	106/5d.	109/3d.	+2/10d.	27/1d.	17/10d.	+12/1d.	+11
Compound	89/10d.	102/1d.	+12/3d.	27/1d.	17/10d.	+21/6d.	+24
Inferior	64/-	96/7d.	+32/7d.	27/1d.	17/10d.	+41/10d.	+65

Notes: (a) Weighted Average Prices calculated from delivery patterns in 1961/62.

(b) Weighted Average Price calculated from the delivery patterns in 1961/62 and assuming all deliveries were sold in the same price period.

(c) Realisation from hides, offal and by-products, average over all grades equally by weight.

(d) The CSC's operating, transport and cattle department costs, plus operating profit, less miscellaneous recoveries over all grades by weight.

Source: F226/1091/3, [A]gricultural [M]arketing [C]ouncil: Cattle, Southern

Rhodesia Native Affairs Department, "Evidence to the AMC on the Principle that the Producer Prices of the Various Grades of Cattle should reflect their Market Values," 6 May 1963, 2.

It is clear from the figures contained in the table above, that cattle producer prices "were determined not by practical requirements of the market, but by a desire to encourage production of the highest grades of beef cattle, apparently regardless of loss,"⁵² The major contradiction was that the Federal government's pricing policy encouraged the production of high grade beef "at a time when ... surplus production of these grades [was] rapidly increasing."⁵³ Because of the huge profits made on the lower grades, private butchers preferred buying and slaughtering more low grade cattle, thereby leaving the CSC burdened with loss-making higher grades. (See table 4.15 below). The only beneficiaries of this flawed policy were white ranchers

⁵² Ibid.

themselves on whom the government poured subsidies for the production of higher quality animals.

Table 4.15 : Grade Percentages and Numbers of Cattle Slaughtered by CSC and Private Butchers, 1954-1963.

Year	1954		1956		1958		1960		1962		1963	
Grade	%		%		%		%		%		%	
	CSC	Pvt. Butc.	CSC	Pvt. Butc.	CSC	Pvt. Butc.	CSC	Pvt. Butc.	CSC	Pvt. Butc.	CSC	Pvt. Butc.
Rhod. Best	2.9	-	2.93	0.35	1.53	1.45	1.59	1.57	4.25	0.82	3.11	0.68
Imperial	11.9	-	8.88	3.96	4.92	6.41	4.18	5.16	6.74	2.76	5.72	2.33
Std. A	29.0	-	27.56	22.84	22.39	-	16.93	-	28.60	-	24.40	-
GAQ	27.6	-	35.10	33.40	32.39	-	28.41	-	32.67	-	31.93	-
FAQ	9.4	-	10.02	14.75	15.37	15.94	21.49	18.91	15.82	21.22	18.74	21.25
Compound	13.5	-	11.41	19.44	16.41	25.03	20.68	26.47	10.20	26.23	13.33	26.98
Inferior	3.7	-	4.10	5.26	6.49	6.04	6.72	6.84	2.54	6.00	3.03	6.06
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
TOTAL (000' HEAD)	159	-	122	20	175	29	239	34	242	31	253	34
	-197		454	944	016	561	911	821	959	149	957	298

Source: Turner Commission Report, 14; Ann. Rep. Sec., Fed. Min. Agric. and Lands, 1956, 23; 1958, 21; 1963, 24-25.

There is no doubt that Government pricing policy denied producers of low-grade cattle the true value of their cattle. As figures in table 4.16 below clearly show, the [A]verage [A]uction [E]xcess, i.e. the average margin by which the knock down price or the price at which cattle were finally bought at auction sales, far exceeded, both in relative and absolute terms the Government's [A]verage [G]uaranteed [F]loor [P]rice. The average margin increased substantially the further one moved down the Government prescribed cattle grading scale. For example, while at the point of sale the [A]verage [K]nock down [P]rice for 'Standard A' cattle barely exceeded the AGFP, it is interesting to note that the AAE paid on Inferiors was as high as 7/11d or over 30 per cent of the AGFP.

⁵³ Ibid.

Table 4.16 : Average Auction Excess Paid at Government Live Weight Auction Sales (All Prices per 100 Ib. Live-weight): 1963

Grade	[A]verage [G]uaranteed [F]loor [P]rice	[A]verage [K]nock-down [P]rice	[A]verage [A]uction [E]xcess per 100 Ib. Live-weight	AAE as a Percentage of AGFP
Standard A	66/ 5d.	66/ 8d.	+ 3d.	0.3
GAQ	57/ 1d.	58/ -	+ 11d.	1.5
FAQ	46/ 9d.	50/ 7d.	+ 3/ 10d.	8.1
Compound	38/ 4d.	44/ 10d.	+ 6/ 6d.	16.9
Inferior	25/ 7d.	33/ 6d.	+ 7/ 11d.	30.8
TOTAL	44/ 8d.	49/ 1d.	+ 4/ 5d.	9.9

Source: F226/1091/3, AMC: Cattle, S. Rhodesia, Min. Inter. Affairs., "Evidence to the AMC on the Principle that the Producer Prices of the Various Grades of Cattle should reflect their Market Values," 6 May 1963, 4.

Table 4.17 : Percentage of Cattle Bought by the CSC and Private Buyers at the Floor Price at Government Auction Sales, 1962

GRADE	CSC Percentage bought <u>At</u> AGFP	CSC Percentage bought <u>Above</u> the AGFP	TOTAL	Percentage of cattle bought by Pvt. Buyers	TOTAL
Standard A.	91	6	97	3	100
GAQ	75	19	94	6	100
FAQ	43	44	87	13	100
Compound	30	48	78	22	100
Inferior	16	23	39	61	100

Source: F226/1091/3, AMC: Cattle, Min. Inter. Affairs., "Evidence to the AMC on the Principle that the Producer Prices of the Various Grades of Cattle should reflect their Market Values," 6 May 1963, 4.

The fear of making losses on top grades clearly explains why there was no desire on the part of private buyers to bid-up prices on top grades or let alone purchase those same grades even at the prescribed floor price or AGFP itself.⁵⁴ The irony was that even the CSC itself was also reluctant to bid up the AKP well above the prescribed AGFP. Thus, clearly all cattle buyers including the CSC itself valued low grade cattle

⁵⁴ Under the sale procedure adopted at all government auction sales, the first bid had to be 5/- above the up-set price or AGFP so that no buyer could in fact obtain cattle at the AGFP. However, if buyers

more than they did the government's prescribed price schedule. Due to the fact that huge profits were made on low-grade, competition increased as one moved down the grading scale. Both the CSC and private buyers had to pay prices well in excess of the AGFP in order to secure adequate supplies of low grade cattle. In most cases, private buyers, who actually showed a willingness to pay higher prices than the CSC, snapped up all low grade cattle, thereby leaving the latter with a preponderance of the loss-making grades. (See tables 4.16 and 4.17 above)

Communal African Sector

There is no doubt that the real victims of Federal marketing policy in the cattle industry were African peasants, the majority of whom produced low-grade cattle. During the period under consideration in this chapter, the African cattle sector remained a crucial balancing factor in the CSC's domestic beef supply equation. For example, between 1958 and 1963/64, an estimated 21 per cent of all slaughter stock which came from white owned ranches originally coming from the African cattle sector.⁵⁵ However, despite the fact that the communal peasant sector had the largest herd in the country, annual output or off take rate only averaged six and a half percent or half the output of the capitalist sector.⁵⁶

Table 4.19 below shows that after a somewhat erratic national sales pattern in the first two years of the Federation, i.e. 1953-1955, African cattle sales rose rather sharply between 1956 and 1959. During the latter period, the introduction of auction sales as the method of sale caused the price of African cattle to rise by some 25 per cent while the numbers of cattle offered for sale also increased by between 10 and 20 per cent.⁵⁷ Because of a severe drought in 1960, cattle sales again soared to 236 535 head or some 56 per cent over the 1959 figures.

showed no interest in buying any cattle on offer, the CSC, in its residual buying capacity, bought them at the AGFP but subject to the seller's ultimate right of refusal.

⁵⁵ F259/1, S. Rhodesia, Ministry of Internal Affairs: Evidence submitted to the Commission of Inquiry into the cattle industry, Salisbury, June 1963, 7.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ For more details on this see the Ann. Rep. Sec., Dept. Native Affairs and CNC, 1956-1960.

**Table 4.18 : Numbers of European and African Owned Cattle in the Federation
(000' head)**

Year	Federation		S. Rhodesia		N. Rhodesia		Nyasaland	
	Europe- an	African	Europe- an	African	Europe- an	African	Europe- an	African
1957	1 600	3 190	1 434	1 981	155	892	11	317
1958	1 687	3 200	1 506	2 074	167	917	14	329
1959	1 747	3 384	1 553	2 087	179	955	15	342
1960	1 766	3 310	1 552	1 964	197	1 007	17	340
1961	1 827	3 417	1 599	1 988	213	1 070	15	359
1962	1 856	3 512	1 626	2 091	215	1 056	15	365
1963	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Source: Ann. Rep. Sec., Fed. Min. Agric. and Lands, 1957-1962.

This was the first time African cattle market deliveries ever built up to the level of deliveries attained during the Second World War and they never again exceeded that figure during the remainder of the Federal years.⁵⁸ Thus, due to increased sales and heavy losses through poverty which amounted to 98 061 head in 1960 alone, the total number of African owned herds fell from a peak of 2 093 000 head in 1959, to 1 954 000 head at the end of 1960.⁵⁹ The need to rebuild herds, among other factors, led to the decline in sales by more than three hundred per cent to 68 000 in 1961, 73 000 head in 1962 and 66 000 head in 1963.⁶⁰ (See Graph I and table 4.19 below) What deserves special comment here was the generally erratic pattern of cattle sales in the sector, sometimes even in the face of rising prices.⁶¹ The thinking was common among S. Rhodesian Native Department officials that, unlike white ranchers who sold cattle to recover direct input costs, the African peasants' production costs "seldom exceeded the annual dipping fee [so much so that] the need [or incentive] to recover

⁵⁸ P. Mosley, The Settler Economies: Studies in the Economic History of Kenya and Southern Rhodesia, (London, 1983), 107.

⁵⁹ F256/1, S. Rhodesia, Ministry of Internal Affairs: "Evidence submitted to the Commission of Inquiry into the cattle industry," Salisbury, June 1963, 2.

⁶⁰ *1310/F5/1, Cattle Sales: African Areas Policy, (Volume 1), Ministry of Internal Affairs, Memorandum to AMC on the Cattle Position in African Areas, 3 November 1964.

⁶¹ This pattern was also evident in the Southern African colonial peasant communities and in East African colonies of Uganda, Kenya and Tanganyika. For more information on this aspect, see Mosley, The Settler Economies, 101-109; B. M. Swallow et al, "Cattle Marketing in Lesotho" Research Division Bulletin, Report No. 13 (Research Division of the Ministry of Agriculture, Institute of African Studies, 13, September, 1986); M. Quam, Pastoral Economy and Cattle Marketing in Karamoja, Uganda, (London 1976); S. N. Chipungu, Commercialising a Peasant Resource: Cattle Trade in Sukumaland, Tanzania, (Lusaka, 1988)

direct input costs [through selling more cattle] was [either nil or] minimal.”⁶² Alternatively, the Native Department officials simply explained the erratic pattern in terms of the so-called Cattle Complex. This was the belief that Africans raised and kept cattle purely for sociological, emotional or spiritual gratification and not for economic reasons. For over a decade now, this colonial view has been the subject of heated debate among African scholars.⁶³

Table 4.19 : Disposals of African Owned Cattle: 1953-1963

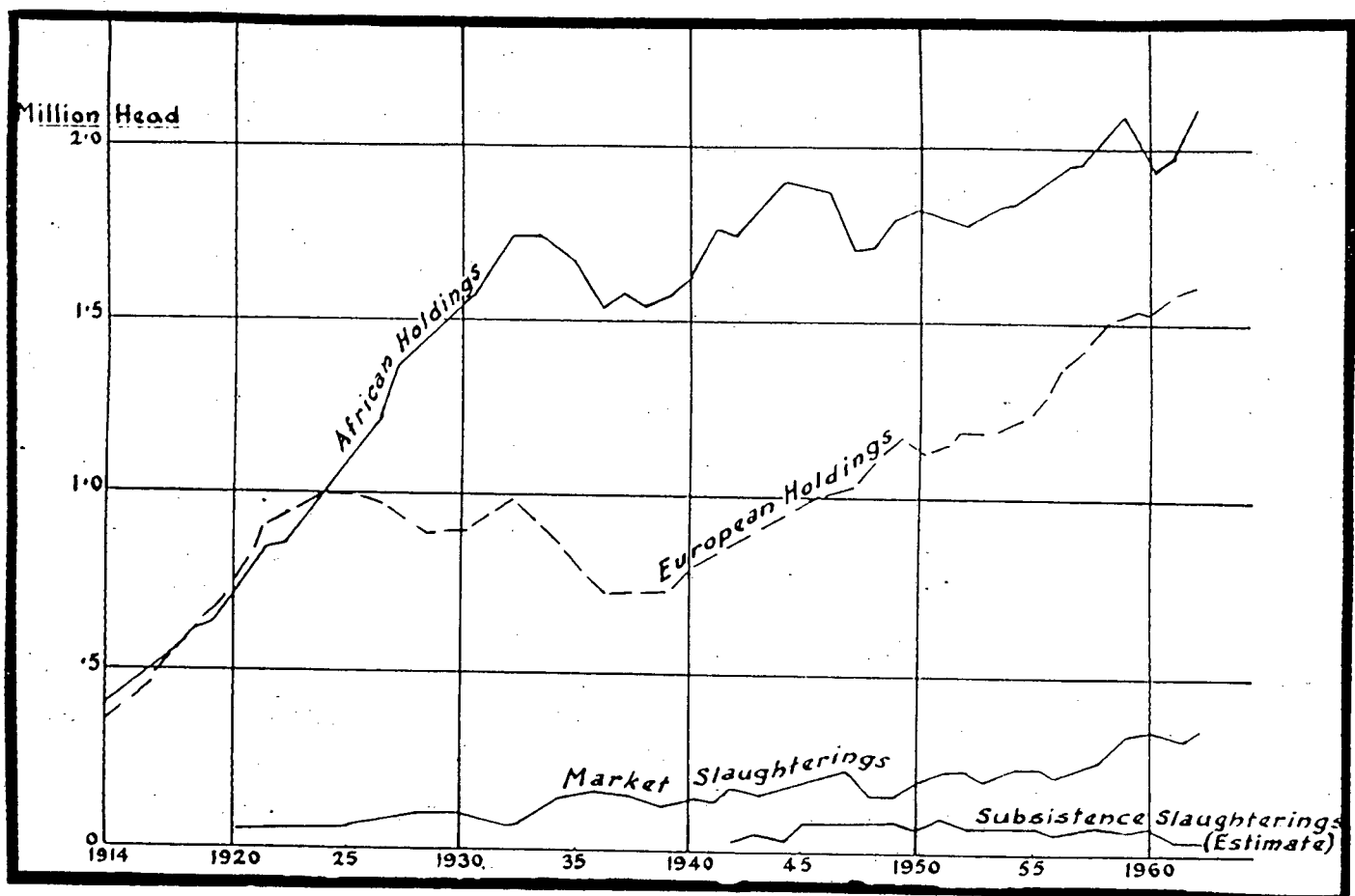
Year	Total No. of cattle Sold	% of Total Herd	Number Consumed	% of Total Herd	Losses	% of Total Herd	Total disposals	% of Total Herd
1953	106 158	5.8	82 845	4.5	43 349	2.4	232 352	12.7
1954	129 183	7.0	80 023	4.3	46 272	2.5	255 478	13.8
1955	115 477	6.1	77 786	4.1	49 777	2.6	243 040	12.8
1956	116 708	6.0	73 036	3.8	38 948	2.0	228 692	11.8
1957	128 312	6.5	77 263	3.9	45 155	2.3	250 730	12.7
1958	153 334	7.4	78 808	3.8	47 686	2.3	279 828	13.5
1959	152 177	7.3	72 770	3.5	56 296	2.7	281 243	13.5
1960	236 535	12.1	73 959	3.8	98 061	5.0	408 555	20.9
1961*	68 000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1962*	73 000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1963	66 000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

* Figures taken from 1310/F5/1, Cattle sales: African Areas Policy, Volume 1, Ministry of Internal Affairs, Memorandum to the AMC on the Cattle Position in African Areas, 3 November 1964.

Source: Phillips Committee Report (1962), Table 55, 164.

⁶² T.L Chamboko, “Cattle marketing in the communal areas of Zimbabwe: Factors influencing cattle marketing behaviour,” (University of Zimbabwe, unpub. M Phil. thesis, 1993) , 42.

⁶³ This was the belief that Africans raised and kept cattle purely for sociological, emotional or spiritual gratification and not for economic reasons. For over a decade now, this colonial view has been the subject of heated debate among African scholars. For more details on the ‘Cattle Complex’ debate, see



Graph 1: Relationship between African and European herds and Market and Subsistence slaughterings, 1914-1960.

In 1962, the Phillips Advisory Committee summed up the predominant thinking among colonial officials when it noted that:

Livestock, particularly goats, cattle and poultry, have always played a major part in the religious and tribal ceremonies of the African people and thus, have a significance as great as, or even greater than, that of providing economic security. This is not always sufficiently appreciated by those who do not know something of African folk lore, law and custom.⁶⁴

Not only did the Cattle Complex become the official scapegoat for explaining the decline of the African cattle industry and a sanction for compulsory destocking, but it also became a tool for perpetuating the myth that white capitalist ranchers were more efficient while Africans were supposedly irrational. By extension of logic, the Cattle Complex had long become a crucial factor governing and shaping colonial government policy towards the communal cattle sector. In fact, over the years, the government had constantly agonised over how it could transform the Cattle Complex, not just to harness what apparently was a crucial cheap beef source but also in the long term interests of the white capitalist ranching bourgeoisie.⁶⁵ The African cattle sector itself was far too important to be left alone, especially in the meatless fifties and early sixties when the sector was seen as a crucial source of young breeding stock and mature feeder stock for the white dominated capitalist sector. For example, by the close of the Federal period, government officials believed that African herds were capable of producing 100 000 young stock per year, which would bring the total value of marketed products in the beef industry as whole to 25 million *pounds sterling*.⁶⁶ In 1962, the Phillips Advisory Committee report noted that:

a great deal potential exists in S. Rhodesia for the production of beef, for export of good qualities to other parts of the world and for canning. While British breeds of beef cattle can be kept in favoured areas, they have not the heat tolerance to be commercially profitable under most conditions. Since the number of African owned cattle exceeds that of European owned cattle by one third, the native breeds should play a greater part in the future than they have done in the past in the production of beef. This could be done in a number of ways bearing in mind the general principle that breeding is most economically

⁶⁴ Phillips Advisory Committee Report, (1962), 157. The theme of the Cattle Complex was also a constant subject of attention by the Horwood Commission Report. For more details on this, see pages 89-100.

⁶⁵ For more details on this point, refer to Chapter Two and Three.

⁶⁶ For details on this, see R. K. Harvey, Chairman, National Cattle Committee, RNFU, "Cattle Now a Major Growth Point of the Economy," RPF, June 1964.

done on inferior [Reserve] land and under poorer conditions of nutrition and management, while rearing the weaned calf to slaughter weight is best done [on commercial ranches] under good nutritive conditions.⁶⁷

The following year, the Horwood Commission Report rather bluntly added that:

the African sector of the industry is relatively best suited to the low-cost breeding of animals, while the European farmers with easier access to capital, better pastures and more efficient management are in a better position to finish-off cattle. For this reason, the two sectors of the industry need to be closely integrated, and the facilities for the sale of selected stock [suitable young breeding stock] need to be continued and if possible, improved.⁶⁸

However, in making these assumptions about African peasant cattlemen, colonial officials chose not to appreciate the fact that the apparent unwillingness to sell cattle was a direct result of inter-linked factors. These included the exploitative colonial marketing policies, the multiple role of cattle in the communal agricultural sector to be discussed below, land scarcity, cattle diseases and uneconomically sized herds. Recently, scholars such as M. Steele and R. M. G. Mtetwa, among others, have not only persuasively demonstrated that cattle played a crucial economic role in the peasant sector but also that Africans responded positively to price incentives.⁶⁹ Yet another scholar, Paul Mosley correctly noted that:

the behaviour of the African agriculturalist in settler states was ... constrained by policy authorities' intervention at every step. 'Rationality' for him therefore, involved, not the free choices of producers in textbooks, but the question of how he might do best for himself in a policy environment that could not be taken as given, but might well hit back at him if he appeared to do too well. If 'rational economic man' is defined not as a trader in an impersonal market but as a player in a game with a hostile colonial government, he can readily be seen ... to have been alive and well in colonial Kenya and Southern Rhodesia. Nor, contrary to the contention of many 'underdevelopment' writers, was the game one which he always lost.⁷⁰

In his analysis of the economic behaviour of commercial beef producers in general, L. S. Jarvis also demonstrated that a pervasive negative supply response to price was not

⁶⁷ Phillips Advisory Committee Report, (1962), 171.

⁶⁸ Horwood Commission Report, (1963), 100-101.

⁶⁹ For details on this, see Mtetwa, "Myths or Reality," 23-35; M. C. Steele, "The Economic Function of African Owned Cattle in colonial Zimbabwe," Zambezia, Volume 9 No. 1, 1981, 30-44; T. L. Chamboko, "Cattle Marketing in the Communal Areas of Zimbabwe: Factors Influencing Cattle Marketing Behaviour." (University of Zimbabwe, unpub. MPhil thesis, 1993).

⁷⁰ Mosley, The Settler Economies, 109.

necessarily an indication of inherent irrational economic behaviour on the part of cattle producers. For example, Jarvis noted that:

cattle ... are capital goods which are held by producers as long as their capital value in production exceeds their slaughter value....The cattle sector presents an interesting feature insofar as the slaughter of animals responds negatively to a price increase in the short-run. [Unlike] the supply response of most other agricultural products, such as field crops ... cattle production can be increased only by increasing the size of the breeding herd and/or withholding animals for further fattening, producers must bid animals away from consumers to increase the capital stock which is the source of higher future beef production. And the slow rate of biological reproduction causes the negative supply response to persist for some time ... this behaviour is rational.⁷¹

However, lest one falls victim to the very same settler prejudices and ignorance which shaped colonial perceptions of the African peasantry, a clear distinction between communal cattle production on the one hand and capitalist ranching on the other, needs to be drawn first. Unlike in the capitalist agricultural sector where cattle were raised purely for commercial reasons at least from the early 1950s⁷², in the peasant communal agricultural sector, where the colonial government gave no financial assistance whatsoever, cattle remained almost purely as crucial production inputs with multiple economic and social functions other than the obvious one of providing beef. They provided draught power, transport, manure and milk. Thus, in so far as African peasants were concerned, "the sale of cattle to Europeans [or to the CSC] constituted only one, and often the least attractive, of several economic choices normally available to [them]."⁷³ To them the sale of an animal went beyond the simple Pavlovic reaction to so-called 'attractive prices or economic incentives. For most peasants, most of whom by the 1950s owned less than ten head of cattle anyway, a higher price meant that the standing value of cattle was raised and there was a greater incentive to hold on to them for their productive benefits as replacement automatically became more costly. Logically, by virtue of the fact that high prices pushed the value

⁷¹ L. S. Jarvis, "Cattle as Capital Goods and Ranchers as Portfolio Managers: An Application to the Argentine Cattle Sector," *Journal of Political Economy*, Vol. 82, No. 3, (1974), 489-491.

⁷² Since 1908, the capitalist agricultural sector and indeed, the colonial economy itself had largely depended on oxen for transport and ploughing. It was only in the period between 1945 and 1950 that rapid mechanization of the sector occurred. Because of this the number of trained oxen cattle fell from 131 000 in 1945 to 80 000 in 1950 while at the same time the number of tractors used rose from about 500 to 4 484. For more details on this point see V. E. M. Machingaidze, "The Development of Settler Capitalist Agriculture in S. Rhodesia, with Particular Reference to the Role of the State, 1908-1939", (University of London, unpub. DPhil thesis, 1980), 288; Dunlop, *The Development of European Agriculture*, 18.

of cattle up, high prices were not always welcome as these were actually “costs of capital acquisition rather than revenues from sales.”⁷⁴ Thus, quite on the contrary, the apparent “refusal” to sell, which many colonial officials mistook for emotional attachment to cattle, actually represented “a careful weighing up of the advantages and disadvantages of disposal to the European market, with reference to [seller’s] personal needs ... leading to a final decision not to sell.”⁷⁵

In an economy where cattle had a multiple role, the sale of one beast from an already depleted herd meant sacrificing several economic alternatives. Furthermore, in an economy where the value of a cow appreciated with the number of calves it produced, and also where the value of an ox was judged by the versatility of its economic multiple role, a beast could only command a ready sale if the price on offer was sufficiently high to offset the opportunity cost, i.e. sacrificed alternative uses, incurred in disposing it. Thus, it was the opportunity cost incurred in selling a beast which was the common denominator of the final selling price or whether a sale should take place at all. All the above factors could mean that the quality, age and sometimes the size of the animal offered for sale, were at best either almost immaterial or at worst, secondary considerations to the seller. “As a rule,” Chavunduka has argued, “an animal [was] not sold until its reproductive potential ha[d] been fully exploited.”⁷⁶ That the above was true was shown by the fact that most voluntary sales only yielded old and sometimes sick animals. Of course, when peasants refused to sell or asked for what appeared to be a ridiculously high price, colonial officials either simply dismissed this as a manifestation of the Cattle Complex, or as a result of the peasants’ inflated sense of value for their cattle. For example, Trevor Hermans, a Native Department official throughout the 1950s and 1960s, spoke for many when he reminisced, saying:

Some of the older tribesman had no idea of the criteria by which a beast was graded. I remember on one occasion a huge ox, nearly two metres at the

⁷³ Steele, “The Economic Function of African Owned Cattle in Colonial Zimbabwe,” 30.

⁷⁴ I. Scoones, “Households, Lineage Groups and Ecological Dynamics: Issues for Livestock Research and Development in Zimbabwe’s Communal Lands,” B. Cousins, C. Jackson and I. Scoones, Socio-Economic Dimensions of Livestock Production in the Communal Lands of Zimbabwe, (Masvingo, 1988), 19.

⁷⁵ Steele, “The Economic Function of African Owned Cattle in Colonial Zimbabwe,” 30

⁷⁶ D. M. Chavunduka, “The Role of Cattle in the Traditional African Society,” in A. J. Smith, Beef Cattle in Developing Countries, (Edinburgh, 1976), 399.

shoulder with gigantic horns to match, was persuaded with great difficulty because of its size and length of its horns to enter the scale platform enclosure. It was very old and was graded as Inferior. When the price was announced its venerable owner shook his grey head in disgust and accepted the price reluctantly, with the plaintive cry “Hau, imali ilutshawana impondo zingaka” [Alas, what a little money for horns that size!].⁷⁷

In the rural economy, increased grain output or food production could not be realised simultaneously with increased beef output. Due to lack of financial support from the government, grain output in the rural economy was directly and heavily dependent on inputs from cattle. It logically followed therefore, that breeding and draught animals “were too valuable to be sold to outsiders except in a very buoyant market or in cases of extreme adversity [such as drought].”⁷⁸

The need for draught power itself had a negative impact on African commercial beef output in two important ways. Firstly, the production of trek oxen involved the castration of bulls so as to make them amenable to the plough. However, the danger was that if castration was not monitored closely, an imbalance in herd composition could occur and the growth of the cattle inventory retarded as a result. Secondly, since a minimum of four strong oxen were needed to make a ploughing span it meant that hundreds of thousands of cattle were permanently tied to the land for years on end without the option of being sold. Unlike the white rancher who was financially backed to the hilt by private financial institutions and the government, the peasants conducted their agricultural activities completely at their own peril and the use of tractors, though preferable, was completely out of question. After all, larger numbers of trained oxen provided the peasantry with the cheapest and most dependable form of draught power. For example, in 1960, the Ministry of Internal Affairs estimated that about 785 000 head or some 35 per cent of African herds were being used in the African rural economy for draught purposes. Although the same Ministry acknowledged that a lasting solution to this problem lay in rural mechanisation, it was quick to add that, “to replace this draught power with tractors would, at [three *pounds sterling*] per acre, cost 9 582 million [*pounds sterling*] annually [and] this figure is several times the

⁷⁷ <http://ds.dial.pipex.com/hermans/book/ch2a.htm>, Trevor Hermans, “Those Were the Days,” (Online Book).

⁷⁸ Steele, “The Economic Function of African Owned Cattle in Colonial Zimbabwe,” 33.

total value of crops sold.”⁷⁹ The above situation was given an added twist by the need to keep the largest possible number of cattle in the rural economy mainly as a form of social security. This was especially true of the 1950s and 1960s when Africans had to contend with declining wages and agricultural output, land scarcity and general loss of economic security spawned by colonial government’s policies in general.⁸⁰

From the above, it can be seen that the most important and overriding factor determining the number of cattle sold was the price. In most cases, African peasants were severely exploited and it was not surprising that in the end, they devised subtle ways of subverting the government marketing policy. Available evidence, particularly on African cattle sales during the Federal period, clearly demonstrates the validity of Jarvis and Mosley’s arguments. With the increase in the pressure to destock, to pay dipping fees and marketing charges such as the Native Development Fund levy, writes Hermans, there arose a phenomenon of ‘ghost herds’ or an “accumulation of unregistered cattle never brought to the dip tanks and so not included in the dip fee register, and thus not paid for.”⁸¹ It is informative to note that while reporting noticeable increases in the number of cattle withdrawn from government organised weight-and-grade sales Native Department officials began to report a concomitant “trebling of cattle channelled through ‘other sales’ despite the considerable difficulty in obtaining [sales] permits to do so.”⁸²

Table 4.20 below clearly shows that the average percentage of cattle withdrawn from weight-and-grade auction sales by province more than doubled from an estimated seven per cent in 1959, to 16.6 per cent in 1963. In spite of the increase in the frequency of organised weight-and-grade sales throughout S. Rhodesia, it was clear that with each passing year, an increasingly fewer number of African owned cattle brought to those sales were actually sold there.

⁷⁹ F259/1, S. Rhodesia, Ministry of Internal Affairs, Evidence Submitted to the Commission of Inquiry into the cattle Industry, Salisbury, June 1963, 7.

⁸⁰ Arrighi, *The Political Economy of Rhodesia*, (The Hague, 1967), 44.

⁸¹ Hermans, “Those Were the Days,” 1.

⁸² *1310/F5/1, Cattle Sales: African Areas Policy, Volume 1, R. M. Mowbray, Animal Husbandry Officer Midlands, Department of Conservation and Extension, (CONEX), Report on Cattle Marketing in Tribal Areas, 31 May 1965. (N.B This file is deposited with the National Archives of Zimbabwe and is still closed to the public).

Table 4.20: Withdrawals as a Percentage of Cattle offered at Government Organised Sales, 1959-1964

Province	1959 (%)	1960 (%)	1961 (%)	1962 (%)	1963 (%)	1964 (%)
Mash. North	27.7	9.8	19.6	7.6	7.3	16.5
Mash. South	25.7	18.6	28.7	31.8	41.5	39.3
Midlands	15.4	21.2	19.6	26.1	39.7	41.0
Manicaland	3.0	4.3	10.1	12.4	19.4	19.7
Victoria	4.9	6.1	13.6	13.4	20.5	18.1
Mat. North	5.9	5.2	10.6	12.0	17.4	14.8
Mat. South	6.6	5.2	9.0	10.7	13.2	13.3
Tot. Average	6.9	6.8	12.7	13.3	18.1	16.6

Source: *1310/F5/1, Cattle Sales: African Areas Policy, I. G. Moore, Agricultural Economist, Economics and Markets Branch, Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Lands, A preliminary Analysis of Organised Cattle Sales in African Areas, 17 December 1965.

The withdrawal of thousands of cattle from weight and grade sales was a major contributory factor to the CSC's failure to secure sufficient cattle numbers to meet its requirements of low grade beef especially during the lean seasons when flows of cattle to organised sales dwindled. This situation forced the CSC to bid for cattle above the prescribed AGFP.⁸³ The percentage of cattle withdrawn from organised auction sales increased, i.e. as one moved down the scale of grades, from six-and-a-half per cent in 1957 to 21.6 per cent in the period January-June, 1963. On the other hand, the percentage of cattle withdrawn from weight and grade sales followed a somewhat fluctuating pattern during the same period. (See table 4.21 below).

Table 4.21: Withdrawals at African Owned Cattle Sales as a Percentage of Total Number of Cattle offered for Sale by Principal Slaughter Grades, 1957-1963

Grade	1957		1958		1959		1960		1961		1962		Jan-June 1963	
	*W & G	Auct	W & G	Auct	W & G	Auct	W & G	Auct	W & G	Auct	W & G	Auct	W & G	Auct
Standard "A"	-	-	-	2.9	2.0	3.0	-	1.4	-	1.0	-	3.7	-	3.2
GAQ	1.2	3.6	1.2	6.7	1.7	4.1	2.6	3.4	7.3	6.2	3.8	8.8	-	11.9
FAQ	2.3	6.2	2.4	9.0	4.0	6.5	4.5	7.4	14.8	10.5	3.5	13.1	-	16.0
Compound Inferior	3.2	6.7	3.4	12.3	4.1	8.0	5.9	8.3	16.9	12.5	4.4	14.2	-	23.2
TOTAL #	5.9	8.4	9.4	18.3	15.2	11.1	17.2	8.4	31.5	19.1	5.3	22.2	-	31.1
	3.8	6.5	3.4	12.3	4.7	8.1	6.8	7.8	16.1	12.5	3.8	13.9	-	21.6

*W&G- Weight and Grade

including "unselected" stock and Rejects.

Source: Horwood Commission Report, 138.

Most complaints about price were closely linked to the way cattle were graded, as well as to the disparities in prices obtaining at sales in African and European areas. For example, the CSC's price schedule which was meant to stimulate the production of export grade cattle actually penalised producers of grass fed slaughter stock, the majority of whom were African peasants themselves.⁸⁴ The price schedule achieved this objective by squeezing all grass fed stock into the low paying or poor quality grades, so much so that African peasants always obtained very low prices for their cattle. After a tour of cattle sales in the Zvimba and Sinoia districts in May 1964, one of the CSC's [P]ublic [R]elations [O]fficers informed Head Office that:

the universal complaint that prices are too low must be accepted as a largely contributing factor for the African not selling cattle. He has seen from European sales what prices can be obtained and he wants something more in keeping with these prices himself.⁸⁵

Only a month earlier, yet another CSC PRO touring the Manicaland district had again reported to Head Office that

there was a universal feeling that the Tribal Trust Land [cattle] sale prices were 'fixed' against the African whilst selling direct to the CSC like

⁸³ *1310/F5/1, Cattle Sales: African Areas Policy, S. A. Cloate, Ministry of Internal Affairs, Memorandum on CSC and African Cattle Sales, 1 June 1966.

⁸⁴ The price schedule offered a weight bonus only on fattened animals and not grass fed stock. For more details on this point see, Dunlop, Development of European Agriculture, 52.

⁸⁵ *1310/F5/1, Cattle Sales: African Areas Policy, CSC, [P]ublic [R]elations [O]fficer, Report to the Chairman and General Manager CSC on a Visit to Native Purchase Areas in Sinoia District, 5-7 May 1964 and 11 May 1964.

Europeans [does] return much better prices ... great suspicion exists because an ox graded No. 1 GAQ in April is often worth less than that when graded No. 2 FAQ in November. This to them is the height of chicanery.⁸⁶

The controversy over prices however, was a direct result of the way in which prices were fixed by the government through the CSC. "The paramount influence at most African auction sales", argued the S. Rhodesian Ministry of Internal Affairs to the [A]gricultural [M]arketing [C]ouncil in 1963, "is still the floor price [i.e. AGFP], and until this is based on [realistic] market values, the seller cannot expect a fair price for his cattle, nor can there be any stability in the African cattle industry."⁸⁷ The main problem was that the AGFP was not based whatsoever on realistic market values. Therefore, the result was that cattle prices at all organised sales tended to take their cue from the officially prescribed or fixed price schedule. Most teething problems were experienced in areas under quarantine and where the CSC bought cattle without competition at all.⁸⁸ However, similar problems were also experienced in areas where public auctions were held. Again, here healthy competition was stifled by the CSC which conveniently adjusted rules governing sales in order to swing business to its favour.⁸⁹

A major source of dissatisfaction about the CSC's price schedule was the manner in which prices were seasonally adjusted. During the flush season the AGFP was fixed a much lower level while during the off season the AGFP was fixed at a higher level to attract or induce deliveries to the CSC abattoirs. Either way, the African producers got a raw deal. Firstly, these producers lost out due to the fact that organised sales were conducted during the dry season or the so-called flush season when prices were low and when most cattle in the African Reserves would have already lost their condition due to poor grazing. Secondly, during the off season, i.e. beginning of the rainy season, the need to keep cattle for draught power again prevented "peasants from availing themselves of the higher prices."⁹⁰

⁸⁶ Ibid., CSC, PRO, Report on Meetings with Native Purchase Area Farmers in Manicaland District, 20-23 April 1964 and 27 April 1964, 2.

⁸⁷ F226/1091/3, AMC: Cattle, Ministry of Internal Affairs, Evidence Submitted to the AMC, 6 May 1963, 8.

⁸⁸ CSC, *Ann. Rep. and Acc.*, 1956, 6.

⁸⁹ F226/1091/3, AMC: Cattle, R. Dawson, Secretary, AMC: Summary of Evidence Concerning Cattle Producer Prices and an Attempt to Define the Problem, 1 June 1963, 3.

⁹⁰ Weinrich, *African Farmers in Rhodesia*. 112.

Against this backdrop must be placed the impact of ecological deterioration on the quality of African owned cattle. For example, deteriorating ecological conditions in 1960 alone explained why less than eight per cent of the 231 000 head of cattle sold by Africans qualified as “good” grades while the rest classified as low-grade animals.⁹¹ In 1962, the Phillips Advisory Committee noted with a sense of helpless pathos that:

the percentage of slaughter stock in the grades GAQ and below is in excess of 99 per cent of all the slaughter cattle sold. The GAQ comprises only about 17 per cent of the total, FAQ grade comprises 21 per cent and the Compound and lower, the remainder [62 percent].⁹²

During the following year, 1963, the Ministry of Internal Affairs rather cynically noted that:

[the] poor condition [of African-owned cattle] is largely accidental, arising from ... poor season[s], overstocking or bad husbandry, and can hardly be induced by the producer as a matter of policy ... it is likely that a higher price might induce more Inferiors to be sold. This would have the desirable effect of leaving more grazing for the better grades, and putting the inferiors where they belong - in tins.⁹³

While the same Ministry might have added that the wretched condition of African owned cattle was a direct result of colonial land policies, it chose, as was common practice among officials, to apportion all blame on the African peasant subsistence land husbandry. It remains true, however, that the government was mainly concerned with two things: protecting the interests of white ranchers and securing sufficient deliveries of low-quality stock on the cheap. After all, cheap low-grade cattle were the only means by which the CSC could make profits and thus offset losses made on domestic sales of higher grade beef coming from white-owned ranches.⁹⁴ In this way, the government was able to extract capital, in the form of both cattle and money, from the African cattle sector in the interests of white capitalist accumulation.

⁹¹ Yudelman, *Africans On the Land*, especially Footnote 28, 275.

⁹² F259/1, S. Rhodesia, Ministry of Internal Affairs, Evidence Submitted to the Commission of Inquiry into the Cattle Industry, June 1963, 8.

⁹³ F226/1091/3, AMC: Cattle, Ministry of Internal Affairs, Evidence Submitted to the AMC on the Principle that the Producer Prices of Various Grades of Cattle should reflect their Market Values, 6 May 1963, 8.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

The final price received by African cattle producers was further reduced to a pittance by the deduction of the 17.5 per cent [N]ative [D]evelopment [F]und levy, the main purpose of which was to facilitate the process of capital extraction from the peasant sector at little cost to the government. For example, the NDF was used in the construction of communal dipping tanks, control of pests, to cover costs of government organised cattle sales and other related marketing expenses, construction of earth weirs, roads and bridges.⁹⁵ The official standpoint was also that since the protection and improvement of all grazing land in the African Reserves was “nobody’s business” such a fund would help in securing “a contribution from the users of the communally occupied areas to assist in their overall development in the interests of all users.”⁹⁶

Despite the fact that the burden of the levy was carried by the African peasantry only, the real beneficiaries were the CSC, private cattle dealers and white ranchers who did not have to pay for the costs of organising and marketing of cattle. In fact, as an incentive to encourage buyers to attend organised sales, the government actually paid them distance allowances and transport costs from the NDF marketing charge vote.⁹⁷ Thus, by reducing the final price to a pittance, the levy itself contributed to the decline in cattle sales.

⁹⁵ Phillips Advisory Committee Report, (1962), 158.

⁹⁶ Ann. Rep. Sec. Dept. Internal Affairs and CNC, 1962, 15.

⁹⁷ F259/1, S. Rhodesia, Ministry of Internal Affairs, Evidence Submitted to the Commission of Inquiry into the Cattle Industry, Salisbury, June 1963, 32.

Table 4.22: Total Value of Native Development Fund Levy from Cattle and Average Price per beast Received by African Producers after Deduction of Levy and Marketing Charges: 1953-1962

Year	Total Amount of Levy Deducted (000' pound stlg.)	Average Price received per beast less 17.5% levy
1953*	-	10. 6s. 1d.
1954*	-	10. 5s. 9d.
1955*	-	10. 16s. 10d.
1956*	-	13. 4s 5d.
1957*	-	14. 0s. 6d.
1958	334 556	13. 4s. 7d.
1959	347 609	14. 1s. 11d.
1960	281 086	12. 9s. 9d.
1961	109 732	15. 19s. 11d.
1962	134 000	17. 19s. 2d.

* Figures on total levy deductions made not available.

Source: Figures taken from: F259/1, S. Rhodesia, Ministry of Internal Affairs, Evidence Submitted to the Commission of Inquiry into the Cattle Industry, Salisbury, June 1963, 3; Ann. Rep. Sec., Dept. Internal Affairs and CNC, 1962, Table 16, 67.

An equally important factor which explains the decline in African cattle sales in the late 1950s and early 1960s, was the fact that over time, the continued expansion of African owned herds was increasingly being checked by the twin factors of land scarcity and overgrazing.⁹⁸ "As the capacity of the pastures was reached and then exceeded, cattle population density became increasingly controlled by thirst and starvation, [and] starvation not only control[led] numbers of cattle, it also limit[ed] their size."⁹⁹ In comparison, white owned herds were, "less liable to this catastrophic form of population limitation."¹⁰⁰ Just as much as the land available per family unit continued to shrink, so were the average herd sizes per household reduced to uneconomic levels. Already by 1960, close to 350 000 African families lived in Reserves while in the African Purchase Areas an estimated 6 500 families owned an average of between 50 and 1 000 acres of land. The average acreage per family in the

⁹⁸ According to the Phillips Committee, in 1962 an estimated 9.5 million acres or 3.7 per cent of land in the Reserves was overstocked. Phillips Advisory Committee Report, (1962), 161.

⁹⁹ J. Ford, The Role of the Trypanosomiases in African Ecology: A Study of the Tsetse Fly Problem, (London, 1971), 352.

Reserves varied from as little as five acres to 83 acres.¹⁰¹ Commenting on the critical situation in African Reserves, Yudelman has argued that:

the differences in size of holdings extend[ed] also to livestock herds... in 1958 Europeans owned 1.5 million head while Africans held 2 million. European herds averaged close to 300 head per production unit. The size of herds varied; in the principal livestock raising areas, the average size of herd [was] close to 480 head, while in the principal crop raising areas, it [was] close to 280 head. In 1960, there were 231 000 African livestock owners with an average of slightly more than 5 adult cattle per owner. The range in size of individual herds [was] not known, but a sample of 486 cultivators indicated that 12 per cent had no cattle, 21 per cent owned between 1 and 5 head, and less than 1 per cent had more than 40 head.¹⁰²

But, the problem confronting the African cattlemen went beyond that of land scarcity to include that of virulent cattle diseases such as Foot and Mouth. This epidemiological situation in African Reserves worsened in the two decades after the Second World War due to the extension of African settlements into the known tsetse-fly belts after the Second World War.¹⁰³ (See Map 2 below) In this way, the process of post-war settlement had the effect of turning pockets of African settlement in these marginal areas into tsetse fly buffer zones. "The implementation of the Land Apportionment Act and the resettlement of Africans in certain areas," excitedly noted the Game Department in 1957, "has had the effect of pushing the wild animals out."¹⁰⁴ Table 4.23 below shows that the percentage of land occupied by Africans and which lay inside the known tsetse fly belts, increased from 57.51 per cent in 1931, to 71.53 per cent in 1961, while during the same period the amount of white owned land which lay inside the same belts fell from 33.45 per cent in 1931 to 9.81 per cent, respectively.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

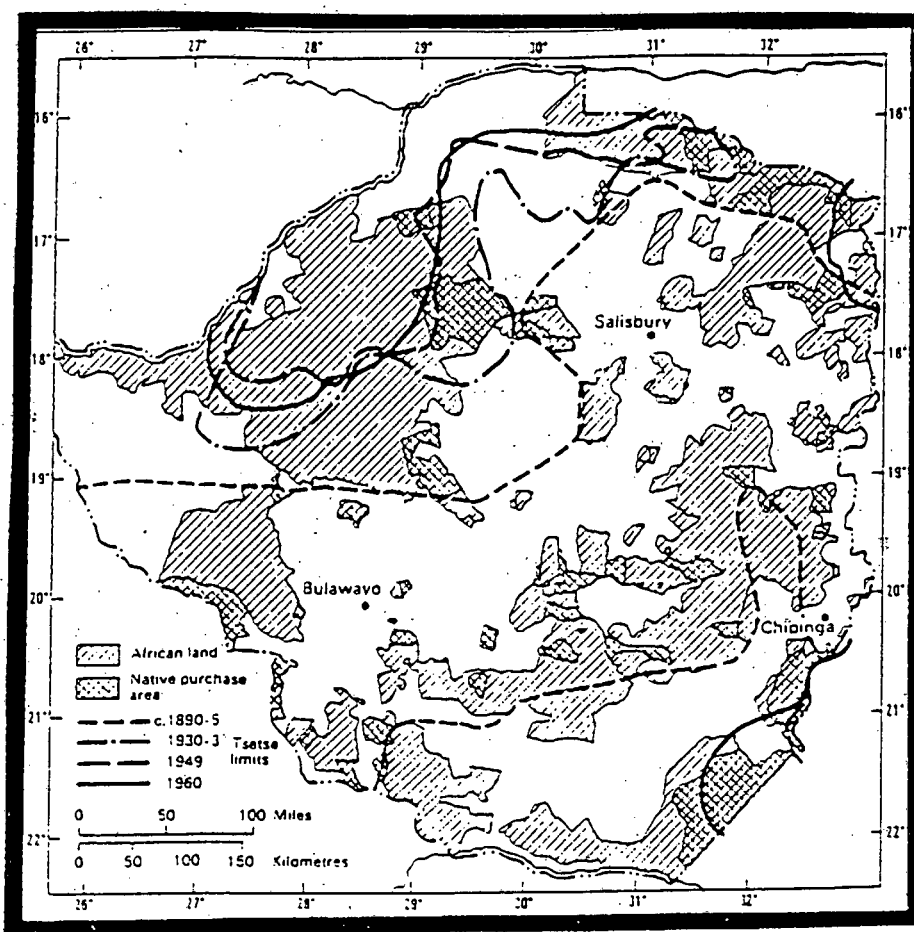
¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ In order to create space for post war white settlement the government invoked the Land Apportionment Act of 1941 by organising mass evictions of all Africans residing on white owned land and Crown land. For more details on this point refer to Chapter Three; See also N. Bhebe, Benjamin Burombo: African Politics in Zimbabwe, 1947-1958 (Harare, 1989).

Table 4.23 : Land Inside Known Tsetse Fly Belts and Pattern of Ownership in Southern Rhodesia.

Land Apportionment	1931		1961	
	Sq. Miles	Percentage	Sq. Miles	Percentage
African Land	13 496	57.51	11 912	71.53
European Land	7 848	33.45	1 633	9.81
Forest or National Land	2 121	9.04	3 107	18.66
TOTAL	23 465	100.00	16 652	100.00

Source: Ford, *The role the Trypanosomiasis in African Ecology*, 346.



Map 2: African-owned Land Inside Known Tsetse-fly Belts in S. Rhodesia, 1960.

¹⁰⁴ Wild game acted as tsetse fly hosts and thus were regarded as a reservoir of diseases such as Foot and mouth. See *Ann. Rep., Dept. of Game, Div. of Mines, Lands and Survey, No.5, 1957, 6.*

It must be emphasised that the policy of making African Reserves bear the brunt of tsetse fly attacks “greatly improved the relative position of white landowners vis-à-vis the Africans within the tsetse infested areas.”¹⁰⁵ Thus, in a way, the government’s post-war resettlement policy turned parts of the African herd into mere sentinel herds or alarm bells, the sole purpose of which was to give the Veterinary Department prior warning of any imminent tsetse fly invasions. In most cases, of which there were many in the 1950s and 1960s, Africans suffered from heavy stock losses because the “space into which to retreat to avoid diseases was now not available” as most tsetse-free land had already been snapped up for post-war resettlement of white ex-servicemen.¹⁰⁶ The net effect of all these developments was to reduce the African contribution to commercial beef production in the country.

Conclusion

This chapter has tried to analyse the strengths and weaknesses of the government’s pricing policy between 1957 and 1964. Firstly, it analyses how the emergence of a Federal marketing policy was delayed until 1960, by the conflict of interest between the S. Rhodesian CSC and private butchers which controlled the meat trade in N. Rhodesia and Nyasaland. Federal integration resulted in the extension of the CSC’s operations and pricing policy into the two northern territories and did not represent a shift or change in government policy towards the beef industry in S. Rhodesia.

During the late 1950s and early 1960s, the country’s beef industry was faced with a situation where it was forced to export surpluses of higher grade beef at a time when the country was facing a domestic shortage of low grade meat. This awkward state of affairs was a result of two main factors. Because of the decline in the fortunes of the tobacco industry from the late 1950s onwards, a significant number of tobacco producers in the north were forced to maintain viability by diversifying into beef production especially cattle fattening. The production of high grades was further

¹⁰⁵ Ford, *The Role of Trypanosomiasis in African Ecology*, 345.

¹⁰⁶ M. T. Tarutira, “A Review of Tsetse and Trypanosomiasis in Southern Rhodesia: Economic Significance Up to 1955,” (University of Zimbabwe, unpub. MA thesis, 1988), 22.

stimulated by the government's pricing policy which paid bonuses on export grade beef and discouraged the production of grass fed animals. The policy, which resulted in the widespread exploitation of the African peasantry, led to the decline of the African cattle industry and thus, worsened the shortage of low grade beef on the domestic market.

As the chapter has tried to show, the most acute problem posed by the government's pricing policy was that the bonuses paid on top grades of beef bore no relation to the needs of the domestic market. Thus, most of the beef produced was highly priced and could only be sold at a loss on the domestic market. This problem resulted in a growing financial burden on the government as domestic beef prices had to be subsidised all the time. However, the problem was that in spite of the subsidies, locally produced beef remained relatively more expensive than other sources of protein such as fish. This problem helped to put into question the efficacy of statutory price support in the beef industry in particular, and the agricultural sector in general.

Chapter Five

The Calamity of 'Cowboy'¹ Independence: The Beef Industry in the Early Years of UDI, 1965-1971

Following the Rhodesian Front's [U]nilateral [D]eclaration of [I]ndependence in November 1965, the international community led by Britain imposed mandatory sanctions "to return [Ian] Smith to legality."² Since S. Rhodesia had come to rely on the lucrative British market for its beef and tobacco exports, the imposition of economic sanctions had a far-reaching impact on the capitalist agricultural sector in general. For example, sanctions had the effect of limiting even further the market for the tobacco industry, thereby giving a sense of urgency to the process of agrarian diversification on the country's maize and tobacco belt. Thus, not only did sanctions necessitate the restructuring of the commercial agricultural industry but they also helped to bring in direct government intervention in the search for new markets and in the process of agrarian diversification. In turn, these changes were to have a direct and largely positive impact on the country's beef industry, which expanded rapidly between 1965 and 1971.

¹ The [R]hodesian [F]ront government was dubbed by many as a "cowboy" Government because of the preponderance of the "planter interest" or farmers in its Parliament and the Cabinet. According to R. Blake, "The expression [planter] with its echo of the Southern states before the American Civil War, admirably catches the flavour of this element in Southern Rhodesian society." See his, A History of Rhodesia (London, 1977), 275; Peter Joyce, Anatomy of a Rebel (Salisbury, 1974), 126.; K. Young, Rhodesia and Independence: A Study in British Colonial Policy (London, 1969), 108. L. Cliffe and L. Bowman have both persuasively argued that the Rhodesian Front represented an alliance between settler farmers and the settler urban petty bourgeoisie consisting of clerks, artisans, small businessmen and shopkeepers. In particular, Cliffe maintains that the common denominator of this alliance was the "essential community of interests ... in the manner in which the black majority was oppressed and exploited." For more detail on this point see his article entitled "Zimbabwe's Political Inheritance," in C. Stoneman, (ed.) Zimbabwe's Inheritance, (London, 1981), 17. Bowman notes that "It [was] readily apparent that rural representation within the [R]hodesian [F]ront far out-weighed its numerical proportion of the population. The rural constituencies [had] far more branches... established in small rural centres which service[d] the surrounding farms or ranches... Representation in the party executive closely followe[d] the constituency break-down.... The caucus [was] heavily weighted toward farmers and ranchers. Eighteen of the fifty MP's elected for the RF in 1965 came from this occupational category, far in excess of their proportion of the total European population. Finally, both R. F prime ministers [were] farmers: Winston Field was one of the most prominent tobacco farmers in the country, and Ian Smith, though primarily a politician all his life, maintain[ed.] a ranch near his home in Selukwe." For more details on this, see his book Politics in Rhodesia: White Power in an African State, (Cambridge, 1973), 97-105; It becomes more compelling to use the term "cowboy" or "farmers government" when one considers the fact that in 1965, more than two thirds of all white farmers or 4 379 out of slightly over 6 000 farmers in Rhodesia were ranchers themselves. For more information on this, see [A]gricultural [M]arketing [A]uthority, Beef Situation and Outlook Report, 1982, Appendix 3.

² A. Astrow, Zimbabwe: A Revolution That Lost Its Way?, (London, 1983), 14.

Rhodesia's Secret Beef Trade

By 1965, the Smithfield meat market had, as already noted in Chapter Four, become the country's largest export market absorbing between 40 and 50 per cent of the industry's fresh, frozen and chilled beef exports. Thus, the closure of Smithfield as a result of the sanctions had an immediate devastating impact on the beef industry, which by now was producing an increasing surplus of top grades, which the domestic market could not absorb, serve at a loss to the CSC. Thus, new or alternative markets had to be found as early as possible. To cater for new market preferences or tastes, the industry was forced to overhaul its grading system which had been in operation for almost 20 years.³ In 1966, the Secretary for Agriculture noted that:

The type of beef required by Smithfield was obtained largely from the animals graded as '[R]hodesia's [B]est' and 'Imperial'. These grades required a type of finish demanded only on Smithfield and not elsewhere. It was essential therefore, that the emphasis should be switched to the production of leaner beef of the quality and finish demanded by other markets.⁴

A comprehensive review of the industry's grading system and export price schedule was undertaken in view of the shift in export markets. In 1967, a revised seasonal price schedule meant to stimulate deliveries throughout the year was drawn-up and a new grade called 'Chiller' Beef was introduced. The introduction of this grade meant that the beef industry had to concentrate on the production of younger and lightly finished animals for chilling throughout the year. Thus, almost overnight, the industry had to effect a complete departure from past practice in which export demand had been met by an irregular supply of heavier but older animals.⁵

The problem of markets was solved by simply violating international sanctions. In fact, there is abundant evidence to suggest that many of the countries which traditionally had been Rhodesia's major trading partners prior to sanctions continued to do business with it in direct violation of international sanctions. Among the chief violators of the sanctions was South Africa

³ *Ann. Rep. Sec. Agric and Lands.*, 1966, 2.

⁴ *Ibid.*; *RPF*, No. 139, September 1967, 27.

and Portuguese-controlled Mozambique.⁶ Through these countries the Rhodesian government was able to conduct an elaborate secret beef trade right under the noses of international sanctions monitors. Rhodesia's overall strategy in forging new trade links involved extending preferential treatment previously accorded to Commonwealth countries to any other country outside the Commonwealth, such as Portugal. For example, in March 1965, the Rhodesian government signed a bilateral trade agreement with Portugal and its colonies. The agreement paved the way for the most favoured nation status on each "other's products, for duty-free treatment for live animals and products of the soil" originating in and passing between Mozambique and Rhodesia and also for duty free entry of a small number of items from Rhodesia into Angola and vice-versa.⁷

At the same time, the Rhodesian government also made sure that economic advantages enjoyed by its Southern African trading partners such as South Africa were maintained.⁸ The establishment of a single column customs tariff in 1967 between Rhodesia and South Africa helped to preserve advantages already contained in their 1964 bilateral Trade Agreement. Thus, "the introduction of the new customs tariff, read in conjunction with the [1964] trade agreement virtually entrench[ed] South Africa as the major [importer of Rhodesian products and] exporter to Rhodesia."⁹ The 1964 Trade Agreement itself gave a wide range of South African products the special preference formerly accorded to Commonwealth trading partners. In return, a wide range of Rhodesian products were accorded duty free status or preferential entry on to the South African market.¹⁰ Also, a number of Rhodesian products such as clothing made from woven materials, hollow-ware, leather and rubber footwear, cotton-piece goods, yarn, twine and cordage, blankets, paper and cardboard, travel goods and certain processed foods like beef,

⁵ CSC News, Vol. 13, No. 54, December 1978.

⁶ H. R. Strack, Sanctions: The Case of Rhodesia (Syracuse, 1978), 114.

⁷ Rhodesia, Ministry of Industry and Commerce, Ann. Rep., 1971, 4; Strack, "The International Relations of Rhodesia Under Sanctions," 213.

⁸ For more details on this point, see Statement by John Wrathal, Minister of Finance, Leg. Ass. Debates, Vol. 66, 15 February 1967, Cols. 1625-26.

⁹ Leg. Ass. Debates, Vol. 66, 15 February 1967, Cols. 1625-26; H. R. Strack, "The International Relations of Rhodesia under Sanctions," (University of Iowa, unpub. PhD thesis, 1974), 208.

¹⁰ RPF, No. 116, October 1965; Southern Rhodesia and South Africa, Trade Agreement between the government of Southern Rhodesia and the government of the Republic of South Africa, 1964; Strack, Sanctions: The Case of Rhodesia, 114.

either fresh, frozen or canned¹¹, were “allowed entry into South Africa under a restrictive quota system which was designed to maximise the diversity of the Rhodesian entry while minimising the disruptive effect on South African industry.”¹²

The various trade agreements between Rhodesia on the one hand and South Africa and Mozambique on the other, were to play a pivotal role in sustaining and promoting Rhodesia’s secret international trade not just in beef but in other major exports such as tobacco. H. R. Strack who investigated the nature of trade relations between Rhodesia, Portugal and South Africa explained how the intricate web of trade arrangements facilitated the violation of international sanctions against the Rhodesian government, when he noted that:

Rhodesian products are sent to these two countries [South Africa and Portugal] and then re-shipped to buyers all over the world. The records of the importing countries show these goods as having originated in South Africa or Mozambique. If any Government challenges a buyer, the buyer can produce false declarations and certificates of origin. With the Rhodesian linkage to the product thus obscured, the buyer is protected from possible prosecution and forfeiture of the product. This method is also used to shield the ultimate destination of goods which Rhodesia imports.¹³

Reports of Rhodesia’s secret dealings with its two neighbours clearly reveal how South Africa and Mozambique became the main conduits through which RF government evaded sanctions against its beef exports. For example, less than a year after the declaration of UDI, the Rhodesian periodical, RPF, summarised the ways through which South Africa and Mozambique helped the RF government conduct its secret beef trade when it noted that:

Imports present no problems: South Africa merely increases its own imports of required materials and thus directly or indirectly helps supply Rhodesian needs. Similarly, South Africa and Portuguese Territories either take Rhodesia’s exports themselves or accept them, where necessary, for re-export to other buyers. And few buyers know, or care, whether the products are Rhodesian or not, even if identification were always possible. In identifiable products like asbestos and tobacco, there is nothing to stop the Republic [of South Africa] from itself consuming a proportion of Rhodesian imports and

¹¹ For more details on rebates on products, see Annextures to the 1964 Trade Agreement; Leg. Ass. Debates, 3 December 1964, Cols. 1090-1092.

¹² The trade Agreement was to last for “an initial five year term and was automatically renewable on a yearly basis “unless either Government gives twelve months notice of termination.” For more details on this point, see Strack, Sanctions, 114; For more details on this point, see also Rhodesia, Min. Comm. and Indust. Ann. Rep. 1971, 4.

¹³ Strack, “The International Relations of Rhodesia Under Sanctions,” 240.

exporting its own. Indeed, this is exactly the arrangement in relation to certain consignments of beef.¹⁴

To facilitate the secret export of embargoed products like beef, the RF government established front companies with links to South Africa's freight forwarding firms. One such front company was Export Sales (Pvt.) which had links with Imex Export, a South African firm with world wide contacts.¹⁵ The RF government also established various central trading and buying agencies such as Univex, which co-ordinated exports.¹⁶ The operations of the front companies were abated by the government Printing and Stationary Department whose job now included the printing of false papers or certificates of origin for embargoed exports. In this and other ways, the RF government managed to get a variety of dairy products, cotton, grain and beef out of the country.¹⁷ The handling of Rhodesian products in South Africa itself was made easier by the role played by influential organisations such as the *Afrikaanse Handelsinstituut*, which in June 1966, called on South African firms to market Rhodesian products to the world in a way which would effectively disguise the country of origin of the products.¹⁸

The irony of this situation was that British beef consumers, whose country had spearheaded the implementation of sanctions against Rhodesia, may actually have continued to consume Rhodesian beef mistaking it for Argentinean or, South African beef for that matter. In March 1968, the [R]and [D]aily [M]ail made a startling disclosure when it reported that Britain was still importing large quantities of Rhodesian beef "under false South African papers."¹⁹ Donald Trelford, a correspondent with the RDM, reported of a "bizarre and complicated sanctions dodging network running from Rhodesia, through the Canary Islands and a number of European countries."²⁰ According to the RDM report, one Western European meat importer had already been prosecuted for "selling carcasses of Rhodesian beef at the Smithfield market with false South African papers."²¹ The paper further reported that "a number of big European firms are

¹⁴ RPE, No. 128, October 1966, 7.

¹⁵ BC, 8 March 1966.

¹⁶ Strack, "The International Relations of Rhodesia Under Sanctions," 245.

¹⁷ H. Ellert, The Rhodesian Front War: Counter-Insurgency and Guerrilla Warfare, 1962-1980 (Gwelo, 1989), 164-5.

¹⁸ RH, 9 June 1966.

¹⁹ RDM, 18 March 1968.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid.

also known to be involved in this and other illicit transactions with the RF government.”²² The Cape Argus also carried a report under the headline: ‘**BRITISH SUNDAY JOINT MAY BE RHODESIAN**’ in which it also noted that:

Since UDI and in fact, a little before it, there has been a sudden upsurge in beef cattle raising [in Rhodesia] and today Rhodesia is exporting not only to South Africa but further afield. In fact, it is quite true to say that many of the British housewives’ Sunday joints come from Rhodesia, in spite of all the talk about sanctions.²³

As late as the early 1970s, major English papers such as Sunday Times could still make reports to the effect that most of Rhodesia’s agricultural products were still finding their way to world markets thanks to Rhodesian and British business people, who still maintained very close links through “various cloak and dagger rendezvous.”²⁴ A report quoted by the RDM from the Observer newspaper during the same period revealed:

a network of Rhodesian agents organising deals in Geneva, Zurich, Lausanne, Paris, Hamburg, Bremen, Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Maastricht, Genoa, Trieste, Lisbon, Las Palmas and one of the less frequented Canary Islands.²⁵

Earlier in July 1967, one John Wrathal, a correspondent to the Manchester Guardian, was quoted as saying that, “through mysterious channels ... and those not so mysterious ... Rhodesian beef ... is still being exported in unknown quantities.”²⁶ In September of the same year, even the Minister of Agriculture revealed that “Rhodesia was selling beef at the rate of 15 million *pounds sterling* a year” and that such “export earnings enabled the government, a year or two later, to inject nearly one and a half million dollars into the cattle industry under a new bonus scheme.”²⁷ In 1969, it was further “confirmed that about 40 per cent of Rhodesia’s beef production was being exported.”²⁸

The extent to which Rhodesia’s secret beef trade was a success will probably never be known, mainly because of systematic cover-ups involving many front organisations and the destruction of data on unacknowledged trade. As Ken Flower, Chief of Rhodesia’s Central Intelligence

²² Ibid.

²³ Cape Argus, 2 March 1968.

²⁴ ST, (London) 12 November 1972.

²⁵ RDM, 18 March 1968.

²⁶ RPF, No. 137, July 1967, 12.

²⁷ J. Handford, A Portrait of An Economy Under Sanctions, 1965-1975, (Salisbury, 1976), 109.

²⁸ Ibid.

Organisation put it, the evasion of sanctions “had become a highly intricate ... game in which players from many countries were participating.”²⁹ For obvious reasons, the RF government itself maintained a veil of secrecy on all transactions made during that time. Thus, typical of Rhodesian official reportage in those days, in 1966, the Secretary for Agriculture could only report that “the CSC [had] gained an entry into a new market”, and that with regards to new markets, “no further details can be given ... about transactions which took place and structures devised after UDI since this would not be in the public interest.”³⁰

However, a few highly classified reports which still survive and are now open to the public, help to reveal the extent of Rhodesia’s unacknowledged beef trade. Information contained in table 5.1 clearly shows the various destinations, quantity and the value of Rhodesia’s illegal beef exports in the first half of the 1970s.³¹

Table 5.1: Beef Exports by Destination, Mass and Value, 1970-1975.

Year	1970	1971	1972	1973	1974	1975
Destination & Commodity	000 kg					
1: South Africa						
Beef, Frozen, chilled	27 881	24 876	24 569	31 185	29 976	26 551
Frozen Offal	1 047	682	432	884	660	598
Total	28 928	25 558	25 001	32 069	30 636	27 149
2: African Countries						
Beef, chilled	2 592	4 753	7 593	8 220	12 441	11 246
Frozen offal	830	1 173	1 644	984	436	455
Total -(excl. S.A)	3 422	5 926	9 237	9 204	12 877	11 701
3: Europe						
Beef, chilled	7 395	17 098	24 616	32 223	6 942	2 738
Frozen, offal	270	371	757	935	406	221
Total	7 665	17 469	25 373	33 158	7 348	2 959
Grand Total	40 015	48 953	59 611	74 431	50 861	1 809
Value of Exports	\$15 582 266	\$20 059 297	\$28 289 000	\$40 137 000	\$32 889 700	\$25 668 000

Source: AMA, Econ. Review of the Agric. Ind. of Rhod.: Beef Section, (Secret), 1975, 1.29; 1976, 2.38.

Apart from South Africa and Mozambique, Rhodesia’s other partner in violating sanctions was the small west African country of Gabon. Available press reports suggest that Rhodesian registered aircraft flew thousands of kilograms of meat, fruit and vegetables each week to the

²⁹ K. Flower, Serving Secretly: An Intelligence Chief on Record, Rhodesia to Zimbabwe, 1964-1981, (1987), 71.

³⁰ Ann. Rep. Sec. Agric. and Lands ...1966, 3.

³¹ Information on the beef trade between 1965 and 1969 was not available in the reports used in this chapter.

Gabonese capital, Libreville, with the permission of the Gabonese President, Albert Bongo himself.³² Regarded as one of the strongest supporters of “dialogue” with South Africa at the time, President Bongo never denied his involvement in thwarting sanctions against Rhodesia. Indeed, the Gabonese President reportedly once declared that “If I do not give a list [of products imported from Rhodesia], it is out of courtesy.”³³ In March 1972, a local Gabonese importer explained to the Star that the “plain truth is that we realise the geographical advantages of importing cheaply from sources close at hand. The country would pay more than double by bringing the same things in from, say, Europe.”³⁴ According to the [R]hodesia [H]erald, Rhodesian beef was the cheapest and enjoyed the reputation of being the best in French speaking West Africa, selling in Libreville for about 20 per cent less than in other French speaking countries of West Africa.³⁵

While the RH was only trying to create the impression all that Rhodesia beef was consumed only in French West Africa, the truth of the matter was that Gabon was only one of Rhodesia’s gateways to western and southern European markets. For example, Strack notes that:

a Rhodesian air freight firm, Air Trans-Africa had established a Gabonese subsidiary, Compagnie Gabonaise d’Affretements Aeriens (Affretair), whose DC 8F Model 55 jet freighter carried consignments of Rhodesian beef several times a week to Athens using Libreville as a refuelling stop.... the Greek importer[s] paid Affretair at least US \$200 less per ton than legitimate importers had to pay for meat but that the entire operation still earned Rhodesia up to UK 4 million [*pounds sterling*] per year. On return flights from Athens, the plane stopped either at Amsterdam’s Schiphol Airport, Cologne, or Paris’ Le Bourget Airport to load freight destined for Libreville. Since the destination of the freight was not Rhodesia, this specific activity did not violate UN sanctions. The carrying charges paid to Affretair, however, constituted foreign ex-change for Rhodesia, and this was a violation. Olympic Airways [Greece] and UTA Airlines [France] are among the companies which service the Affretair plane. The authorities in Greece and Holland have refused to stop Affretair activities because they accept Affretair’s cover story that it is a Gabon airline and that it is only carrying freight to and from Libreville.

³² RH, 1 March 1972.

³³ B. Cole, The Elite: The Story of the Rhodesian Special Air Service, (Pietermaritzburg, 1984), 26.

³⁴ Star (Johannesburg Weekly Airmail Edition), 18 March 1972.

³⁵ R.H., 1 March 1972; Strack notes that “A note from the United Kingdom dated December 8, 1969 brought the Gabon case to the attention of the [U]nited [N]ations Sanctions Committee. The UN representative sent an acknowledgement of receipt to the secretary general on February 18, 1971 and stated that his Government’s observations would be forwarded to the Secretary General as soon as his note was received in Libreville. As of 31 December 1972, no reply from Gabon was received by the UN. For more details on this point see Strack, “The International Relations of Rhodesia Under Sanctions,” 253.

The aircraft's papers certify the point of origin as being Libreville. The Greek importer claims that the beef he imports is South Africa.³⁶

The truth of the matter however, was that Affretair was actually the Rhodesian government's own national cargo airline. "Established by Jock Mallock, the Rhodesian born flying companion of Rhodesian Prime Minister, Ian Smith, in the Royal Air Force during the Second World War, the cargo carrier operated clandestinely to smuggle goods into and out of the country to keep the besieged economy from going under. Various called 'Rhodesia Air Services', 'Air Trans Africa', 'Air Gabon Cargo', and 'Affretair', this air cargo carrier flew into numerous airports world-wide in flagrant contravention of the United Nations sanctions against Rhodesia."³⁷ It was the shadowy Mallock who was responsible for flying the long-range DC 8F aircraft on weekly sorties "which became known to the Rhodesians as the 'meat run'."³⁸ With the full and close co-operation of government officials from the Rhodesian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, who established "a low diplomatic presence in Libreville and later in Abidjan", Mallock was able to regularly fly whole "plane loads of beef" to West Africa without any questions being asked.³⁹ It was also because of its role in sanctions evasion that Affretair quickly earned itself the reputation of a "sanctions busting airline."⁴⁰ Affretair also helped the Rhodesian government to establish a cheaper and faster air link between Salisbury, Windhoek in South West Africa and

³⁶ Strack, "The International Relations of Rhodesia Under Sanctions," 253; "In June 1974, Greece decided to deny Affretair landing rights and not to accept any more certificates of origin issued by South African authorities on merchandise suspected to be of Rhodesian origin. Greek importers had produced such certificates for the Rhodesian beef. Over 30 people were put on trial in Athens including the trade Minister of the former Papadopoulos regime and one of Greece's biggest meat importers, Stavros Tsonis. Tsonis claimed that he was doing a favour to the state, offering the best meat, and the cheapest, at a time when the meat shortage was an international phenomenon. He also claimed that he acted on direct orders from the Trade Ministry. A total of 23 000 tons of meat was imported from May to the end of 1973, according to the RH, 4 June 1975." For more detail on this point see also Strack, Sanctions, 137.

³⁷ A. S. Mlambo, "A Decade of Civil Aviation in Zimbabwe: Towards a History of Air Zimbabwe Corporation, 1980-1990", Zambezia, Vol. 22 No. 1 (1995), 83; For a background history of civil aviation in Rhodesia before 1965, see Mlambo, "Civil Aviation in Colonial Zimbabwe, 1912-1980", Zambezia, Vol. 19, No. 2 (1992); Flower, Serving Secretly, 75-76; Air Zimbabwe News, (1984) Ellert, The Rhodesian Front War, 170.

³⁸ Ellert, The Rhodesian Front War, 172; Peter Godwin and Ian Hancock (eds.) Rhodesians Never Die: The Impact of War and Political Change on White Rhodesia, 1970-1980 (Harare 1993), 309; According to Strack, reporters from the ST (26 August 1973 and 2 September 1973) claimed to have seen the aircraft at the various airports mentioned and had photographs of its Rhodesian pilot, Jack Mallock. For more details on this see Strack, "The International Relations of Rhodesia Under Sanctions", 254.

³⁹ Ellert, The Rhodesian Front War, 171.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 42.

Luanda in Angola. The establishment of these crucial air-links by Affretair helped to ease Rhodesia's penetration into the Angolan market as well.⁴¹

As can be seen from table 5.2 below, the amount of Rhodesia beef exported by air increased tremendously from the early 1970s onwards. The main reason for this increase was the strategic importance of air transport not only in minimising the risk of detection by sanctions monitors, but also in getting fresh beef to secret markets faster, cheaply and on a regular basis. This factor also explains why most of Rhodesia's fresh exports, which included beef, were increasingly airlifted rather than railed especially from the early 1970s onwards when the intensification of the Second Chimurenga War made road and rail transport increasingly unreliable and dangerous.

Table 5.2 : Amount of Beef Airlifted in Violation of Sanctions, 1971-1974 (000 tons)

Year	1971	1972	1973	1974
Export by air	4 326	6 529	13 024	13 613
Total exports	48 953	59 611	74 431	50 861
Percentage by air	8.8	10.9	17.5	26.8

Sources: AMA, *Econ. Rev. Agric. Ind. Rhod.: Beef Section*, 1975, 1.30; 1976, 2.39.; 1975, 1.30.

Although there seems to be no official statistics to show the quantities of beef exported between 1965 and 1969, reports of the value of beef exports from de-classified sources actually show that Rhodesia may have exported, i.e. in terms of value, as much beef in the mid to late 1960s, if not more, as it did in the early 1970s. For example, in 1967, it was reported that Rhodesia was selling beef at the rate of 15 million *pounds sterling* a year, an average figure which almost corresponds with yearly figures on the value of exports contained table 5.1 above.⁴² Also, around 1967, it was also reported that about 40 per cent of Rhodesia's beef production was being exported and this figure remained constant beyond 1971. Clearly, a substantial quantity of these exports, mainly top quality beef, was airlifted to Western or Southern Europe via

⁴¹ Between 1972 and 1973, an estimated 10 000 head of cattle, including 350 pigs and agricultural machinery, were airlifted from Salisbury to Luanda. For more details on this, see *R.H.*, 16 September 1971; 22 June, 25 July, 27 July 1972; 25 January, 4 February 1973.

⁴² Handford, *Portrait of An Economy Under Sanctions*, 109.

Libreville, while considerable quantities were sold to Zaire and Angola.⁴³ Although official reports try to attribute the country's success in conducting a secret beef trade to Rhodesian ingenuity, the truth of the matter is that it was much easier for sanctions violators to disguise the origins of beef than it was for Rhodesia's flue-cured Virginia tobacco, which could more easily be identified.⁴⁴ This factor largely explains the relative success of the international economic embargo in stopping or reducing Rhodesian tobacco exports. It was the key difference between these two Rhodesian export products which was to define the pattern of agrarian diversification, as was epitomised by the capitalist agricultural sector's shift from tobacco to cattle, in the immediate post-1965 period.

The Shift from Tobacco to Beef Production, 1965-1972

An important point to emphasise here is the fact that the lucrative pickings from Rhodesia's secret trade not only helped to loosen the sanctions noose on the capitalist agricultural sector, but also made beef production a viable alternative for tobacco producers already reeling from the impact of sanctions. Now, increasing numbers of tobacco farmers, with direct financial assistance from the government, switched to beef. As one commentator aptly put it, "the shift to cattle raising was made partly because beef proved to be a particularly successful sanctions busting commodity."⁴⁵ Thus, the imposition of sanctions in 1965, helped to catalyse the process of agrarian diversification which, as pointed out in Chapter Four, had got slowly underway from the late 1950s.⁴⁶

The RF government's main pre-occupation after 1965 was obviously the preservation of white economic survival. Thus, while white farmers received more subsidies and cheap loans⁴⁷, RF government "used every means at their disposal to pass on the burden of sanctions [or white

⁴³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴ This factor largely explains why tobacco export earnings fell by as much as 37 per cent between 1965 and 1967. For more details on this point see, R. C. Porter, "Economic Sanctions: The Theory and the Evidence from Rhodesia," *Journal of Peace Science*, (Fall, 1978), 100; Strack, *Sanctions*, 94.

⁴⁵ R. Kent et al., *Historical Dictionary of Zimbabwe* (London, 1990), 49.

⁴⁶ M. Goldberg, "Commercial Agriculture in Rhodesia, 1965-1980: Consolidation and Change," (University of London, unpub. MA thesis, 1982), 5.

⁴⁷ For example, in 1966, "any worthwhile farmer" could qualify for interest free loans under the Greylin Farmers' Assistance Scheme. For more details on this point see, *FM*, 26 August 1966, 587. Graylin was the Chairman of the Tobacco Export Promotion Council.

survival] ... to the African masses.”⁴⁸ Indeed, this came as no surprise since Ian Smith, the Rhodesian Prime Minister himself, had warned the British government that if sanctions were imposed, “Europeans could pull in their belts, but Africans would lose their livelihood and might even be without food.”⁴⁹ Thus, by the early 1970s, government subsidies and loans ran at an estimated \$8 000 per white farmer as compared to 60 cents per each African peasant farmer.⁵⁰ Most financial assistance in the capitalist agricultural sector went towards the provision of drought relief and the provision of water infrastructure such as bore holes, especially in drought prone Matabeleland.⁵¹ Besides increasing financial assistance to the capitalist agricultural sector, the RF government moved to exercise tighter control over the marketing of agricultural products in which the country was a net producer using its parastatals. One of these government controlled central marketing agencies was the [A]gricultural [M]arketing [A]uthority, whose job it was to carry out market research for different products, study marketing channels for different products, co-ordinate pricing policies and advise government on marketing policies.⁵² The AMA also acted as a “channel for most of the external short term financing of the [marketing] boards [such as the CSC] under its control to enable them to conduct their marketing activities.”⁵³ Thus, its crucial function during the sanctions period was to co-ordinate the RF government’s elaborate sanctions busting network.

As an interim measure to kick-start a quick shift away from tobacco, the RF government established a “subsidy system to buy up and store non saleable stocks.” The stock piled surplus tobacco was then “gradually sold as sanctions busting developed.”⁵⁴ While the programme to stock pile tobacco was being implemented, the government devised a phased plan for the

⁴⁸ Astrow, *Zimbabwe*, 15, 57.

⁴⁹ Indeed, after sanctions were imposed in 1965, the level of African repression and landlessness increased while the standard of living fell noticeably. For more details on this point, see Astrow, *Zimbabwe*, 15, 57.

⁵⁰ Stoneman, *Zimbabwe’s Inheritance* (London, 1981), 139.

⁵¹ [C]entre for [A]frican [S]tudies, “Zimbabwe: Notes and Reflections on the Rhodesian Question,” (Maputo, unpub. paper, March 1979), 18.

⁵² Apart from the [A]gricultural [M]arketing [A]uthority, the Government also established the [T]ribal [A]rea [D]evelopment [C]orporation (1968), [S]abi-[L]impopo [A]uthority (1970), [A]gricultural [D]evelopment [A]uthority (1971), [A]gricultural [F]inance [C]orporation (1971), [A]gricultural [R]esearch [C]ouncil (1971). For more details on this see I. M. Hullme, *Agriculture in Rhodesia*, (Salisbury, 1977), 10.

⁵³ V. Tickner, *From Rhodesia to Zimbabwe: The Food Problem* (London, 1979), 28.

⁵⁴ CAS, “Zimbabwe: Notes and Reflections,” (Maputo, unpub. paper, March 1979), 16; Astrow, *Zimbabwe*, 15.

reduction of tobacco production throughout the country.⁵⁵ The result was that between 1966 and 1968, an estimated 900 farmers out of approximately 2 600 tobacco farmers, stopped growing tobacco.⁵⁶ Hopes of reaping profits from Rhodesia's secret beef exports largely explain why many tobacco producers opted to switch to cattle. This was in spite of the fact that returns from cattle were deferred and diversifying away from tobacco to either cotton or maize production was less expensive. As a result of increasing confidence in beef production, the capitalist ranching sector expanded rapidly after 1965. This was so much that by 1971, the cattle industry's overall contribution to total national agricultural production value had exceeded that of tobacco.

The expansion in capitalist beef production, though, also took place regardless of the fact that livestock farming did not really provide equivalent economic returns per acre as tobacco.⁵⁷ For example, in January 1966, K. S. Ainslie, the local livestock expert, cautioned farmers that the profitability of beef would generally fail to match that of tobacco "under ideal conditions with an unlimited market."⁵⁸ However, obviously mindful of the success of country's secret beef trade, Ainslie was quick to advise tobacco farmers to focus their attention on beef production as opposed to any other forms of diversification.⁵⁹ Many people involved in the cattle business, for example, James Gilchrist, one of the country's leading cattle auctioneers, were well aware of the attractive prospects provided by Rhodesia's illegal beef exports. Gilchrist noted that:

Although markets have been closed to Rhodesian products, outlets have been found and continue to be found for Rhodesian beef. Far from there being any of the curtailment in production, the country's beef output is on the up and up and is playing a major role in the diversification programme.⁶⁰

The shift from the 'leaf of gold' to beef in the north was also hastened by the inflow of breeding and feeder cattle from the south, which was triggered by a combination of unreliable rainfall patterns and persistent droughts in the ranching districts of Matabeleland and Victoria in the

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, Tobacco was to reduced as follows: 1965, 246 million lbs., 1967, 200 million lbs.. and 1968-71, 132 million lbs..

⁵⁶ G. Kay, *Rhodesia: A Human Geography* (London, 1970), 113-4.

⁵⁷ J. A. Mackenzie, "Commercial Farmers in the Governmental System of Colonial Zimbabwe, 1963-1980", (University of Zimbabwe, unpub. DPhil thesis, 1989), 107; C. Stoneman, "Agriculture", 141.

⁵⁸ *Rhodesia Tobacco Journal*, Vol. 18, No. 1, (1966), 37

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 38.

⁶⁰ *RPE*, No. 153, November 1968, 21.

three to four years between 1965 and 1968.⁶¹ During the 1965-1966 season, an estimated “one fifth of the cattle population [in the south-western Matabeleland] perished from starvation and lack of water in approximately three months.”⁶² Before the same district had recovered, yet another severe drought, which Tim Mitchell, the President of the RNFU described as “a disaster of the first magnitude”⁶³ occurred during the 1967-68 season. The problem of drought coupled with economic sanctions, helped to bring the already existing problems of economic viability in the southern ranching areas into sharp relief.⁶⁴ Due to ecological deterioration, the carrying capacity of many ranches declined and hundreds of thousands of cattle died. Those which survived not only lost their condition, but also suffered from stunted growth. More out of desperation for solutions than anything else, by May 1967, as many as 30 ranchers in the south were reported to have abandoned government advice on grazing techniques and had instead adopted so-called “non government advice on veldt management”⁶⁵ Although the lack of sufficient grazing made supplementary necessary, this course of action cost money which many ranchers did not have. For a start, cattle prices on Bulawayo cattle markets plummeted, due to the glut resulting from drought-induced sales. For example, commenting on the state of affairs at one Bulawayo cattle sale in March 1965, the BC reported that:

More than 100 head of breeding stock was left unsold ... after a rancher had refused to accept rock bottom prices for his cows and heifers. Those that had gone under the hammer earlier were only fetching 22 pounds to 24 pounds a head ... despite the fact that many of the cows were in a good condition.⁶⁶

By July 1966, the situation in Matabeleland had become so desperate that a significant number of ranches were faced with imminent “land collapse.”⁶⁷ A staff member of an unnamed ranch in Matabeleland spoke for many when he complained bitterly that:

I simply cannot understand it: when the ranch started they had absolutely no water development at all and yet they carried 100 000 head without any feed bill. Now, when we are fully developed for water we cannot carry 30 000 head without special feeding. This ranch’s problem is typical of that of probably 90 per cent of the ranches in

⁶¹ Ann. Rep. Sec. Agric. and Lands ...1971, 2.

⁶² Leg. Ass. Debates, 10 March 1965, Col. 535, Contribution by Mr. Goldstein.

⁶³ Times, (London) 25 March 1968.

⁶⁴ RPF, No. 126, August 1966, 6.

⁶⁵ Many ranchers were responding to warnings of an imminent “land collapse” from a local ecologist named Allan Savory, whose main advice to ranchers was the adoption of high intensity short duration grazing principles or techniques. For more details on this point, see RPE, No. 135, May 1967, 23.

⁶⁶ BC 19 March 1965.

⁶⁷ RPF, No. 125 July 1966, 25.

Matabeleland. It will get worse unless the government and ranchers are prepared to go into it with an ecological and scientific approach.... The spending of these millions [of dollars] on water development merely underlines the urgency for proper ecological appraisal before more people go bankrupt while the government and the civil service continue to bark-up the wrong tree. This bark is costing the taxpayer a great deal.⁶⁸

The situation in the south of the country forced the government to take urgent measures to provide water facilities and to help in the massive evacuation of cattle by both road and rail from the south to the higher rainfall areas in the north, where pastures were better.⁶⁹ In order to save thousands of cattle threatened by drought, the government drew up a whole package of incentives ranging from railage subsidies; income tax relief; priority geographical surveys and bore hole drilling programmes to bonus payments on non slaughter stock sales and milk subsidies.⁷⁰ For instance, in 1966, a Farm Irrigation Fund was set up to enable ranchers to "secure low interest rate loans to finance irrigation undertakings."⁷¹ Irrigation water was also made available at reasonable rates in order to facilitate diversification and intensification of production.⁷²

While thousands of cattle which could not be saved were immediately slaughtered, those evacuated northwards, were distributed to white farmers as 'feeders' and breeding stock under the Cattle Finance Scheme. For example, between 1965 and 1966, government drought relief buying teams bought approximately 65 575 head and out of this an estimated 64 509 head were distributed under the Cattle Finance Scheme. While another batch of 67 320 head of were purchased by northern farmers and placed under private grazing approximately 37 787 head were purchased for immediate slaughter by the CSC in 1966. During the same period, government buying teams bought approximately 28 453 head from African peasants either for immediate slaughter or for leasing under Cattle Finance Scheme.⁷³ Thus, with a vast array of such subsidies and increased financial backing from the government, the rebuilding of the national herd got underway in earnest in the north of the country. Because of the expansion of

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 25-26.

⁶⁹ *Leg. Ass. Debates.*, 2 March 1966, Col. 1186, Contribution by Col. Hartley Member of Parliament for Victoria district.

⁷⁰ *Ann. Rep. Sec. Agric. and Lands, 1966*, 1-2.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 1971, 3; *Leg. Ass. Debates*, 2 March 1966, Col. 1181, Contribution by Colonel Hartley.

⁷² *Ibid.*

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 2; About 100 South African railway wagon trucks had to be used in the "mercy lift of thousands of cattle." See also, *Cape Argus*, 15 January 1966.

the Cattle Finance Scheme, the value and number of cattle held under the CSC's Cattle Finance Scheme increased from 949 000 *pounds sterling* or some 64 500 head in 1959, to nearly 4.7 million *pounds sterling* or the equivalent of 230 500 head by the end of 1966.⁷⁴ Taking advantage of the Cattle Finance Scheme which had now been expanded to include white owned cattle from Matabeleland, capitalist farmers in the higher rainfall areas began to fatten or raise beef cattle more than ever before.⁷⁵ In particular, those farmers who received breeding stock from the CSC under the same scheme enjoyed the option of purchasing such cattle outright after a period of five years.⁷⁶ Thus, the economic uncertainty created by sanctions in the country's tobacco industry and the viability crisis spawned by adverse drought conditions in the southern ranching districts combined to facilitate the 'cattlization' of the northern tobacco and maize belt. Until economic uncertainty and viability problems hit tobacco, white farmers in the north had not really seen the need to produce cattle as a way of boosting falling incomes. In fact, "before UDI, most large tobacco farmers had [only] raised some beef cattle in a crop rotation sequence in which one year under tobacco was followed by three to five years under grasses."⁷⁷ However, with the imposition of production quotas after 1965, even the country's most successful tobacco 'barons' were forced to allocate more land to livestock production."⁷⁸ Thus, drought and sanctions helped to catalyse the de-regionalisation of beef production in the country which hitherto started in the late 1950s albeit at a slower pace.⁷⁹

The above development marked an important step towards the full utilisation of the country's grazing potential, especially in the north where land had primarily been used for the production of cash and food crops. Thus, the otherwise previously under-utilised resources of veldt and tobacco ley grazing came under increasing use after 1965. It had been precisely because of this missing link between the arable north and southern range-lands which, among other factors, had distinguished Rhodesia from other major beef producers in the world such as Argentina.⁸⁰ The de-regionalisation of production resulted in a noticeable decline in the south's contribution to total national beef production. For example, in 1965, herds in Matabeleland had already shrunk

⁷⁴ CSC, *Ann. Rep. and Acc.*, 1966; RPF, No. 141, November 1967, 27.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 1965, 3.

⁷⁶ AMA, *Rev. Agric. Ind.*, 1968, 66-67; 1970, 144; CSC, *Ann. Rep. and Acc.*, 1966, 3.

⁷⁷ Nelson, *Area Handbook*, 289.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

⁷⁹ Quoted in *Ann. Rep. Sec. Agric. and Lands*, 1965, 117.

by 30 928 head or some two percent to 441 578 head, whereas in 1964, the figure stood at approximately 472 506 head. The disparity in the 1964 and 1965 cattle totals almost corresponds with the total number of cattle bought by the CSC under the government drought relief programme between March and June 1965.⁸¹

The fact that CSC's Cattle Finance Scheme acted as an easy form of credit in itself helped to encourage increased economic production 'on-the-hoof' in north of the country. As the CSC itself noted in 1966, the Cattle Finance Scheme was crucial in assisting:

new-comers to the [cattle] industry and to producers who [had] limited or no credit facilities available to them, as the yard stick in approving [the allocation of] grazers [was] not primarily the credit worthiness of the applicant nor his financial position, but rather a judgement of the applicant's ability to care for the cattle without financial loss to himself and the Commission. From the national point of view, the scheme ... proved to be the saviour of the national herd in times of drought.⁸²

The result was that within a few short years, a significant number of white farmers in the north came to play a crucial role, especially in the beef industry's drive to increase the production of export-grade beef. Thus, while herds in Matabeleland shrank by some six percentage points from 29 percent to 23 percent of total national herd between 1965 and 1971, the total herd in both Mashonaland north and south expanded from 13 and 19 per cent, to 17 and 23 per cent, respectively, during the same period. Between 1966 and 1971, a total of 408 new producers entered the industry. As can be seen from the table 5.3 below only three provinces of the Midlands, Victoria and Manicaland registered the smallest increases in herds between 1965 and 1971.

Clearly impressed by the encouraging changes occurring in the north, in 1965, the Secretary for Agriculture noted that:

There is a very definite increase in interest in beef production particularly in the higher rainfall parts of the country, and in many areas the farmers have formed stock-owners' associations and have organised weaner-feeder sales. Several factors have contributed to increased interest in beef production and among these are the development in feeding techniques, fencing rebates, price structure improvements and perhaps the greatest of all

⁸⁰ For a comparison between the Rhodesian beef industry and the Argentinean industry, see Chapter One.

⁸¹ Rhod., Central Statistical Office, Agric. Prod. in Rhod., 1964, Table 40 ; Ann. Rep. Sec. Agric. and Lands, 1965, Table 41.

⁸² CSC, Ann. Rep and Acc., 1966; R P F, No. 141, November 1967, 27.

is the current situation in the Virginia Tobacco field, where profit margins are narrowing and some uncertainty exists.⁸³

Table 5.3: Size and Provincial Distribution of the Large Scale Beef Herd, 1965-1971

Year	Total Beef Herd	Number of Beef Farms	Aver. Herd Size	Provincial Distribution of the National beef herd					
				Matabele- land	Mashonaland North	South	Midlands	Victoria land	Manica land
Percentage Share									
1965(1)	1 519	N/A	-	29	13	19	18	13	8
1966(1)	1 569	4 379	358	25	16	21	17	13	8
1967(1)	1 649	4 110	401	26	15	21	17	13	8
1968	1 866	4 533	412	24	16	22	17	13	8
1969	2 103	4 715	446	24	16	23	16	12	9
1970	2 350	4 749	495	24	16	23	16	12	9
1971	2 562	4 787	535	23	17	23	17	12	8

Source: AMA, Beef Sit. and Outl. Rep., 1982, Appendix 2.

In 1967, the Department of Conservation and Extension also added that:

There is intense interest in beef production. Beef as a topic of farming conversation, tends to command the attention formerly held by tobacco. New recruits to cattle farming are quickly adapting themselves and learning and applying modern methods. More difficult is the problem of introducing new techniques into old established beef producing areas. However, many improvements are taking place: drought relief payment has been put into much needed ranch development and many farmers have purchased cattle scales. Money obtained from the sale of tobacco quotas and diversification loans have been invested in cattle. However, it is possible that in the rush to diversify some decisions have been made hastily. Some of the inexperienced may yet burn their fingers.⁸⁴

Even David Smith, a Rhodesia Member of Parliament from Marandellas, Rhodesia's Virginia tobacco heartland, observed in 1966 that:

the drought in the years that have gone past has been to the great advantage of the [Cold Storage] Commission, but in some cases good comes out of evil and I believe these droughts have shown us one thing: the necessity of having a two-stage movement of cattle from the low-rainfall areas and from [African Areas or Reserves] into high rainfall areas. That, I believe, is the crux of success in the future of our beef industry.⁸⁵

⁸³ Ann. Rep. Sec. Agric. and Lands, 1965, 117.

⁸⁴ Ibid., 1967, 58.

⁸⁵ Leg. Ass. Debates, 2 March 1966, Col. 1175, David Smith, MP for Marandellas.

The shift from tobacco to cattle was given further impetus by the tendency for returns on arable crops to lag behind the price of beef. For example, in 1966, the Secretary for Agriculture reported that:

In the light of recent fairly substantial increases in the price of beef, and surpluses in respect of several crop products, a more favourable price relationship for the livestock industry, in particular for beef production, has been created ... Rhodesia has the natural resources to produce beef in particular; but, due to the relative profitability of crop farming in relation to stock farming, the potential for beef production in the high rainfall areas of the country is relatively unexploited.⁸⁶

Whereas in 1965, the value of tobacco production was more than three times the value of the next most important product such as beef or maize, the position in 1971, was one of a much more changed or diversified capitalist agricultural industry, with cattle and maize contributing more than tobacco.(see table 5.4 below). On the other hand, the favourable relationship between the prices of maize and cattle helped to make the maize industry an essential part of the beef industry, with playing a crucial role as a major source of feed for capitalist farmers in the north. For example, in 1967, the Department of Conservation and Extension reported that:

There is an ever increasing number of farmers participating in the Beef Recording Scheme sponsored by Conservation and Extension.... As evidence of the 'new look' in cattle farming, winter supplementary feeding is now generally accepted as necessary and economic, whereas up until now, it has usually been regarded as an emergency measure only.... Africans have become very interested in fattening as indicated by the increase in the numbers of cattle being pen-fed by the "Stubbs" method, from about 2 000 last year [1966], to 5 490 [head] this year. A trade has developed in maize stover. It is now in demand by farmers who are pen feeding and find their own supply of roughage insufficient, so seek to purchase stover from neighbours.⁸⁷

⁸⁶ Ann. Rep. Sec. Agric. and Lands, 1965, 117 ; 1966, 46.

Table 5.4: Contribution of Major Agricultural Commodities to Total Value of Primary Agricultural Production, 1965-1971

Year	Percentage Contribution to Total Value of Primary Production							
	Beef (1)	Tobacco	Maize	Sugar	Cotton	Dairy	Other	Total
1965	13	48	12	8	2	4	13	100
1966	17	38	14	10	3	4	14	100
1967	15	32	21	8	4	5	15	100
1968(2)	18	24	16	9	8	6	19	100
1969	16	17	25	7	13	5	17	100
1970(2)	19	16	21	10	8	5	21	100
1971	19	16	3	10	9	4	19	100

Notes: (1) Relates to cattle slaughterings only. (2) Drought season. (3) Provisional

Source: AMA, Beef Sit. and Outl. Rep., 1982, Appendix 1.

Because of the increase in pen feeding or stall feeding, a larger percentage of the maize produced in the north was either retained on the farms as feed or, sold to other cattle feeders elsewhere for the same purpose. Table 5.5 shows the movement of the maize/beef price ratio and actually indicates that the price of beef rose much faster than that of maize.

Table 5.5 : Movement of the Maize/Beef Price Ratio, 1965-1971

Year	Maize Price (1) (\$ per tonne)	Beef Price (2) (Cents per Kg.)	Maize/Beef Price ratio
1965	37.70	30.18	1 : 8.0
1966	31.22	33.99	1 : 10.9
1967	29.13	35.49	1 : 12.2
1968	33.45	36.22	1 : 10.8
1969	32.11	35.94	1 : 11.2
1970	38.44	35.76	1 : 9.3
1971	32.51	36.76	1 : 11.3

Note: (1) The final producer price of Class 'A' maize grain; (2) The CSC's average beef producer price for the year. The figures on beef prices also reflect changes in the grading pattern of slaughterings.

Source: AMA, Beef Sit. and Outl. Rep., 1982, Appendix 14.

By the late 1960s, beef had become a major product of all the districts in which tobacco and maize had been the predominant cash crops. For example, by May 1968, the Gwelo district in

⁸⁷ Ibid., 1967, 58-59.

the Midlands districts, previously known as the country's third largest dairy producing area, had moved more towards beef production.⁸⁸ Because of the increase in costs of production coupled with stagnating maize prices, production in the fertile Mazoe Valley, traditionally the country's 'maize bowl', had also begun to shift from maize towards cotton and cattle.⁸⁹ For example, in March 1969, the RPF explained the process of economic change in the Mazoe Valley as follows:

The nucleus of many herds came in when drought relief operations were being mounted to save cattle in the less fortunate areas and many of the beasts stayed behind when the droughts were over. Most farmers have breeding herds and there are a good many herds as well. The cattle population generally has increased so much that many experts predict that the traditional cropping areas in Mashonaland will soon usurp Matabeleland's position as the premier cattle producing province. One of the reasons is that crop farmers have learned from Matabeleland and are unlikely to allow their land to become degraded to the extent that has occurred to the west and south. Most farmers in the Valley show a keen interest in management of veldt and animals and are getting in on the ground floor with sound management practises. A large number are enthusiastic believers in the 'Savory System' and given the high carrying capacity of the high-veldt, the stage seems set for a major increase in the cattle population.⁹⁰

Furthermore, by December 1970, most farmers in the Gatooma district which had experienced a post-war tobacco and maize boom, had also begun to specialise in cattle fattening.⁹¹ The increase in the district's contribution to total national beef production was underlined by the commissioning of a modern and 'state-of-the-art' meat packing factory in the small mining town of Gatooma by the CSC in 1970. The new factory, which was capable of processing 500 carcasses inside one eight hour shift, could also convert an ox into various joints and cuts packaged in 70 lb. cartons in just 45 minutes.⁹² Similar changes were also evident in the Lomagundi district situated in the north western part of the country. The advent of UDI and the pressure of persistent droughts in Matabeleland, altogether "hastened the inflow of cattle into the district [with the result that] many [tobacco] farmers ... diversified into cattle." Thus, by 1971, the cattle population in the district had quadrupled to 100 000 head and the district had actually become one of the country's major producers of some of the finest export-grade beef cattle in the country's beef industry.⁹³

⁸⁸ RPF, No. 147, May 1968, 11.

⁸⁹ Ibid., No. 157, March 1969, 26.

⁹⁰ Ibid., 26-27.

⁹¹ Ibid., No. 178 December 1970, 10.

⁹² Ibid., 12-13.

⁹³ Ibid., "Special Supplement on Lomagundi," July 1971, 7-10.

The expansion of the white-dominated capitalist sector of the beef industry contrasted deeply with that in the African peasant sector. The RF government's policy of shifting the burden of white survival on to the back of the African peasantry resulted in a drastic fall in peasant commercial production. For example:

Over the period 1965-1970, production for consumption by African rural households did not increase per capita but remained at \$17.9 in constant prices while the income from sales index fell, in current prices, fell from \$3.31 a head to \$2.82. The share of sales of African total production was 18.4 per cent on average for the 1966-1970 period compared with 30 per cent for the 1955-1960 period.⁹⁴

While the share of white capitalist beef production to total national food production increased rapidly, that of the peasant cattle sector's declined. Not only did cattle ownership in the African sector become "more unequal"⁹⁵ but also from 1968, and for the first time since the period before 1921, white capitalist ranchers owned more cattle than African peasants. The reversal in the cattle ownership pattern in the cattle industry as a whole was shown by the fact while the capitalist sector's share of the national herd increased from 47 per cent in 1965, to 53 per cent in 1971, the African cattle sector herd declined from 53 per cent to 47 per cent of the national total during the same period. (see table 5.6 below).

Table 5.6 : National Cattle Population

Year	<u>1965-1971</u>			<u>Communal Areas (2)</u>	<u>National Total</u>	<u>Percentage Change</u>
	<u>Large and small scale Beef Herd</u>	<u>small scale Dairy Herd</u>	<u>sector Total (2)</u>			
	----- 000 head -----					
1965 (1)	1 519	111	1 630 (47)	1 844 (53)	3 474	+ 1.3
1966 (1)	1 635	114	1 749 (50)	1 714 (50)	3 463	- 0.3
1967 (1)	1 649	108	1 757 (45)	2 183 (55)	3 940	+13.8
1968	2 148	112	2 260 (53)	2 036 (47)	4 296	+ 9.0
1969	2 367	120	2 487 (52)	2 315 (48)	4 802	+11.8
1970	2 616	123	2 739 (53)	2 451 (47)	5 190	+ 8.1
1971	2 819	123	2 942 (53)	2 600 (47)	5 542	+ 6.8

Note: (1) Figures exclude cattle held in the Small Scale Sector; (2) Figures in parenthesis denote percentage shares.

Source: AMA, Beef Sit. and Outl. Rep., 1982, Appendix 2.

⁹⁴ CAS., "Zimbabwe", 18.

⁹⁵ Phimister, "Zimbabwe", 2.

The positive impact of the RF government's policy of 'white agriculture' was also reflected by the visible change in the herd structure and the generally increased level of productivity of the capitalist sector itself. For example, the number of calves born each year rose steeply from just above 250 000 in 1965, to 561 000 in 1971. In some years, i.e. 1968-1970, the white owned beef herd expanded at the rate of more than ten per cent. The increase in the commercial herd was also explained by the increase in the number of bulled females from 579 000 in 1965, to 952 000 head in 1971.⁹⁶ Most of these bulled females stock were breeding stock brought in from Matabeleland to Mashonaland for the purpose of rebuilding the national herd following the droughts of the late 1960s. (See table 5.7 below). During the same period, the capitalist sector's off take rate rose from 195 000 head in the period 1964/65, to 437 000 head in the period 1971/72.⁹⁷ From 1969 onwards, the slaughter cattle intake at the CSC's abattoirs jumped from 260 000 head to nearly 430 000 head or some 80 per cent of all cattle slaughtered in 1971.⁹⁸

Table 5.7 : Structure of the Commercial Sector Beef Herd, 1965-1971

<u>Year</u>	<u>Calves</u>	<u>Breeding Females</u>	<u>Other Females</u>	<u>Bulls</u>	<u>Other Males</u>	<u>Total Herd</u>	<u>Percentage Change</u>
		----- 000 head -----					
1965	253 (17)	579 (38)	219 (14)	25 (2)	433 (29)	1 519	-
1966	278 (18)	607 (38)	221 (14)	26 (2)	437 (28)	1 569	+ 3.9
1967	349 (21)	668 (41)	220 (13)	29 (2)	383 (23)	1 649	+ 5.1
1968	386 (20)	739 (40)	276 (15)	34 (2)	431 (23)	1 866	+ 13.2
1969	454 (22)	823 (39)	299 (14)	37 (2)	490 (23)	2 103	+ 12.7
1970	507 (22)	922 (39)	337 (14)	41 (2)	544 (23)	2 350	+ 11.7
1971	561 (22)	952 (37)	397 (15)	42 (2)	610 (24)	2 562	+ 9.0

Notes: Figures in parenthesis denote percentage share of the respective category of cattle to the total herd.

Source: AMA, Beef Sit. and Outl. Rep., 1982, Appendix 5.

⁹⁶ AMA, Beef Sit. and Outl. Rep., 1982, Appendix 6.

⁹⁷ Ibid., Appendix 7.

⁹⁸ Ibid., Appendix 8.

Calamity

Although the increase in capitalist beef production after 1965 was impressive, there is no disguising the fact that the shift from tobacco was a very costly process. Poor seasons, increased borrowing and an increase in costs of production combined to reduce the economic viability of settler farming ventures in general.⁹⁹ For example, in the first three years of sanctions, gross income per farmer in the capitalist sector in general declined from 3 304 *pounds sterling* in 1965, to 1 580 *pounds sterling* in 1968.¹⁰⁰ Because of the decline in profitability, the level of indebtedness in the capitalist agricultural sector in general reached new heights. An increasing number of white farmers were forced to rely on the government's offers of tax exemptions, cheap credits and loans to meet heavy capital expenditure required in increasing crop and animal production.¹⁰¹ While a sizeable proportion of the increase in the borrowing of long term finance was associated with land purchase and other long term capital improvements, an increasing proportion of the overall debt in the sector arose out of short term borrowing usually meant to offset increases in the cost of inputs caused by sanctions.

Because of the pressure to shift emphasis away from Virginia tobacco, many white farmers were forced to concentrate on products whose economic returns were lower than those of tobacco. Such evidence as there is suggests that even beef production itself did not provide a viable alternative to tobacco. Although the price of tobacco fell from an average 60.61 cents per kilogram in 1965 to 55.00 cents per kilogram in 1972, the 'leaf of gold' still paid more on a cents-per-kilogram basis. This was in spite of the fact that between 1965 and 1972, the price of beef actually increased by the biggest margin in terms of current money values i.e. 37.8 percent over all other agricultural products, from 27.62 cents per kilogram in 1965 to 38.07 cents per kilogram by 1972.¹⁰²

⁹⁹ Handford, *A Portrait of an Economy*, 97; *Ann. Rep. Sec. Agric. and Lands*, 1966, 7; 1971, 3.

¹⁰⁰ *Ann. Rep. Sec. Agric. and Lands*, 1969, 6.

¹⁰¹ *Report of the Commission of Inquiry on Agricultural Input Costs*, 1973, Chairman, D. S. Morley, 7.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, 27, Table 1 (a).

The profit margins in the beef industry were severely reduced by the price-cost squeeze which resulted from a rapid rise in the general cost of inputs and the deferred returns inherent in beef production. For example, during the period under consideration here, the cost of veterinary products and other related services alone rose by approximately 57.3 per cent.¹⁰³ This anomalous situation arose out of the fact that after 1965, beef became one of the most strictly controlled products in the country. Under the provisions of the Emergency Powers (Price Maintenance) Order of October 1965, all traders who included butchers were not allowed by the RF government to make an "Unjust Profit" on their merchandise¹⁰⁴, by taking an advantage of the difficult economic situation created by sanctions. The effect of the Price Maintenance Order was to reinforce already existing government price controls in the beef industry. The only plausible explanation for more control measures was political. The RF government was desperate to create the impression in the eyes of the world that whites in Rhodesia could still enjoy an exceptionally high standard of living even in the face of punitive economic sanctions.¹⁰⁵ The extent to which it continue to dole out assistance to its beleaguered farmers was limited.

Table 5.8 : Agricultural Debt in the Capitalist Sector, 1965-1972 (\$ millions)

Year	1965	1966	1967	1968	1969	1970	1971	1972
1. Indebtedness								
Commercial Bank advances	24.6	26.8	23.9	26.4	26.2	28.0	35.5	36.4
Bills	5.2	3.1	3.6	2.7	2.8	3.4	4.5	8.7
H.P & Leasing (Estimate) ...	4.0	4.0	5.0	5.0	6.0	7.0	8.0	9.0
AFC Long term	12.0	13.6	13.7	16.9	21.3	23.3	26.2	28.8
AFC Short term	7.7	10.0	11.5	12.5	11.6	12.0	11.7	15.0
Trade Credit	11.6	11.2	10.0	11.9	14.5	16.0	22.9	25.8
CSC Finance (Estimate) ...	5.5	7.3	8.2	9.9	12.5	13.4	13.3	13.3
Total	\$70.7	\$76.0	\$75.9	\$85.2	\$94.9	\$103.1	\$122.1	\$137.0
Increase over previous year ...	\$ 9.1	\$ 5.3	-\$ 0.1	\$ 9.3	\$ 9.7	\$ 8.2	\$ 19.0	\$ 14.9
Increase in indebtedness during 1966-1972								\$ 66.3
2. Fixed Capital Formation ..	\$ 23.4	\$ 10.8	\$ 14.4	\$ 17.4	\$ 18.5	\$ 18.7	\$ 24.3	\$ 24.7

Source: Report of the Commission of Inquiry into Agricultural Input Costs, 1973, Chairman-D.S Morley, Table 1 (a), 25.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, 13.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 22. An "Unjust Profit" was defined as an amount in excess of the highest price at which the seller sold goods during October 1965.

¹⁰⁵ For example, potential immigrants were told of the splendid climate, good wages for whites, cheap beef, low prices and taxes, cheap labour, minimal inflation and good quality housing. For more details on this point, see Ministry of Information, Immigration and Tourism, *Rhodesia in Brief*, (Salisbury, 1971); C. B. Metcalfe, *A Guide Farming in Rhodesia* (Salisbury, 1971), 1-2.

The trouble with Rhodesia's cheap beef policy however, was that it was implemented without regard to the efficiency of capitalist beef producers in the country. The truth of the matter was that most white producers in the beef industry were highly inefficient and were dependent on continuous doses of subsidies and the government's use of non-market forces or statutory measures to tip the economic scales in their favour. The cheap beef policy resulted in beef prices falling below costs of production, thereby reducing the profit margin of the country's cattle 'barons'. The result was that the relationship between the government and its 'cowboy' electorate was, ironically, not always free of tension. Indeed, in this respect, the period 1965-1971 presents an interesting twist of rich irony in the dynamics of white politics in colonial Zimbabwe. The fact is that the RF government increasingly came under fire from an irate farmer electorate, which had fully backed it root and branch in its bid for UDI.

What angered white ranchers and other farmers alike was that while many had the perception that the RF government was a "farmers' government"¹⁰⁶, its position on the economic plight of farmers seemed ambiguous at best. For instance, at a Farmers' Association meeting held in November 1971, Rudland, the Minister of Agriculture, in response to complaints about "the chronic state of profitability," reminded those present that "his responsibilities were national ones and it was not practicable to deal with any particular area without regard to the overall consequences and the national interest."¹⁰⁷ Thus, many small producers who were struggling to keep their heads above water increasingly came to believe that the RF government was less sympathetic to the poorer members of the farming community in general. This thinking was further reinforced by Rudland's utterings that government subsidies were just mere palliatives.¹⁰⁸

The tension between white farmers in general and the RF government, especially at the end of 1960s, was so high that only the fear of black rule kept the farmers in line.¹⁰⁹ The worsening economic situation helped to undermine the integrity of the Rhodesia National Farmers Union

¹⁰⁶ *FM*, 13 February 1970, 461.

¹⁰⁷ Press Statement 728/71/DK, 4 November 1971.

¹⁰⁸ *FM*, 11 November 1966, 439.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 12 May 1967, 453.

itself. For instance, the smaller producers were threatening to pull out of the organisation as they felt that “RNFU was [also] not interested in the problems of the small man.”¹¹⁰ In particular, militant ranchers from Matabeleland who were not happy about its inept handling of the issue concerning cheaper stock feed, demanded that the Matabeleland branch secede from the RNFU.¹¹¹ Thus, by 1970, an “overall air of despondency,”¹¹² prevailed over the capitalist ranching sector in general, with most of the criticism directed against the RF government’s cheap beef policy which many blamed for keeping producer prices down.¹¹³

What angered most producers was that all profits made by the CSC went towards the subsidisation of domestic beef prices instead of benefiting the producers themselves. It was the use of what amounted to producer money either to smoothen out any “decreases in prices payable to producers, or excessive fluctuations in prices to consumers”¹¹⁴ which angered small cattle producers, most of whom were already reeling under the burden of heavy debts, effects of drought and increased costs of production brought about by economic sanctions. In 1966, D. Smith, an MP from Marandellas district, questioned the wisdom of the government’s cheap beef policy when he noted that:

The producer supplies to the CSC and the Commission buys at a price well in excess of what the Commission sells to the consumer... It is not good business and I do not see any sense in it. The money must come from somewhere. From where is it being subsidised? The producer can supply carcasses to the CSC and receive X [pounds], and buy it back cheaper from the butcher. There is something wrong in the system.¹¹⁵

In the same year, Colonel Hartley, an MP for Fort Victoria, argued that while the government’s income tax incentive measures on inputs such as fencing, dams, farm machinery and other farm

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 26 May 1967, 635. Most of the influential figures in the RF government were the bigger wealthier farmers such as D. C. Lilford, a wealthy rancher and confidant of Ian Smith, who was regarded by many as the RF’s principal financial backer and king maker. Barbara Field, the widow of Winston Field, however, argued that the RF’s largest sums came from the tobacco ‘barons’ of Marandellas. For more detail on this see ORAL/FI 2, 19-20; Other wealthier ranchers in the RF included Smith himself, who owned a ranch in Selukwe, W. J. Cary, a Midlands rancher and Brigadier A. Dunlop, a rancher from Que-Que, just to mention a few. For more detail on this point see ORAL CA/4; A. Dunlop, *The March of Time*, (Salisbury, 1977).

¹¹¹ *RH*, 30 April, 5 November 1971.

¹¹² Mackenzie, “Commercial Farmers,” 153.

¹¹³ For more details on this, see for example, R N F U, *Rep. Ann. Congr.*, 1970, 33-37, 43-49; HA/1/17/7/2, Papers of George Hartley, a former RF-elected Speaker of the Legislative Assembly and later Senator; Mackenzie, “Commercial Farmers,” esp. Chps. 2-3.

¹¹⁴ All profits made by the CSC were put into a Stabilisation Reserve Fund. By 1965, this Stabilisation Reserve had swelled to approximately 650 000 *pounds sterling*. For more details on this point, see CSC, *Ann. Rep. and Acc.*, 1965, 3-6.

developments were practical, they would only benefit those who were already making a taxable profit. For instance, Hartley noted:

I wonder if an examination has yet been made by the Ministry [of Agriculture] as to how many cattle breeders today in the commercial sector are making the sorts of profits which their capital investment should justify [being taxed] and how many as a result of that profit are incurring taxation? I have heard it stated in cattle breeding circles that as many as 60% of cattle breeders are in the red.... We hear very often from Honourable Members who sit on the opposition benches that this is a farmer's government and it is at pains to keep the farmers happy ... but, I would remind Honourable Members that it will avail nothing to the economy if government is to pour in assistance at the top while broken down farmers and ranchers drain out at the bottom.¹¹⁶

Hartley concluded by calling for a price increase of 250 for the revival of the breeding side of the beef industry.¹¹⁷ During the same debate, another MP, Mr Cary, also attacked what he saw as the government's tendency to follow "calamity measure[s]" which were not in the long term stability of the industry already suffering from low profit margins of between two-and-a-half and five per cent.¹¹⁸ While independent sources actually put the average economic returns per unit were "somewhere between R\$5 and R\$7 per animal"¹¹⁹, the RNFU itself admitted that net profitability in the beef industry at that time was actually nil.¹²⁰ Because of lack of profitability, the Rhodesia Cattle Producers Association estimated that at least 80 per cent of Matabeleland ranchers were bankrupt.¹²¹

In particular, the situation in Matabeleland was given an added twist by the fact that "agricultural operations ... require large amounts of capital which is only available at rates in excess of profit margins."¹²² Only those ranchers who had sufficient capital to paddock and water their animals and employed sound managerial practices, but obviously at a cost to themselves, were able to survive extended droughts.¹²³ Thus, the average small rancher, usually with less than 50 per cent equity in his enterprise, had enormous difficulty in raising

¹¹⁵ Leg. Ass. Debates, 2 March 1966, Col. 1173-74, Smith, MP for Marandellas.

¹¹⁶ Ibid., Col. 1178-80, Colonel Hartley, MP for Victoria.

¹¹⁷ Ibid., Col. 1182.

¹¹⁸ Ibid., Col. 1202, Contribution by Mr Cary.

¹¹⁹ FM, 8 May 1970, 105; E. G. Cross, "Zimbabwe: Strategies for Economic Development and Equity", Symposium on Zimbabwe's Economic Prospects, (New York, 1980), 14.

¹²⁰ FM 19 February 1971, 586.

¹²¹ Ibid.; Cross, "Zimbabwe: Strategies for Economic Development and Equity", 14.

¹²² An Agro-Economic Survey of South-Western Matabeleland, 1972, 21.

¹²³ Ibid., 23.

development capital.¹²⁴ The Matabeleland's rancher's position was made more untenable by the high price of grain which could not be produced in-loco under dry land conditions there.¹²⁵ The only producers who managed to make a profit were the larger company owned ranches which could mobilise development capital and had larger herds.

Because of the unprofitable nature of beef production in the late 1960s and early 1970s, producer confidence sagged to an all-time low. Because of this, the market for young breeding stock collapsed thereby hitting the breeding side of the beef industry badly.¹²⁶ For instance, in 1970, "it was estimated that as much as 30 per cent of [breeding] cattle on offer at times remained unsold [while] those that changed hands did so at prices well below the CSC's maximum permissible ... level introduced when demand was keen and prices were high."¹²⁷ Many cattle breeding properties became severely overstocked as ranchers were forced to hold their stock for longer than was necessary. In order to stave off a looming cash flow crisis and cut losses, breeders were forced to send thousands of breeding cows to the CSC's abattoirs for slaughter.¹²⁸ Because of this, the percentage of bulled females between 1969 and 1971, fell from 73.4 per cent to 70.6 per cent, respectively.¹²⁹ Thus, after experiencing rapid growth in the first three to four years of sanctions, the industry's gains were once again eroded by low prices and increased costs of production at least by the start of the 1970s.

Conclusion

The chapter has tried to assess the positive impact and negative impact of economic sanctions on the country's beef industry. It is clear that in the first three to four years after 1965, sanctions acted as an exogenous catalyst which stimulated the rapid expansion of the Rhodesia's beef industry. There were two main factors which help to explain its impressive rate of expansion. The first one was Rhodesia's success in conducting a secret beef trade in direct violation of economic sanctions. Not only did the profits made from illegal exports loosen the noose of sanctions on the industry, but they also helped to make beef production a viable alternative to

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, 33.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, 22.

¹²⁶ *Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Zimbabwe Beef Industry, 1982*, 17.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*; AMA, *Production Potential of the Rhodesian Beef Industry* (European Areas), 2.

¹²⁹ AMA, *Beef Sit. and Outl. Rep., 1982*, Appendix 6.

tobacco, a prime sanctions target. The second and equally important factor was the RF government's policy of cheap subsidies and loans which were crucial in facilitating a shift away from tobacco to cattle on the northern maize and tobacco belt. This de-regionalisation of beef production not only led to expansion in the commercial herds but also led to the expansion in the production of export grade cattle. Thus, for the first time in the history of the beef industry, Mashonaland became a major producer of beef cattle while Matabeleland lost its position as the premier cattle producing region.

However, as result of UDI, the country's beef industry paid a heavy price. For example, there is absolutely no doubt that Rhodesia's secret beef trade was carried out at a very high cost to the beef industry itself. Indeed, even Ian Smith, the Rhodesian Prime Minister himself noted that:

the imposition of sanctions created many trading problems for us ... We find that we are compelled to export at a discount and import at premium. The result is that we lose out on both transactions. This has the effect of reducing profit margins internally, and at the national level, it has an adverse effect on our balance of payments and foreign exchange reserves.¹³⁰

Sanctions left the RF government faced with the calamitous and thankless task of dishing out millions of dollars in subsidies in order to keep increasingly restive white farmers on the land. Despite the fact that the government poured millions of dollars to prevent the capitalist agricultural sector in general from going under, it was ironic that an increasing number of white ranchers actually found themselves economically worse-off. At the root of this crisis was the RF government's cheap beef policy and the effects of economic sanctions all of which led to a loss of confidence and combined to make beef production unprofitable. The net result was a reversal of the gains the beef industry had made during the first five years of sanctions and, most importantly, a widening political rift between the RF government and its farmer electorate.

¹³⁰ Statement by Prime Minister, Ian Smith to the House of Assembly, Quoted in RH, 17 April 1973.

Chapter Six

Colonialism at the Ritual Altar?: The Beef Industry During the Second Chimurenga War, 1972-1980.

Just at the time when recorded profits in the beef industry had hit their lowest level since the imposition of sanctions in 1965, the country was plunged into a protracted guerrilla War of Liberation or Chimurenga, with disastrous consequences for capitalist agriculture in general, and the beef industry in particular. Although the actual war against the Rhodesia Front government began with an attack on the Oberholtzer family farm by the Crocodile Commando, a [Z]imbabwe [A]frican [N]ational [L]iberation [A]rmy guerrilla unit, on 4 July 1964¹, the real turning point in the war against the colonial regime was marked by the attack on Altena farm on 21 December 1972. The attack on Altena coincided with a shift or change of tactics in [Z]imbabwe [A]frican [N]ational [U]nion's approach to the armed struggle. Thus, from 1972 onwards, the Second Chimurenga war entered into a new phase and a completely new strategy "based on giving primacy to the prior political preparation of the people" turned the Second Chimurenga into a "People's War."² In turn, the success of the "People's War" strategy rapidly changed the security situation in the country thereby forcing the R F government to launch a repressive counter-insurgency campaign to break the link between guerrillas and the people.³ The Rhodesian government's counter-insurgency strategy backfired as the "repression that the settlers sustained against the African people, combined

¹ L. H. Gann and T. H. Henricksen, *The Struggle for Zimbabwe*, (New York, 1981), 48

² L. Cliffe, "Zimbabwe's Political Inheritance," in C. Stoneman (ed.), *Zimbabwe's Inheritance* (London, 1981), 27 The new strategy, which was based on the Maoist approach to armed struggle, involved mass political education of the rural peasantry using a combination of all-night meetings called "pungwes", slogans and Chimurenga songs. Thus, as in Maoist thinking, the guerrillas had become the fish and the people the water. The strategy involved a clear division of labour: the people provided guerrillas with food, shelter, portage and most importantly, gathered intelligence on the movement of Rhodesian security forces for the guerrillas. Sometimes old men but mostly young boys or men herding cattle on the veld served as "Mujibas" or the "eyes and the ears" of the guerrillas while on the other hand, young women known as "Chimbwidios" prepared food and served as porters. For more details on this, see J. Frederikse, *Non But Ourselves: Masses vs. Media in the Making of Zimbabwe*, (Johannesburg, 1982), esp. Ch. 3; J. Tungamirai, "Recruitment to ZANLA: Building Up a War Machine," in N. Bhebe and T. Ranger, *Soldiers in Zimbabwe's Liberation War*, (Harare, 1991).

³ For more details on Rhodesian counter-insurgency operations, see J. K. Cilliers, *Counter Insurgency in Rhodesia*, (London, 1981).

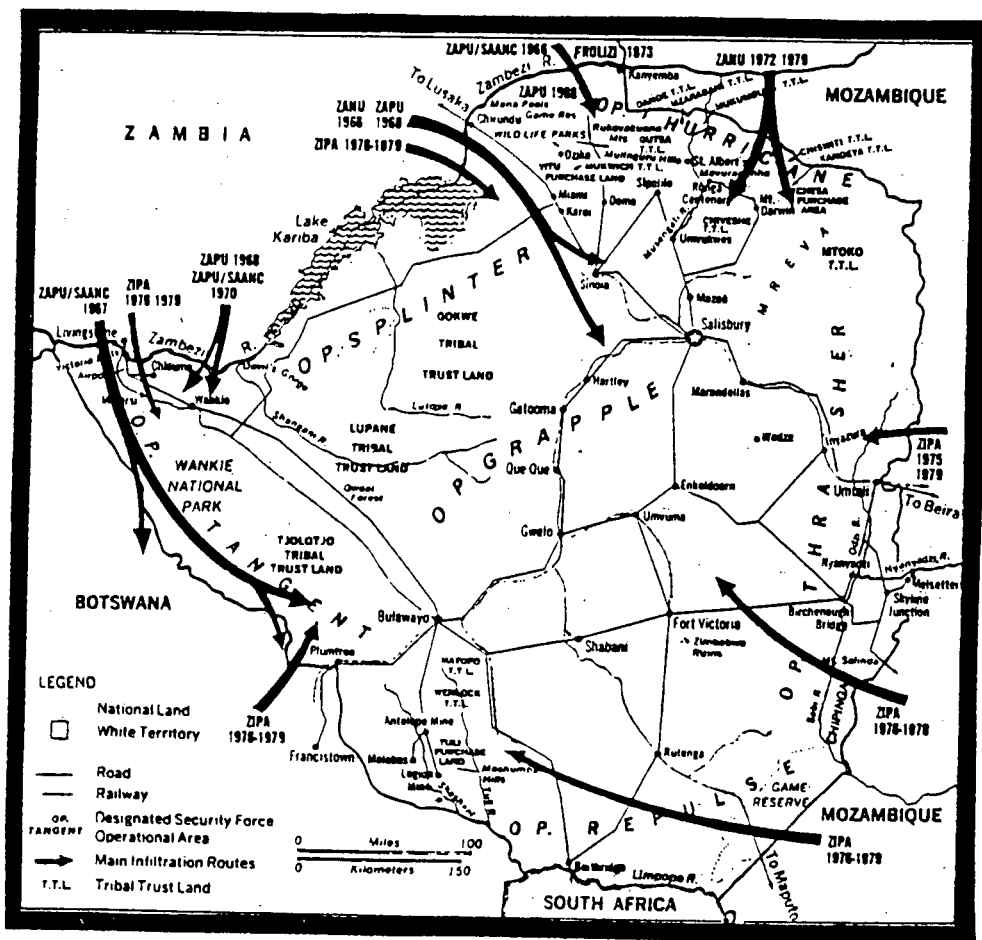
with their declining living standards and increased landlessness helped to [radicalise their] support for the armed struggle.”⁴

In the period between 1972 and 1979, ZANU’s military wing, ZANLA, infiltrated the country in a wide arc from Centenary and Mt. Darwin in the north-east, and when Mozambique became ZANLA’s rear base in 1975, through Manicaland in the centre or east of the country, to Victoria in the south-east and the edge of the farming and mining Midlands district in the south.⁵ On the other hand, ZAPU’s military wing, ZIPRA, also closed-in on the country’s economic heartland in another “wide arc extending from Sipolilo and Urungwe in the north, through Gokwe and Silobela in the centre of the country, to Lupane, Nkayi and Tsholotsho in the west.”⁶ (see Map 3 below). In this huge pincer movement, both ZIPRA and ZANLA carried out barrages of attacks on the white economy especially white owned farms before planting land mines and retreating or vanishing, often by assuming the protective colouring of the people in the outlying countryside.⁷ Apart from legitimate military targets, white farmers were constantly attacked as they were considered to be the RF government’s “front-line soldiers.”⁸ Besides, guerrillas knew from bitter experience that, as the Rhodesian security forces fifth columnists, most white farmers would invariably inform the security forces if they caught sight of insurgents or so-called “terrorists” anywhere.

⁴ A. Astrow, *Zimbabwe: A Revolution That Lost Its Way?*, (London, 1983), 57.

⁵ Cliffe, “Zimbabwe’s Political Inheritance,” 28.

⁶ J. Brickhill, “Daring to Storm the Heavens: The Military Strategy of Z A P U, 1976-79,” in Bhebhe and Ranger, *Soldiers in Zimbabwe’s Liberation War*, 52.



Map 4. Main Guerrilla Infiltration Routes During the Second Chimurenga War.

⁷ D. Dabengwa, "ZIPRA in the Zimbabwe War of National Liberation," *Ibid.*, 32.
⁸ *New African*, Monthly, April 1979.

In this chapter, the economic impact of the Second Chimurenga or war of liberation on the country's beef industry between 1972 and 1980 is assessed. In what curiously appears to have been a ritualised end to colonialism, hundreds of thousands of both white and African-owned cattle died or were lost during that war. Indeed, like the proverbial sacrificial lambs, hundreds of thousands of cattle were lost in a vicious spiral generated by a combination of large scale and systematic cattle rustling, maiming, hamstringing, shootings, the resurgence of tsetse-fly and a plethora of tickborne diseases. It is argued here that the Second Chimurenga helped to worsen the beef industry's economic problems brought about by sanctions. By so doing, the war brought into sharp relief the increasing political differences between the RF government and white ranchers especially over the issues of security, stock theft and profitability arising from its control over beef prices.

The War and Cattle Rustling

One of the earliest problems to hit the commercial sector of the beef industry hard was the systematic use of cattle rustling by guerrillas and peasants as a tool of economic subversion against white dominated economy. Thus, as if to echo in historical antithesis the events surrounding the entrenchment of colonialism itself and indeed, the successful establishment of white capitalist ranching in the country in the 1890s and early 1900s, the two factors of land and cattle, once again came to occupy the centre stage in a vicious anti-colonial war. While the issue of land was the chief most important driving force behind the war, cattle became the pawns in the vicious demise of colonialism much in the same way as white cattle looting had accompanied the successful establishment of white capitalist ranching and colonialism in the 1890s and early 1900s.⁹

From their operational zones and during blitzkrieg-like night time raids on white owned ranches or farms, guerrillas, often with the help of young men or "mujibhas" adopted a strategy of "liberating" whole herds of cattle owned by "exploitative capitalist" white

⁹ For more details on this point, see the Introduction to this whole study.

ranchers, before retreating with them into the adjoining “semi-liberated zones”. In their wake, the night-time raids left both paddock and perimeter fences on ranches completely broken down.¹⁰ Once the ‘liberated’ cattle had entered the “liberated zones” they were slaughtered the same night and the meat, which was known variously as ‘makabichi’ (cabbages), ‘matindindi’ (giant wild mushroom), ‘wenera’ (a corrupted term for the Witwatersrand Native Labour Agency) or, ‘gusha’ (wild okra) was distributed immediately for consumption by everyone in the surrounding villages.¹¹ A former Mujiba told this writer of how cattle raiding parties left the ‘semi-liberated zones’ situated in the west of the Nuanetsi district in the south of the country and crossed the well patrolled Fort Victoria Beitbridge road under the cover of darkness into “Fileleyo,” or the huge complex of white owned ranches in the east to “liberate wenera” cattle. According to him, once the raiding parties crossed safely back into the “semi-liberated liberated zones”, the cattle were automatically lost to their owners as all roads leading into the “liberated zones” were heavily mined thereby effectively making it difficult for Rhodesian security forces to carry out any ground follow up operations to recover them.¹² Commenting on the impact of the guerrilla strategy of “liberating” cattle, the BBC reported in 1979 that:

Settler land owners and ranchers have lost vast areas which were formerly grazing land to the liberation forces. Large herds of cattle are reported to have been driven either to the liberated or semi-liberated-liberated zones. The few that remain in settler hands are now overcrowded..¹³

On the other hand, by abetting guerrilla sabotage of the white economy in this manner African peasants were able to reap the fruits of their courage, while guerrillas themselves

¹⁰ Semi liberated zones were those areas in which colonial law and order had collapsed and were completely under the control of guerrillas. For more details on this, see Zimbabwe News, 3 October 1978. The same point is also made by Frederikse, Non But Ourselves, 219 and J. A. Mackenzie, “Commercial Farmers in the Governmental System in Colonial Zimbabwe, 1963-1980”, (University of Zimbabwe, unpub. DPhil thesis, 1989), 263.

¹¹ Interview with Moja and Cosmas Dzingira, 16 December 1996. The two Dzingira brothers were young boys in Chibi district, who, like other boys in rural Rhodesia at the time, spent most of their boyhood herding cattle during the war. According to them, the reason why guerrillas insisted that everybody eat meat from ‘liberated’ cattle was the need to ensure that no-one co-operated with the Rhodesian security forces when follow up investigations were made as everybody would be guilty of stealing.

¹² Interview with Mr. X, a former “Mujiba”, 10 December 1996. NB. The interviewee chose to remain anonymous and asked for his name to withheld for personal reasons. The author decided to refer to him as Mr. X. According to him, the targeted settler commercial ranching area to the east of Mberengwa and Gwanda districts became known to local inhabitants as “Fileleyo” because many people lost their lives there during clashes with both Rhodesian security forces and white farmer vigilante or stock-theft ‘reaction’ groups.

¹³ BBC, Salisbury Home Service 1745 GMT, 7 November 1979.

gained political capital. In another sense, the participation of the peasantry made the Second Chimurenga unique in the sense that peasants were not just the proverbial water while guerrillas were the fish in the Maoist sense of guerrilla warfare. Also, by rustling white-owned cattle, sabotaging “soft” targets through cutting perimeter fences to facilitate stock theft, mutilating, hamstringing cattle and sometimes deliberately setting fires to pastures on white-owned ranches, the peasantry were also able to turn the Second Chimurenga into a “People’s War.” In 1978, ZANU’s Secretary General, Robert Mugabe, acknowledged this fact when he told the Mozambican magazine Tempo that:

as we advance out of the [semi-liberated-liberated] rural zones the people will have a very important part to play. The war turns into a people’s war, with the people struggling ... and attacking the enemy. Our army will attack the most difficult targets and the people the easier ones.¹⁴

With reference to the sabotage of the commercial ranching industry, Mugabe’s words were not just mere revolutionary rhetoric. Already, by 1977, cattle rustling had become so serious that the economic viability of white ranching in Rhodesia itself was severely threatened by heavy stock losses.¹⁵ The worse off ranchers were those operating in areas situated along the wide arc of guerrilla advance, mainly in the east and west of the country. Hence, while a promotional supplement to the Umtali Post of 26 August 1977, pointed out that, “the farming area of Chipinga district has, since the emergency started here in June 1975, gone through probably the biggest economic boom the town has known,” it also sadly acknowledged that white ranchers, especially those operating along the border, had failed to share in this prosperity because of increased cattle rustling.¹⁶ In particular, peasants in the Manicaland district of Makoni in the east of the country, struck mortal blows at the ranching economy around them by rustling and sometimes killing white owned cattle. One of their number, Amon Shonge noted that:

The people used to go to European farms and drive away cattle. They never bothered to leave them alive. They killed them and ate the meat or left the carcasses to rot. If the army [Rhodesian Security Forces] found any of the bones or any evidence of the cattle then you were in real trouble. They shot your cattle, burnt huts. [During one

¹⁴ Quoted in T. O. Ranger, Peasant Consciousness and Guerrilla War in Zimbabwe: A Comparative Study, (Harare, 1985), 180-181; For information on such activities as cutting of boundary fencing on ranches see also: Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Zimbabwe Beef Industry, 1981 Chairman - R. C. Elliot, 19.

¹⁵ [C]ommercial [F]armers [U]nion, Minute Book, (January 1977-December 1977), minutes (Cyclo. 8990), 22-23 February 1977, 45.

¹⁶ Umtali Post, 26 August 1977, Quoted in Mackenzie, “Commercial Farmers,” 268.

such incident] all the people in Matongo's village were forced to strip naked: men, women and children and marched for a mile while their huts were burnt.¹⁷

The idea of imposing collective punishment on whole villages suspected of complicity in cattle rustling came in 1973, with the promulgation of the Emergency Powers (Collective Fines) Regulations.¹⁸ In effect, the Regulations empowered Rhodesian security forces and the Ministry of Internal Affairs officials to mete out collective justice on people suspected of any involvement in acts of sabotage or abetting guerrillas. Punishment took many forms which ranged from severe torture and beatings to destruction of immovable property and confiscation of all cattle, "including those of men who were working in town and could not possibly have been involved in the alleged offence."¹⁹ Reporting on the problem of cattle rustling, for which he had slapped the people of Weya in Makoni district with a collective fine of R\$35 000 in March 1977, the District Commissioner for the area reported that:

between the 1st July 1976 and 16th February 1977, cattle numbering 3 292 and estimated to value \$326 950 have been stolen from [white] farms in the Mayo, Headlands and Macheke areas of the Makoni District; that these cattle were driven into Weya, Tanda, and Chikore and Zimbiti Tribal Trust lands ... and that of the 3 292 head of cattle stolen 928 head valued at approximately \$92 000 have been driven into Weya Tribal Trust land ... that the terrorists have held and are holding meetings in the Tribal Trust lands mentioned above with tribesmen instructing them to steal European-owned cattle; that the tribesmen of these Tribal Trust lands have willingly carried out the instructions in question and have assisted the terrorists and continue to do so in their declared aim of disrupting the agricultural economy of the areas mentioned above.²⁰

After finding the people of Weya guilty, the District Commissioner unilaterally took the decision to impose a stiff fine in the form of cattle and ordered each of the 37 Headmen in the area to seize at least 30 or more cattle from their people which were to be handed over to government.²¹ Two months after this official report was made, Amon Shonge, a resident in the same district, informed Guy Clutton-Brock, a missionary at St Faith Mission in April

¹⁷ Ranger, *Peasant Consciousness and Guerrilla War in Zimbabwe: A Comparative Study*, (Harare, 1985), 180-81.

¹⁸ Rhodesian Government Notice. No. 101 of 1973.

¹⁹ A. K. H. Weinrich, "Strategic Resettlement in Rhodesia," *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol. 3, No. 2 (1977), 207; Evidence from Oral interviews with Moja and Cosmas Dzingira, 10 December 1996; A similar point is also made by Mackenzie, 'Commercial Farmers', 198.

²⁰ Ranger, *Peasant Consciousness*, 180-81.

²¹ *Ibid.*

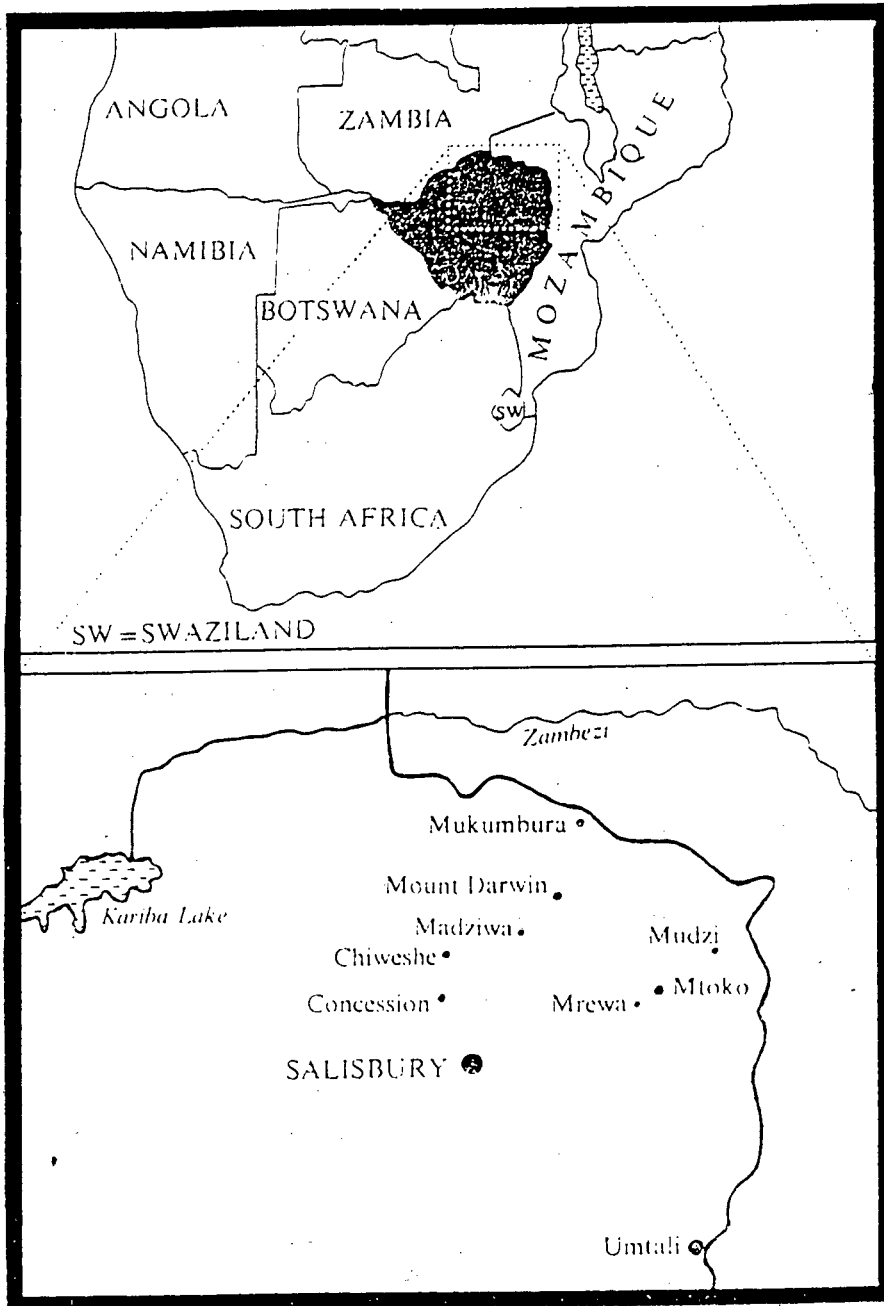
1977, about Rhodesian security force reprisals which followed one episode of rustling when he note that:

on the 5th April the army rounded-up all the people, village by village, in our area, collected all the biggest, best and fattest oxen they can find [sic]. Roughly, the oxen could number between 300-400 beasts. Some families could have as much as 7 beasts taken, as long as they are the best in that village. All such unfortunate families have no oxen to plough with now. Not even a cent was offered for their beasts. This was said to be the punishment for feeding and sympathising with 'terrorists.' The next day they [Rhodesian security forces] dropped leaflets from a plane warning people that if they ... continue [assisting guerrillas] they could face even more severe punishment in future.²²

Despite the general brutality with which Rhodesian security forces dealt with suspected cattle thieves, cattle rustling continued unabated throughout the country. Thus, in order to sever links between guerrillas and civilians, Rhodesian government's strategists proposed the forced removal of people in areas thoroughly infiltrated by guerrillas and their resettlement into so-called "protected Villages" from 1973 onwards.²³ (See Map 4 below)

²² *Ibid.*

²³ The new attempt at counter-insurgency was based on the protected villages set up in the 1940s in Malaya, where many Rhodesians had served in the British army after the Second World War and the *aldeamentos* put up by the Portuguese in Mozambique during the last years of the war of independence in the early to mid 1970s. For more details on the establishment of protected villages, see Weinrich, "Strategic Settlements in Rhodesia", 207-229.



Map 5. Strategic Resettlements or Protected Villages (PVs) in Rhodesia, 1973.

Brutal, elaborate and costly as such government counter insurgency measures were, they did little to soothe the anger of white ranchers which by now had reached boiling point. Much to the anger of white ranchers, cattle rustling which many regarded as “latent terrorism” simply became an item on the capitalist ranchers’ already long list of complaints about the government’s failures to effectively deal with the problems facing the beef industry during the war. For example, at an annual meeting of the [R]hodesia [N]ational [F]armers [U]nion held in Bulawayo in July 1975, one rancher hit out at the government’s “unsatisfactory record of the detection of stock thieves.”²⁴ Other ranchers at the meeting criticised local Magistrates for being too “lenient and too afraid of reviewing judges to impose stronger penalties on offenders.” Amid cries of “Flog them, Hang them”, R. W. V. Lee, also a rancher at the same meeting told those gathered of a case where he had met a convicted stock thief on his property only a few days after being sentenced to 180 days or R\$100 in the Magistrate’s court. “The African told me the court had given him time to find the money, but by stealing more cattle?”, Lee asked angrily. Yet another rancher, Cecil Wolhunter, the chairman of the Matabeleland branch of the RNFU, agreed with R. K. Harvey of Mvuma, “that stock theft was a form of terrorism ... [for which] thieves should be jailed for 10 years and flogged”²⁵

In the Rhodesian parliament, the political storm generated by cattle rustling began with calls for equally harsher penalties for stock thieves. For instance, during the second reading of the Stock Theft Bill, which called for a mandatory nine year jail term for offenders, an MP, Roney Simmonds, thought that the bill would still not go “far enough” to solve this problem and thus, called for “mandatory whipping as well as mandatory imprisonment for the convicted stock thief.”²⁶ However, A. Wright, another MP, was more hopeful about the Bill’s impact when he said “I believe that a sentence of nine years may well render the economics of this particular exercise a bit doubtful”²⁷

²⁴ RH, 24 July 1975.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Leg. Ass. Debates, 20 February 1976, Col. 666, H. R. J. Simmonds, MP for Mtoko.

²⁷ Ibid., Col. 672.

Two of the main reasons which explain the government's failure to deal effectively with cattle rustling were the severe shortage of manpower, especially at the height of the war and the collapse of law and order particularly in areas where guerrillas had established full control. Left to themselves, ranchers took matters into their own hands and established vigilante "reaction" groups whose main purpose was to pursue cattle rustlers deep into the adjoining rural areas with the objective of, as had become common official practice, seizing African-owned cattle in retaliation for the theft. But, despite the fact that these so-called "reaction groups" were to be found everywhere in the country where cattle theft was rife, stock theft continued to pose serious problems for the capitalist ranching industry even by as late as 1979.²⁸ Reporting on the cattle situation in Matabeleland in 1979, the Provincial Veterinary Officer, J. O. K. Rodger, acknowledged this when he noted that:

Stock theft and intimidation of labour are having a more serious effect on the farmer's morale and in many cases they have proved to be the final straw, because he [i.e. rancher] sees little he can do to counter it. The farmer's reaction does, however, vary from community to community and, while some farmers have banded together to counteract the stock thefts, others are accepting the losses in the hope that things will improve in the near future and they can return to their normal farming practice.²⁹

On the state of affairs in the Wankie district in western part of the country, Rodger further noted that:

The Gwaai farmers are having a particularly difficult time with stock theft and labour intimidation. They have lost about 2 000 head of cattle and [two] farmers have left with their cattle to farms closer to Bulawayo. The remaining farmers have formed an anti-stock theft unit with police and claim to be getting on top of the problem following punitive seizing of [Africa-owned] cattle. Whether, however, they will in the future be able to again live harmoniously as neighbours with the [peasants in Communal areas] is another question.³⁰

The interesting thing about the so-called "reaction groups" was that they were actually made up of government officials, some of whom were ranchers themselves, who for obvious reasons, had personal reasons for taking drastic measures against alleged stock thieves. The Chief Veterinary Officer (Trypanosomiasis) in the Ministry of Agriculture himself, Bill Boyt,

²⁸ Mackenzie, "Commercial Farmers", 271-272, 274.

²⁹ The correspondence on this subject is contained in a closed archival file. Because of this, the file number has no letter prefix like other archival files. For more detail on this point, see *1310/F39/1, Rodger to Director of Veterinary Services, Bulawayo, 6 April 1979.

³⁰ Ibid.

outlined how his own “reaction group” went about recovering looted cattle when he noted that:

we countered this [cattle theft] by setting up anti-stock-theft units to guard the cattle and retaliate when they were stolen, frequently chasing the terrorist gang into the Tribal Trust Lands to recover the animals. Other measures included the use of cowbells, stripes on the backs of animals so that they were easily recognisable from the air or some vantage point on the ground and fitting tiny electric gadgets which gave out a radio signal indicating their whereabouts.³¹

But, even with all these measures in place, such regular counter raids, at best made little impact on the problem and, at worst took-up most of the ranchers’ valuable time. For instance, Rodger pointed out that many “stalwart farmers” who chose to remain on the land, regrettably ended up doing “more fighting than farming and cattle management [suffered].”³²

Table 6.1 below, shows the serious nature of cattle rustling in one year alone, i.e. 1979.

Table 6.1 : Livestock Theft Summary by Agricultural Province, April-December, 1979.

Province	Provincial Total	Stolen/killed	Recovered	Net Loss	Net Loss (%)	National Loss (%)
Manicaland	107 000	7 266	1 016	6 250	5.8	11.5
Mash. North	402 000	945	96	828	0.2	5.1
Mash. South	509 000	10 870	2 682	8 188	1.6	14.5
Matabeleland	633 000	17 546	3 790	13 756	2.2	24.4
Midlands	467 000	5 502	1 970	3 532	0.8	6.3
Victoria	251 000	27 280	3 675	23 605	9.4	41.8
Unknown	-	300	0	300	-	0.5
Nat. Total	2 369 000	69 709	13 227	56 482	2.4	100.0

Source: Mackenzie, “Commercial Farmers”, Appendix 6, 473.

The high stock theft figures in the table above help to confirm Rodger’s conclusions on the impact of “reaction groups” on the beef industry. Actually, just a year earlier, Rodger’s conclusions had already been confirmed by a petition sent by ranchers in the Victoria district to MPs. The petition noted that:

³¹ T. Grundy and B. Miller, *The Farmer at War*, (Salisbury, 1979), 125.

³² *1310/F39/1, Rodger to Dir. Vet. Services., Byo., 6 April 1979.

Despite intensive self-help measures, stock-theft has grown like a malignant cancer and is threatening to consume the entire district. Over a period of some 18 months every known method of curing this illness has been tried to no avail. We have tried defensive measures such as kraaling, patrolling and ambushing with negligible results. In fact, kraaling cattle not only kills them through loss of condition but also necessitated an even increasing burden of manpower as cattle were then taken during the day as well as at night, resulting in an impossible requirement for day and night guards.³³

The petition went on to point out that:

Hazardous operations were mounted whereby we went into the T TTLs Ls [Communal Areas] at night in unprotected vehicles leaving our homesteads and wives and families unguarded and apprehended known stock thieves and their gang leaders. Over thirty stock thieves have been detained and several have already been sentenced to imprisonment. Stock theft has [however,] not stopped ... it is frightening. Besides being extremely dangerous, these efforts have been time consuming. Management on farms has fallen to a dangerous degree and as a result many of the younger farmers in particular, face ruin. Decimation of cattle herds has resulted in over 50 000 hectares of land lying idle and already one younger rancher is out of business.³⁴

Acknowledging further how cattle rustling had wrecked havoc on white owned ranches the MP for Mtoko, told other members of the House that:

This crime is itself forcing many ranchers to curtail their cattle ranching operations, and some even to abandon them altogether.... I would like to quote the example of a farmer in my constituency who lost 83 head which were valued at the realistic value of R\$180 each. This means that he incurred a loss of \$14 940. Quite honestly, nobody can remain in business facing losses of this magnitude. The prevalence of stock theft today is, as you see, adversely affecting the national economy, and is also resulting in more empty farms in the security sensitive areas such as Mtoko.³⁵

The Chairman of the RNFU's Victoria branch, R. J. Taylor, also informed other members of the House that:

Cattle theft was still very serious and complaints were being made that in some cases the [J]oint [O]perations [C]ommand did not respond to definite requests.... ranchers were suffering not only as a result of stock theft, but from the high cost of mine-proofing vehicles and the cost of additional security measures.³⁶

Also commenting on the impact of stock theft in the eastern districts of the country, the (London) [F]inancial [T]imes noted on 21 September 1978, that:

³³ Leg. Ass. Debates, 29 November 1978, Col. 1406, Mr George M P for Victoria.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ibid., 20 February 1976, Col. 666, Simmonds, MP for Mtoko.

³⁶ CFU, Minute Book (January-December, 1977), minutes (cyclo. no. 9376), 25-26 October 1977, 206.

Stock theft from cattle ranches has crippled the industry in some areas. One farmer in Umtali told of losing 350 head this year [1978] alone, instead of 400 calves he would have 100.³⁷

During 1978 alone, the number of attacks against white farms totalled a staggering 3 500 while in 1979 the total exceeded 4 000. About two thirds of these raids or attacks involved cattle rustling.³⁸

What made the situation worse were the difficulties which authorities faced in tracking down and apprehending alleged stock thieves especially those who drove their loot across the country's eastern borders into Mozambique.³⁹ It is important however, to emphasise that while the Rhodesian security forces together with Ministry of Internal Affairs routinely blamed all cattle rustling on so-called "C/T [Communist Terrorist] inspired incidents", not all stock losses had anything to do guerrillas or peasants.⁴⁰ Indeed, it would seem that while crying of so-called "C/T inspired" cattle rustling throughout the country, white ranchers themselves, especially those operating along the southern border areas, took a hand in driving both imported and pedigree cattle across the border into South Africa.⁴¹ For instance, in January 1979, the [Z]imbabwe [P]eople's [V]oice confirmed that some white commercial ranchers were "conniving to drive" their cattle together with "many cattle belonging to Africans," across the southern border into South Africa.⁴²

Cattle rustling itself remained a serious problem in the country even after the signing of the cease-fire agreement in December 1979. The reason for this was that after the cease-fire was signed, Rhodesian security forces were confined to assembly points. While the RNFU's branch chairmen reported "a general easing of attacks on white farms", they were also quick to mention that cattle theft remained a thorn in the side of many ranchers throughout the

³⁷ FT, (London) 21 September 1978.

³⁸ AMA, Econ. Rev. Agric. Ind., 1980, 2.

³⁹ Leg. Ass. Debates, 20 February 1976, Col. 675, Contribution by Mr A. Wright.

⁴⁰ Mackenzie, "Commercial Farmers", 412-13.

⁴¹ Interview with the Mr. C. B. Madonko, Managing Director of Nuanetsi Ranch Ltd., 17 December 1996.

⁴² ZPV, 6 January 1979.

country.⁴³ For example, J. M. Sinclair, Chairman of the [C]ommercial [C]attle [P]roducers [A]ssociation noted that:

stock-theft has, since the cease-fire [was signed], been running at record levels.... An alarming feature is the spread of the problem geographically and more reports of stock theft in Mashonaland are coming in. This area up to now has been relatively free from stock theft.... There has been a decline in the weekly figures but I feel it is too early to be jubilant about this.⁴⁴

Even in as late as 25 January 1980, the Umtali Post could still quote Sinclair calling for a stop to “this bleeding of the industry”, through cattle theft.⁴⁵

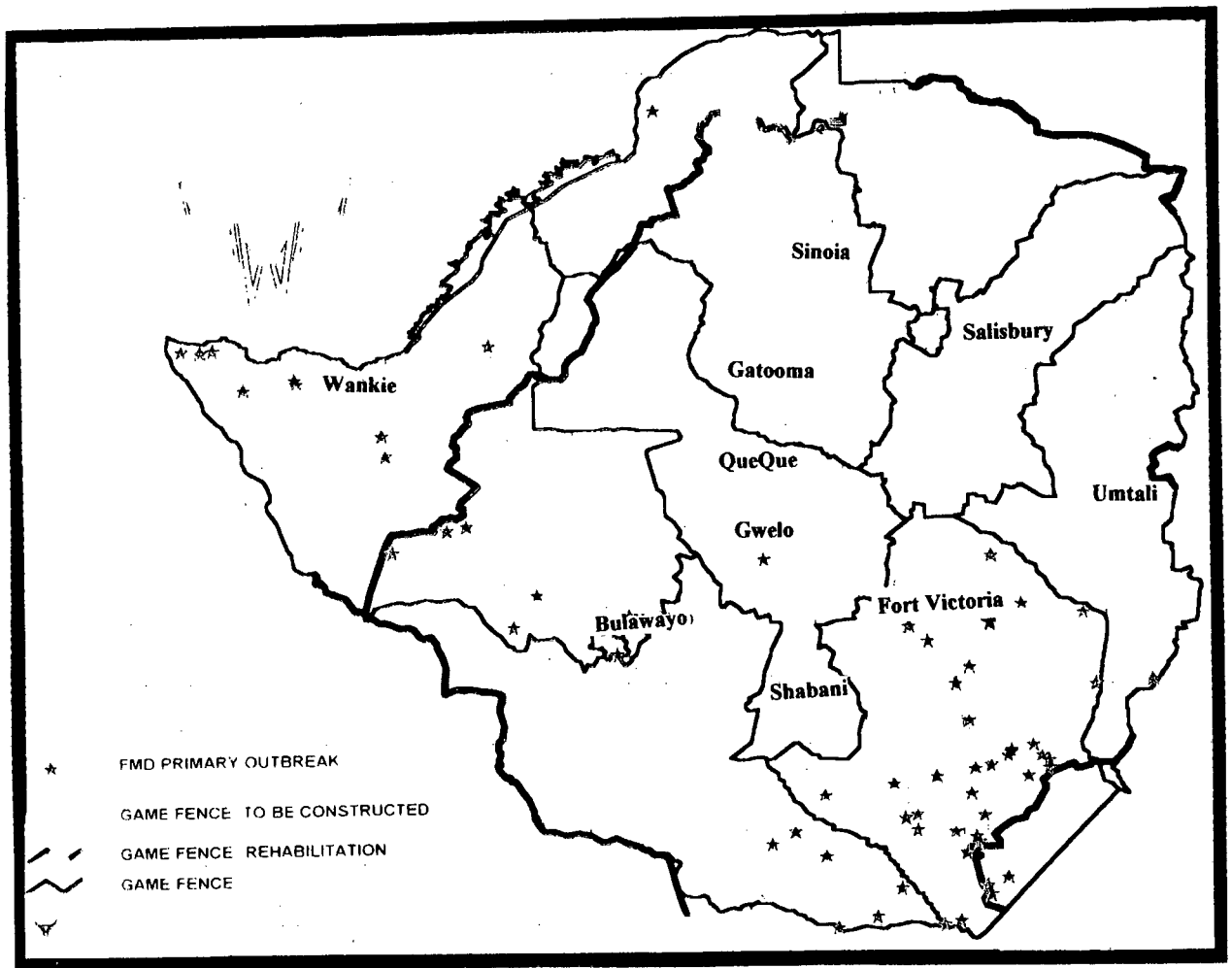
The Out-break of Diseases

While the issue of cattle rustling was just one face of the war, the other even uglier face was the outbreak of cattle diseases in rural areas throughout the 1970s. By far, the worst affected by this problem was the African cattle sector which suffered direct physical damage from the war itself. Due to the fact that most of the actual fighting between guerrillas and Rhodesian security forces took place in African Reserves, almost all the available veterinary infrastructure was destroyed. This situation plunged entire swathes of rural African land into the throes of a smouldering viral challenge paralleled only in magnitude by the cattle epidemics of the late 1890s, early 1900s and early 1930s. (For the epicentres of foot-and-mouth out breaks since 1931 see Map 5 below).

⁴³ Mackenzie, “Commercial Farmers”, 408.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 409.

⁴⁵ UP, 21 January 1980.



Map 1: Primary outbreaks of Foot and Mouth disease since 1931

At the forefront of fanning the spread of cattle diseases, especially Anthrax were the Rhodesian security forces themselves. With victory quickly slipping through their fingers in the last four years of the war, the Rhodesian security forces used poisons and chemical defoliants as part of their counter-insurgency operations. For instance, hoping for starved guerrillas to fall for the trap, Rhodesian security forces especially the notorious Selous Scouts, distributed *Leox* brand tinned beef spiked with *Thallium* poison in areas thoroughly infiltrated by guerrillas. The tinned beef was either passed on to guerrillas using agents or, more commonly was left by the security forces in deserted camps and other faked 'ambush scenes' along the main roads.⁴⁶ In one case where this strategy was used, the spiked beef ended in the hands of innocent villagers. Henrik Ellert, a former member of the Rhodesian Special Branch noted that:

A classic example of how this strategy ... horribly backfire[d] came in late 1977 when African villagers living in the Arcturus District found a case of *Leox* corned meat hidden in the bush. Most of the tinned meat was quickly consumed and within hours many of the unfortunate victims lay dying or dead. The circumstances were soon reported to the Rhodesian Ministry of Health who contacted the Manufacturers, Liebig's, at West Nicholson with a complaint that people had died from botulism poisoning after eating *Leox* tinned meat.... A team of food Scientists [from Liebig's London Head office] were immediately despatched to investigate.⁴⁷

After the "offending tins" were discovered by Loris Zoukini, Liebig's' resident Engineer, and also following an unsuccessful attempt by government officials to destroy incriminating evidence, further investigations unearthed evidence of "massive concentrations of *Thallium* poison in the *Leox* tins."⁴⁸ The highly embarrassing and sensitive matter forced the visiting team of [Liebig's] Brooke-Bond food Scientists to immediately recall the "entire stock of *Leox* beef nation-wide for examination." Ellert goes on to point out that:

the final irony of this ill-considered poisoning strategy was that it cost Rhodesia vital export earnings as Brooke-Bond cancelled export contracts for corned meat. Up until late 1977, Liebig's had been manufacturing *Fray Bentos* brand tinned meat under forged *Product of Argentina* labels for export on behalf of their London principals.⁴⁹

⁴⁶ Interview with John Chabva, a former "mujibha" during the war, 18 December 1996.

⁴⁷ H. Ellert, *The Rhodesian Front War: Counter-Insurgency and Guerrilla Warfare, 1962-1980*, (Gweru, 1989), 146.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

On the whole, however, it was the use of the Anthrax virus as a tool of biological warfare which had disastrous consequences for African owned herds. It has only recently come to light that Rhodesia security forces, fully aware of the effects, deliberately unleashed the Anthrax virus on African-owned herds in areas they believed guerrillas were receiving maximum support from local people. In a “confidential communication,” a former officer in the Rhodesian army, told David Martin, an authority on Zimbabwe’s war history, that:

It is true that Anthrax spoor was used in an experimental role in the Gutu, Chilimanzi, Masvingo and Mberengwa areas, and the Anthrax idea came from Army ‘Psyops’ [Psychological Operations]. The use of Anthrax spoor to kill off the cattle of tribesmen assisting the guerrillas was not carried in tandem with the distribution of Thallium contaminated foodstuffs or organo-phosphate impregnated clothing, but was carried out in conjunction with the psychological suggestion to the tribes-people that their cattle were sick and dying because of disease introduced into Zimbabwe from Mozambique by the infiltrating guerrillas.⁵⁰

The above information would seem to correspond with BBC reports on the cattle situation in the south and south-east parts of the country. For instance, on 7 November 1979, the BBC reported that:

Cattle, besides being short of grazing area, have been badly hit by the spread of Anthrax disease which has been worsened by the shortage of appropriate medicines ... people were also suffering from the same disease, with 20 deaths already reported as a result of eating beef from infected cattle.⁵¹

In his paper on the subject Martin outlines several characteristics about outbreak of Anthrax which clearly suggest that the epidemic was actually a man made problem. These factor are as follows:

(a) The first striking point about the Zimbabwe case is that it affected 10 738 people from January 1979 to December 1980. This compares to about 7 000 cases reported in the world annually. The Zimbabwean outbreak was regarded as particularly unusual in the light of the previous relatively low occurrence of Anthrax in this country. In the previous 29 years only 334 human cases had been reported (compared to 459 in the United States in the same period), meaning that Anthrax was a rare disease in both country and,...[since] treating Anthrax was outside the experience of Zimbabwean doctors.... of those affected 182 died.

(b) A second unusual factor about the Zimbabwean case was its most unusual geographic scope. Normally outbreaks are localised but, in Zimbabwe, Anthrax spread

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ David Martin, “The Use of Poison and Biological Weapons in the Rhodesian War”, (University of Zimbabwe, unpub. in-house paper, 7 July 1993), 5.

⁵¹ BBC, Salisbury Home Service, 1745 GMT, 7 November 1979.

across the country affecting six of the eight provinces, in most cases in areas where Anthrax had never been previously recorded.

(c) Thirdly, if weather conditions had been particularly favourable throughout Zimbabwe to the growth of Anthrax, then it should have been spread beyond our borders. But no cases were reported.

(d) In addition....the epizootic was almost entirely confined to the TTLs of Communal Lands.... Commercial white farms were almost entirely spared with only four small outbreaks, 11 cattle deaths and no human cases reported. Yet, by the end of 1979, one-third of Tribal Trust Lands covering approximately 17 per cent of the country were affected by Anthrax.⁵²

In view of the above mentioned factors, Martin persuasively suggests that Anthrax was indeed used as a form of biological weapon against guerrilla infiltration. In fact, he points out that:

the timing of the epizootic, the largest ever recorded in the world, coincided with the final bitter months of the war and the recognition by some in the Rhodesian establishment that they could not win, indeed, that they were losing. Whilst some who were in authority now may seek to apportion blame to individuals and units, that is much too easy and incorrect. Those at the top had sanctioned the use of poisons and biological warfare and theirs is the ultimate blame.⁵³

The death of thousands of African owned cattle during the war however, cannot entirely be explained by Anthrax epidemic alone. The outbreak of tick-borne diseases was a direct by-product of guerrilla tactics, especially if one considers the fact that guerrillas targeted the colonial dipping system itself. For instance, guerrillas instructed peasants to destroy dip tanks by filling them with lumps of concrete, rocks or stones. Explaining the psychology behind the campaign, Comrade Zeppelin, a ZANLA Political Commissar during the war recalled that:

All that had to do with Internal Affairs ... were important targets.... You see, the District Commissioners would go to the people and tell them that they are superior, they can crush the terrorists in no time. They used to gather the people at places like cattle dip tanks or at the Internal Affairs offices, and that is where they tell the people that they had enough strength to attack terrorism. So it was these places that we attacked, to show people that what the D Cs are saying is false. And, of course, in some cases we tried to exploit the fact that some of the masses were disgruntled with the idea of having to go to the dip tanks all the time; they would be harassed for not

⁵² Martin, "Use of Poison", 6.

⁵³ Ibid.

bringing in their cattle for dipping. So for us to get their support, we had to destroy those dip tanks.⁵⁴

Because of the already existing historical animosity towards compulsory dipping and dipping fees amongst the peasantry, it was easy for guerrillas mobilise people to destroy dip tanks. After all, by taking a hand in their destruction, the rural people who lived under conditions of relative abject poverty anyway, were able to save themselves significant amounts of money since dipping fees ranged from approximately 75 cents to R\$1.50 per beast per year.⁵⁵ Under the circumstances, many poor peasants voluntarily and eagerly sought to shake off any other form of fiscal obligation to the Rhodesian government. Of course, the Rhodesian officials never believed that some peasants participated in this type of sabotage willingly. For example, commenting on the destruction of dip tanks and the success of this guerrilla campaign, one of the country's leading tick ecologists, Andrew Norval, argued with an unintended touch of irony that:

It is a very effective kind of biological war-fare. The only technology needed is an A K. 47 and unfortunately, that technology is being wielded with increasing efficiency.⁵⁶

But, it also has to be accepted that failure to co-operate with guerrillas was often seen as selling out. Indeed, one 'progressive' peasant farmer commented on the guerrilla strategy that:

I believe in dipping and no-one can convince me that it is not a good thing.... Even people like me who support the principles of the liberation struggle do not agree with some of the methods of the people fighting. But if they tell me not to dip, it's not worth the risk to try it. I think the time will come soon when some of us will have to be brave and try and speak to the commanders in the bush and ask them to let us dip again. I've lost some cattle, and I have had to turn to sheep which a white friend is letting me keep on his land so they can be dipped. But even doing that could get me killed.⁵⁷

⁵⁴ Comrade Zeppelin, ZANLA Political Commissar, quoted in Frederikse, *Non But Ourselves*, 87.

⁵⁵ Grandy and Miller, *Farmer at War*, 85; *New African*, (Monthly), April 1979.

⁵⁶ Apart from the fact that the Government's own brutality had radicalised the political consciousness of rural people treatment it was also true that peasants more than willingly co-operated with guerrillas because they were related to them. This explains why guerrillas were affectionately called "vana Mukoma" meaning "our brothers". The level of co-operation which guerrillas received largely explains why Government counter-insurgency measures failed to succeed. *Commerce* (Monthly) 1979; *New African* (Monthly), 1979; Weinrich, "Strategic Resettlements in Rhodesia," 214.

As a result of this guerrilla campaign, approximately three quarters of all dip tanks in the Reserves were knocked-out so much so that only 1 500 out of a total of 8 000 dip tanks were still functional in the whole country by April 1979.⁵⁸ Because of the destruction of dip tanks, whole herds of African owned cattle were not being dipped by the end of the war. In 1979, Norval estimated that out of a total national herd of 3 300 000 head of African owned cattle in Rhodesia, approximately 1 353 000 head “in compulsory dipping areas [were] not being dipped.”⁵⁹

Table 6.2 : Total Number of Dip Tanks Not in Use by Province, 1979.

Province	Number of Dip Tanks	Number of Dip Tanks Not in Use
Manicaland	259	204
Victoria	318	234
Matabeleland South	133	125
Midlands	392	76
Mashonaland	388	43

Source: Grundy and Miller, *The Farmer at War*, 87.

The systematic destruction of dip tanks or dipping facilities led to the outbreak of a multitude of tick-borne diseases, six of which were to ravage the countryside with fatal results. Following the collapse of the country’s entire tick control infrastructure, diseases such as red-water, gall-sickness, theileriosis, heart-water and screw-worm easily killed hundreds of thousands of African owned cattle. The reason for this was that following many years of compulsory dipping most cattle now lacked immunity from such diseases. These diseases spread like a veldt fire owing to the enormous increase in the tick population. Due to the difficulty in carrying out cattle censuses during the war figures on cattle mortality vary according to source and are not necessarily accurate. However, government officials estimates indicate that losses varied according to province. They indicate that Manicaland suffered the highest mortality rate of over 50 percent or 200 000 head, Mashonaland and Victoria, plus or minus 40 000 head and Matabeleland, plus or minus 1 000 head.⁶⁰ While these estimates

⁵⁷ *New African*, (Monthly), April 1979.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

⁵⁹ Grundy and Miller, *Farmer At War*, 87.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

amount to almost a quarter of a million head, other independent sources place the total estimated loss at 500 000 head.⁶¹ The impact of the war however, was not uniform. Some rural areas obviously suffered more than others. For example, Kandeya Communal Lands which had an estimated total of 58 000 head of cattle at the start of the war, only had 40 000 head left in 1975, and 28 000 head by the end of 1979. Out of the 30 000 head which died between 1972 and 1979, only a mere 6 000 head or some twenty per cent were either sold or slaughtered.⁶²

Although guerrilla strategies had a boomerang effect on Africans themselves, the white commercial rancher was also not entirely free from a “spill over of disease and ticks” from the adjoining African areas.⁶³ This was not surprising given the unrestricted or uncontrolled movement of cattle across veterinary boundaries during the war. By the end of the 1970s, white ranchers were not just faced with the threat of guerrilla bullets and mortars but were also confronted by a spill over of ticks, tsetse fly and trypanosomiasis which began to spread rapidly following the collapse of the country’s disease monitoring and early warning system. For instance, owing to the escalation of the war, all anti-tsetse fly operations involving bush control, controlled movement of wild and domestic animals and aerial spraying had to be suspended, especially in areas where the government security forces had long lost control to the guerrillas. In fact, the war “put back tsetse and trypanosomiasis control some 20 or more years in some areas.”⁶⁴ One veterinary officer sadly pointed that:

In 1973, in Rushinga in the north-east, Rhodesia was about to embark on a major spraying operation down to the Rio Luia in Mozambique, the stronghold of tsetse in that area. But then the security situation deteriorated. Refusal of our help by FRELIMO in controlling the tsetse-flies along the 160 km into Mocambique. Today the situation is very serious. We can do literally nothing to stop the fly.... All we can do now is protect some of the cattle, we can do nothing to prevent the spread of the fly in most areas and little elsewhere.⁶⁵

The above situation was given an added twist by the fact that:

⁶¹ Commerce, (Monthly), April 1979; New African, (Monthly), April 1979.

⁶² Grundy and Miller, Farmer at War, 87.

⁶³ New African, (Monthly), April 1979.

⁶⁴ Grundy and Miller, Farmer at War, 89.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

even sentinel herds [strategically placed] along the borders ceased to function. Kept as alarm systems to check on the presence of fly through the trypanosome parasite which it carries, one herd of 32 was shot, mortared and rocketed in their kraal in 1976. Twenty-two died that night with a further ten being put down because of their severe wounds. This year, a whole sentinel herd of 24 was shot in Lupane [Matabeleland] and two herds of 83 in Binga [northern Matabeleland -south Kariba shore].⁶⁶

With the collapse of the veterinary infrastructure along the borders, “one of nature’s most notorious disease carriers, the tsetse fly [crept] back from Mozambique where all spraying and control programmes [had also] broken down.”⁶⁷ Thus, foot and mouth disease, which in the 1930s had left most white ranchers living like paupers with the responsibilities of rich men, once again made a comeback. By the end of the war, trypanosomiasis or “trips” as it was known, which guaranteed a 100 per cent kill, had gripped and infested an estimated 33 000 square kilometres of rural country in Rhodesia.⁶⁸ As a result thousands of cattle were wiped out so much that by 1979, some areas were “completely devoid of cattle.”⁶⁹ On the whole therefore, the viral challenge caused by the war spelt catastrophic results for all major players in the beef industry. In particular, the spread of foot and mouth brought back sad memories of the 1930s. Expressing fears typically reminiscent of the 1930s the MP for Matobo, Mr Goddard, argued that because of the breakdown in veterinary services farmers could:

not afford to manage their cattle as well as they did before, and all of a sudden a farmer then finds himself in quarantine and there is no compensation for that. A rancher could go out at this time of the year and buy himself 500 cattle for slaughter at next Christmas and by next August, because of the situation in the adjoining TTLs [Communal Areas], finds his whole farm under quarantine. He has now laid out in the region of R\$45 000 to secure himself a return at this time next year and finds that he can not sell the cattle.⁷⁰

Goddard might also have added that the presence of infection would not only play havoc with the movement and marketing of cattle locally, but would also jeopardise “the beef export trade [which was governed by] very strict veterinary requirements of importing countries.”⁷¹

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 90.

⁶⁷ *Commerce*, (Monthly) April, 1979; *New African* (Monthly), April 1979.

⁶⁸ Grundy and Miller, *Farmer at War*, 89.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

⁷⁰ *Leg. Ass. Debates*, 29 November, 1978, Mr Goddard, MP for Matobo (Matabeleland South).

⁷¹ *Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Zimbabwe Beef Industry*, 1981, 5.

On the whole, one third or approximately one million head of cattle died of tick-borne diseases alone in the period between 1974 and 1979.⁷² Of this total, about half or an estimated 500 000 head died in the last two years of fighting when the enzootic situation in the country had completely got out of control.⁷³ Partly because of the death of hundreds of thousands of African owned cattle the total value of cattle sales from African areas, fell by 15 percent from \$10.7 million in 1975, to \$9.1 million in 1976. Already, by 1976, cattle had ceased to be “the main source of income for African farmers ... this position having been taken over by cotton with commercial sales valued at \$9.2 million.”⁷⁴ By 1979, the situation in the African cattle sector had deteriorated so much that the sector’s marketed total output had fallen even further to a dismal all time low of about \$1.5 million.⁷⁵

Table 6.3 : Number of Cattle in the African Sector and Recorded Sales, 1972-1980

Year	Total Herd	Total Sales	Sales/Herd (%)
1972	2 890 000	71 000	2.5
1973	3 063 000	105 000	3.4
1974	3 267 000	87 000	2.7
1975	3 123 000	79 000	2.6
1976	3 349 000	74 000	2.2
1977	3 572 000	53 000	1.5
1978	2 950 000	26 000	0.9
1979	2 800 000	22 000	0.8
1980	2 600 000	44 000	1.7

Source: Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Zimbabwe Beef Industry, 1981, 6.

The decline in African marketed output was partly explained by declining returns caused by the continued deduction of levies and the extremely low prices paid for their cattle by the Ministry of Internal Affairs. The worst affected however, was the Small Scale Purchase Area farmer, who in comparison with his rural counterpart, incurred “heavier expenditure on

⁷² Ibid., 4.

⁷³ Grundy and Miller, Farmer at War, 128.

⁷⁴ A M A, Econ. Rev. Agric. Ind. : Gen. Surv. and Fut. Prosp., 1977, (Secret), 5.10.

⁷⁵ CSC News, Vol. 15, No. 56, 1980, 1.

capital developments.”⁷⁶ Indeed, as one scholar has concluded, the levy had the effect of reducing “net income to practically zero” and forced the African farmers to “revert to the production of traditional non levyable crops.”⁷⁷ The decline in the marketed output from the cattle sector also partly resulted from the disruption by the war of government organised sales.⁷⁸

Also worth mentioning here was the siphoning away of a sizeable proportion of Africa owned herds as collective fines by Rhodesian security forces, either in retaliation for collaborating with guerrillas or as reprisals for cattle rustling. Furthermore, the resettlement of people into [P]rotected [V]illages or “Keeps” as they were known, led, not just to the destruction of crops, but also to the enforced sales of cattle which had the effect of depleting African-owned herds even further.⁷⁹ The remainder of the cattle which remained unsold simply died of starvation and diseases which were rampant in areas around the PVs. As the Internal Affairs Minister, L. B. Smith, himself, later admitted, serious problems were posed by the soil erosion and disease caused by concentration of cattle around PVs.⁸⁰ The above situation was made worse by the shorter grazing hours caused by the government’s rigorously implemented curfew regulations.⁸¹ Thus, due to a combination of the above mentioned factors, African cattle sales fell from a wartime high of 105 000 head in 1973, to an all time low of 22 000 head in 1979.⁸² Because of the war, the number of African owned cattle fell from a peak of 3

⁷⁶ R. H. Clarke, “The Economic Implications of the Government’s Imposition of a 10 % Levy on the Commercial Produce of the African Purchase Land Farmer,” *Rhod. Journal of Econs.*, Vol. 10, No. 2, (June 1976), 86.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

⁷⁸ AMA, *Econ. Rev. Agric. Ind.*, 1980. 12.

⁷⁹ Following the establishment of the Mukumbura PV in 1973-74 local people were forced to sell their cattle “for a mere R\$5 or R\$6 a head, that is, for a quarter of the price normally paid for African cattle.” Sometimes the Ministry of Internal Affairs never bothered to pay for cattle as was the case in Makaha PV situated on border with Mozambique in 1975. The District Commissioner at Makaha gave cattle owners receipts but no cash and argued that the Government would keep their money to buy food for all those who would settle in the PV or Keep.” For more details on this point see Weinrich, “Strategic Resettlement in Rhodesia”, 212, 215; Mackenzie, “Commercial Farmers,” 199.

⁸⁰ Mackenzie, “Commercial Farmers,” 199.

⁸¹ By 1978, in areas such as Marange and Chiweshe districts, just to mention a few, cattle were kraaled from last light till twelve noon the following day, everyday. What this meant was that cattle grazing hours were cut by half. For more details on this see poster disseminated by District Commissioner, February 1978, cited in Frederikse, *Non But Ourselves*, 88.

⁸² AMA, *Econ. Rev. Agric. Ind.*, 1980. 12, This report’s estimates are slightly different from those in the table.

575 000 head in 1977, to 2 600 000 head in 1980 or 290 000 head less than the total in 1972. (see table 6.3 above).

The Problem of Debt during the War

Apart from creating various problems mentioned in the preceding paragraphs, the war caused economic sanctions to bite even more and by so doing, deepened the already existing crisis of profitability and indebtedness in the capitalist sector of the cattle industry. By 1975, economic sanctions alone were directly responsible for pushing up the input costs for livestock by an average of 30 per cent.⁸³ The cost of stock feed had gone up by more than 20 per cent, while home grown fodder and feed had also gone up by more than 83 per cent.⁸⁴ The only input on the ranchers' account, which had shown a decrease, was fuel.⁸⁵ The above situation was worsened by the world oil crisis from 1973. Due to the oil crisis, between 1973 and 1980, the "value of petroleum products used by farmers increased from R\$5.4 million to R\$22.8 million, [while] the price of diesel fuel rose from 6.3 cents per litre to 31.6 cents per litre in the same period."⁸⁶

By making it necessary for white farmers to acquire security equipment to repel attacks and protect property, the war cost many farmers money they simply did not have. With the escalation of the war, periodicals such as The Farmer, began to give more advertising space for the sale of military hardware to farmers. Side by side with displays of farming equipment, displays of various versions of military type security fencing, alarm systems, customised firearms and sub-machine guns became a common sight at most agricultural shows.⁸⁷

While the security measures taken by farmers depended on the extent of the guerrilla threat in their neighbourhoods, those residing on the "bitterly contested 'sharp end' of the war" took

⁸³ Ibid., 1975, 4.10.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Agricultural Industry, 1982, Chairman, D. L. Chavunduka, 72. (hereinafter referred to as the Chavunduka Commission Report.)

more elaborate and costly measures to maximise the security on the farms.⁸⁸ For instance, while farmers in the eastern border areas of Melssetter and Honde Valley were forced to live “in a virtual laager”, the general tendency for most farmers elsewhere was to establish private armies and armouries, to walk about fully armed and, out of necessity to restrict their movements on the farms.⁸⁹ In the Bindura-Centenary area where the war had intensified earlier, guns and security fences virtually became the way of life for white farmers. On the other hand, farmers in the Sipolilo area in the north of the country, were also forced to live under a state of siege from guerrillas operating from the neighbouring rural areas.⁹⁰ Most farmers throughout the country came to realise that they could only travel around in mine and ambush proof vehicles known as “Leopards”. The “Leopard” was a specially customised vehicle which was fitted with roll bars, bullet proof glass and specially designed thick armour-plating to ward off the blasts from land mines and ordinary small arms fire. At 1979, these vehicles cost R\$7 000 a piece.⁹¹

The periodical New African, captured in telling prose the common scene on most farms in the north-east of the country when it noted that:

The labour compound has been rebuilt nearer the farm house. There are now four deep bunkers covered with logs and sandbags for protection from mortar attacks. Lights point into the bush, and two corners are sandbagged for Black [African] Guards who also hold the detonators for Adam’s Grenades and shrapnel-filled explosives that are hidden in the nearby bush. Overlooking the whole complex, which is ringed by barbed wire and trip wires for more explosive booby traps, is a three story tower built at the end of the farm house. It commands a sweeping view and field of fire of the surrounding bush and the compounds. On a clear day, one can see Mozambique, less than 24 hours walk away. The farmer does not know for sure how much it has cost, because the government will give some of the money back to him. But the security wire runs at about R\$5 a yard, and there are thousands of yards of it.⁹²

As the costs of sustaining the war increased and stretched the government’s purse to its limit, the costs of the guerrilla war were borne by the white farmers themselves. If anything,

⁸⁷ Africa Confidential, Vol. 15, No. 2, 18 January 1974. Advertisements for military hardware oftened appeared side by side with those for farming equipment.

⁸⁸ Godwin and Hancock, Rhodesians Never Die, 156.

⁸⁹ New African, (Monthly), April 1979.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² Ibid.

security technology became part of the farmers' long list of regular input items such as dip, vaccines and pesticides just to mention a few.

For the white cattle rancher, substantial costs were incurred on additional fencing material and cattle guards. On most cattle ranches fences were simply "cut almost nightly and wire stolen."⁹³ During cattle raids both perimeter and paddock fences were often left broken down and either had to be replaced completely or repaired continuously. Also because of the higher risk of "deliberately set fires"⁹⁴, more money had to be spent on making fire guards. But, one of the most serious problem which ranchers found extremely difficult to deal with during the war was "Poach-grazing."⁹⁵ What happened was that rural people would cut down perimeter and paddock fencing on white owned ranches so as to allow their starved cattle to graze. In areas where "Poach-grazing" was rife some farmers resorted to either detaining such cattle without food and water until a hefty fine had been paid by the owner, or alternatively they shot them.⁹⁶ "Poach-grazing" was however, commonly practised in the liberated zones and on deserted ranches and farms. For example, in October 1978, the Zimbabwe News, ZANU's official organ, reported that ZANLA guerrillas had increased the land occupied by the rural people by wresting a farm in Nuanetsi from a racist white farmer who had refused to abandon his exploitative capitalist methods of production.⁹⁷

However, not all white farmers or ranchers had their properties sabotaged or attacked by guerrillas or peasants. For instance, those farmers who treated their workers well, did not report the presence of insurgents to the Rhodesian security forces and co-operated by supplying guerrillas with the much needed clothes, boots and medicines survived almost

⁹³ Leg. Ass. Debates 29 November 1978, Col. 1362, Mr Elsworth, MP for Midlands.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ The author owes this term to Professor Ranger who brought it up during a paper presentation at the Economic History Conference held at the University of Zimbabwe in August 1997.

⁹⁶ Oral Interview with John Chabva, a former "Mujiba" during the liberation war, 18 December 1996. The usual justification for shooting cattle was that they allegedly brought diseases to white-owned herds. On the whole it was difficult to establish what actually happened to cattle which remained unclaimed by their rightful owners. Given that the Government's sympathies lay with white farmers, there was nothing to stop unscrupulous white farmers from snapping up strays found "Poach-grazing" on their land and sending them to the CSC as part of their own production.

⁹⁷ Zimbabwe News, October 3, 1978.

unscathed throughout the war.⁹⁸ Although by co-operating in this way such farmers actually spent more money on food and clothing items for guerrillas, they were able to prevent their properties, especially cattle, from being rustled or destroyed. One such rancher who survived the war unscathed was Garfield Todd, the former Federal Prime Minister and owner of Hokonui ranch situated on the border between Mashonaland and Matabeleland. On Todd's Hokonui ranch, "the armies of both ZANLA and ZIPRA fought the regime's soldiers, while the people tilled the land, herded cattle, and supported all the guerrillas that passed through."⁹⁹ Richard Dewa, a farm worker at Hokonui ranch recalled that:

We were all the police. If we could here that there is anyone that has gone to Mr Todd's farm to do some dirty thing, getting cattle, he would be in trouble. We would just report to the boys [guerrillas] straight away. The boys didn't want that. They told us that if anything goes wrong on Mr Todd's farm, if you go there and steal his cattle, we will get you. They liked him, and the *Povo* [people] liked him, because he was helping the armed struggle very much.¹⁰⁰

However, such co-operative farmers were the exception and not the rule. The majority of white ranchers fell within the category of "obnoxious neighbours or bad employers [who] were identified by peasants and labourers as specific targets for guerrilla revenge."¹⁰¹ Obviously, those targeted bore the full brunt of the war and while many of these were forced to desert their ranches and flee to the safety of nearby towns, others opted to move their cattle to farms situated in the hinterland of towns where it was relatively safer from guerrilla attacks. With this movement the management of ranches suffered. For instance, it was reported by Rodger in April 1979, that:

the remote farmer or rancher is unable to continue his normal farming operations under the present security climate. The extent to which his farming operations are affected vary from area to area and are to a large extent dependent on the type of [guerrilla] interference being employed. [Some] farmers have to a large extent learnt to live with possible homestead attacks and ambushes on the road or at the dip tanks by fortifying their homes and vehicles and by carrying armed guards.... Finally, of

⁹⁸ Frederikse, *Non But Ourselves*, 301.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 230.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, For more details on this point, see evidence from Richard Dewa, farm worker, Hokonui Ranch, 231.

¹⁰¹ Phimister, "The Combined and Contradictory Inheritance of the Struggle Against Colonialism," in Stoneman, *Zimbabwe's Prospects: Issues of Race, Class, State and Capital In Southern Africa*, (London, 1981), 9.

course, there are those who have had to leave and have moved their cattle closer to towns or have sold them.¹⁰²

Reporting on the situation in the Wankie area, Rodger went on to note that:

There are now only two resident farmers in the Matetsi area. Some have moved their cattle to safer areas or have sold them, while others run the farms from Wankie. Cattle management standards have dropped as a result.¹⁰³

The situation on cattle ranches to the north of Bulawayo, Plumtree, South and West along the Botswana border, Marula and Kezi areas was also reported to be equally critical. With specific reference to these areas, Rodger further noted that:

many of the farms have been cleared of cattle, as for example, LONHRO Ltd, who have moved all cattle off their very large Goodwood block, north of Lonely Mine and concentrated them on the adjoining Gourlays block which is better protected. Where cattle remain on the farms, the farmer is more often than not living in Plumtree or Bulawayo and running the farm by telephone.¹⁰⁴

The only exception were ranchers located in the area around Bulawayo, Essexvale, Insiza, Fort Rixon, parts of Filabusi and Gwanda, who continued to “function reasonably normally.”¹⁰⁵

What made the situation worse for many ranchers was that desertion of labour became common during the war. As from the mid 1970s onwards, farmers increasingly complained about guerrilla tactics of “frightening” or “intimidating” labour away from farms or ranches. In April 1979, it was reported that farmers in the Odzi district, a tobacco and cattle area, had been subjected to attacks aimed at “bankrupting [them] by driving away the labour force ... destroying crops, cattle and confidence.”¹⁰⁶ Faced by a similar problem, farmers in the northern Gurube district were reportedly forced to establish a fund aimed at compensating their workers for any losses of property owing to guerrilla activity.¹⁰⁷ But, such measures however, did not always guarantee the security of labour supply needed especially during the war years. In fact, the farmer’s greatest and increasing common nightmare was losing their

¹⁰² *1310/F39/1, Cattle Production and Marketing , 10 February 1975- 31 December 1979, Rodger to Dir. Vet. Services, Bulawayo 6 April 1979.

¹⁰³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶ R.H., 29 September 1977.

¹⁰⁷ New African (Monthly), April 1979.

labour soon after pay day, which obviously tempted many desperate employers to keep their workers' wages in arrears.¹⁰⁸

The loyalty of labour in the 1970s itself, just like that of the rural people, was governed by a variety of factors not least of which was the higher degree of political consciousness caused by the "crisis of survival"¹⁰⁹ or immiserisation brought about by a cocktail of starvation wages and the Rhodesian government's determination to make blacks foot the bill of both sanctions and war. While there is no separate data specifically dealing with labour conditions in the beef industry, there is equally no reason to suspect that the conditions in the industry were different or any better than those in the entire white dominated capitalist agricultural sector. In fact, what makes any distinction in the conditions of labour between the arable and pastoral sectors almost impossible was the versatile nature of labour on farms producing a varying mixture of tobacco, maize and cattle.¹¹⁰

That low wages had been the common denominator of profit in the entire capitalist agricultural industry's history is an indisputable fact.¹¹¹ But, there were basically two ways through which capitalist farmers and ranchers minimised costs of production during the war. Firstly, farmers could offer "non wage benefits [under which compensation for property allegedly destroyed by guerrillas could conveniently fall] 'made up' the wage gap [between

¹⁰⁸ RH, 21 April 1978. This paper quoted one farmer RH who raised this issue at a gathering of farmers at Umtali at which Ian Smith was also present.

¹⁰⁹ D. G. Clarke, Agricultural and Plantation Workers in Rhodesia: A Report on Conditions of Labour and Subsistence, (Salisbury, 1977), 11.

¹¹⁰ The above situation was given an added twist by the increase in employer-on-employee violence and the prevalence of rough justice on farms and cattle ranches during the war. For instance, the RH reported on one case of violence saying, "Because his herdsmen repeatedly allowed his cattle to stray on to the main road, a Karoi farmer decided to punish them. He set fire to 14 of his employees' huts, believing them to be tenanted to the herdsmen. For these acts, the accused [farmer] was given a \$300 fine plus 100 days imprisonment, suspended for 3 years on condition that compensation was paid." For more details on this point see RH, 14 December 1972; Clarke, Agricultural and Plantation Workers in Rhodesia, 130; Dunlop, The Development of European Agriculture, 14.

¹¹¹ According to R. Riddell, "85 percent of [of all farm workers in Rhodesia] received cash wages of less than R\$20 a month." Riddell further maintained that real wages in agriculture did rise since 1900 and average wages in fact fell between 1948 and 1973. For more details on this point, see R. Riddell, From Rhodesia to Zimbabwe: Alternatives to Poverty, (London, 1977), 12.

farm workers and] industrial workers.”¹¹² Secondly, ranchers or farmers could choose to maintain quasi-feudal labour relations designed to keep costs of labour at a minimum, while simultaneously multiplying the services extracted from it. The second option was the commonest practice on the larger company owned ranches of Matabeleland and Victoria districts.¹¹³ Suffice to say here that the economic difficulties brought about by sanctions and war, not only gave an added twist to the existing level of exploitation, but also ensured that the amount of labour required of a cattle herder also increased tremendously. For example, A. Dunlop, a rancher from Que-Que in the Midlands district, outlined the tasks of the African cattle herder when he noted that:

In a predominantly cattle enterprise, the cattle boys [sic] must be most alert, responsible and willing employees on the place. So often this is not the case, but rather the old “dead beats” are employed.... The counsel of perfection is that one cattle boy should be made responsible for each herd; the best boys for obvious reasons being detailed to the breeding herds. Each boy must be responsible for the general welfare of his particular herd; for the maintenance of fences surrounding that paddock, in which his herd happens to be situated ... and he must act as a farm policeman. He must check strangers walking in his paddock, because if this is allowed various malpractices, including even the killing of cattle, can occur. He must notice and report any bicycle or motor spoor, the later may indicate the activity of poachers. The removal, handing in and reporting of snares is important. Finally he must report upon and mark the trees, which have been cut for honey. This is important as the cutter, almost certainly a trespasser, will return normally during the dry season and smoke out the bees by burning the tree, thus frequently causing a veldt fire, which is the cattleman’s nightmare. Each cattle boy must be equipped with a native axe and a pair of fencing pliers, so that he can maintain the fences round his paddock, whilst he is going round his herd.¹¹⁴

Any practical limitations to exacting so much labour from an already poorly paid labourer were simply overcome by appropriating the labour power of his whole family. Dunlop revealed how the appropriation of family’s labour power allowed him to harvest high protein natural feed on his ranch for his cattle:

I give the wives of my employees a certain sum of money per 100 kg (200 lbs.) bag to collect them [mimosa beans]. This they do by knocking down the ripe beans from the trees with a long stick. They and their children collect them and put them into bags,

¹¹² Clarke, *Agricultural and Plantation Workers in Rhodesia*, 62. Clarke argues that any attempts to force wages of farm workers to go up were often met with stiff resistance from farmers. Some of them told him that the agricultural sector “should be ‘blessed’ with a low wage structure so that export competitiveness can be maintained.”, 62.

¹¹³ Clarke, *Foreign Companies and International Investment in Zimbabwe*, (Gweru, 1980), 54.

¹¹⁴ A. Dunlop, *A Practical Rancher’s Ramblings*, (Que-Que, 1974), 23-24.

which they leave near some track for collection and riding to the hammer mill. The women are satisfied to make some pocket money and with children, they always seem to enjoy the 'outing.'¹¹⁵

The extent to which some white farmers went to minimise costs was far-reaching. A survey carried out in 1975, on a ranch situated in the Enterprise district of Mashonaland and on which a herd of 1 346 head was run, revealed that wages there were as low as R\$14 per adult worker per month, with R\$22 per month being the highest paid. In response to a question why wages were so low, the owner of the ranch maintained that any changes in wages of workers were based on his "knowledge of individuals and their work performance," because "there are some old dodderers [very old workers who] know [that] their wages are fixed ... [because] they have not got it in themselves to earn more."¹¹⁶ In as far as the provision of meat rations for workers on the same ranch was concerned, no live animals were slaughtered for such purposes. Rather, "deceased animals [were] used for 'ration meat' [meaning that] meat rations were only available after animals died."¹¹⁷

Instead of putting the blame on rampant exploitation as the main cause for labour desertion, white landowners chose to cling to the widespread view that desertion of labour was being caused by "C/T [Communist Terrorist] inspired incidents."¹¹⁸ There is no doubt however, that under the shadow of Chimurenga farm labourers with genuine grievances found an opportunity to get even with obnoxious and exploitative employers by abetting guerrilla sabotage at great expense to those employers. Just as grinding poverty drove many rural people to throw their weight behind the armed struggle, so were significant numbers of farm workers driven into deserting by the 'crisis of survival' of the 1970s. The effect of labour on capitalist ranching itself was far reaching. In 1979, Parliament heard from one rancher how the problem of labour was affecting the industry:

In my own constituency, I know personally of four or five ranchers who are on the verge of folding up ranching operations purely because they have not got any labour.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁶ Clarke, *Agricultural and Plantation Workers in Rhodesia*, 29.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 199.

¹¹⁸ Mckenzie, "Commercial Farmers", 412-13.

They have survived ... ambushes and homestead attacks and they have survived having their fences taken down, but they cannot ranch now because the [guerrillas] have intimidated their labour and they have lost their labour. If you have no labour-force you cannot ranch.¹¹⁹

The above situation was not made any better by the diversion of white ranchers and farmers for the war effort. Lacking the “virtually bottomless manpower barrel that the nationalists [could] dip into” and, desperate to beef up its stretched security forces, the RF government embarked on an economically ruinous military call up system.¹²⁰ In 1974, the government amended the Defence Act of 1972, to prevent people from dodging military service on the basis of religion and increased liability for dodging to six months in jail.¹²¹ The draft system resulted in many white farmers spending weeks, even months, away on national duty. In areas where the security was really bad, farmers up to the age of 50 were put on active military service all year round. By the time the war reached its peak in 1976, the period of continuous military service had been extended from 12 months to 18 months.¹²² The drafting of white farmers into the army not only incapacitated the management of ranches, but also led to a situation where properties were left unattended resulting in infrastructure and vital equipment falling into a state of disrepair. By 1978, an army intelligence map showed the extent of absentee landlordism in the eastern district of Makoni as follows:

Virginia, Martin J., Unoccupied -not farmed; Vrede, Martin and Son, Unoccupied -not farmed; Rosendal, Unoccupied -not farmed; Quando, Botha L. M., Unoccupied -not farmed; Koodoo-kop, Unoccupied -not farmed ...¹²³

Yet, even without underplaying the impact of the war, there seems to have been fewer desertions by the richer and wealthier farmers in equally dangerous areas, suggesting that profitability coupled with the size of the investment and not war, were sometimes sufficient antidotes to concerns about personal safety. Notwithstanding the negative impact of increases in costs of production caused by war and sanctions, it has to be emphasised that Rhodesia white capitalist agriculture was notoriously inefficient. For instance, an agro-economic investigation in 1976 revealed a startling level of inefficiency on cattle ranches in

¹¹⁹ *Leg. Ass. Debates*, 29 October 1978, Col. 1376, Mr Goddard, MP for Matabeleland.

¹²⁰ *Africa Confidential*, Vol. 18, No. 13, 24 June 1977.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, Vol. 15, No. 2 18 January 1974; See also original Act i.e. *Act No. 27 of 1972*.

¹²² *FT* 21 September 1978; *Sunday Mail*, 10 April 1977; *RH* 20 April 1977 and 19 November 1977.

¹²³ Ranger, *Peasant Consciousness and Guerrilla War in Zimbabwe*, 182.

Matabeleland and Midlands provinces. The investigation revealed that between 40 and 60 per cent of all ranches in the area were non-viable. In a sample survey in the area, it was found that 20 per cent of all respondents had incomes of less than R\$1 500 a year and 48 per cent had incomes of less than R\$4 000 a year.¹²⁴ On the other hand, in Matabeleland north, it was also estimated that at least 800 livestock units were needed for beef ranches to be economically viable; yet only 110 out of 455, or some 24 per cent could be considered viable on these criteria.¹²⁵ The Chairman of the RNFU stated in 1976, that cattle production in Matabeleland could go up by 33 per cent if all land were used and if known production technology were applied more generally.¹²⁶

Due to gross inefficiency on the part of white capitalist farmers in general coupled with the effects of the war and economic sanctions, the problem of debt in the capitalist agricultural sector increased tremendously throughout the 1970s. For example, total indebtedness in the sector increased from R\$103 million in 1970 to R\$242 million in 1980. Thus, owing to heavy debts the number of white farmers on the land fell from an estimated 6 300 in 1975 to an estimated 4 700 in 1980/81.¹²⁷ In 1977, the [A]gricultural [F]inance [C]orporation, to whom many farmers owed millions of dollars, was actually forced to advertise an “appalling number” of vacant farms for sale.¹²⁸ The problem of profitability and debt largely explains why the severely undercapitalised small white ranchers were quick to blame “terrorist activity” and large company-owned ranches for acting as “haven[s] for terrorists.”¹²⁹ Such economic xenophobia surfaced at the RNFU annual conference in 1975, where several small southern ranchers expressed their dissatisfaction at the fact that thirteen ranching operations which covered 34 per cent of the land in Matabeleland were owned by foreign based companies. The ranchers expressed unhappiness at the fact that company owned ranches were run by white managers, who in turn employed Africans to run them effectively turning them

¹²⁴ T. Bembridge and J. D. G. Steenkamp, “An Agro-Economic Investigation of Beef Production in the Matabeleland and Midlands Provinces of Rhodesia,” *Rhod. Agric. Journal*, Vol. 73, No. 2 (April, 1976), 30-32.

¹²⁵ ADA, *Agro-Econ. Surv.*, N. Mat., 1973, 58.

¹²⁶ *Leg. Ass. Debates*, 25 August, Col. 1362, 1976

¹²⁷ *Chavunduka Commission Report*, 73.

¹²⁸ *RH.*, 30 September 1977.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.* It needs to be emphasised that profitable farming depended upon other factors besides size of land, such as capitalisation and management abilities. The main problem was that smaller ranches were inefficiently run or managed and proportionately under-capitalised than larger ones.

into the proverbial Trojan Horses from which guerrillas could launch attacks on neighbouring white-owned ranches. Ironically, and by way of suggesting a solution to the menace, Harvey, a rancher from Mvuma, called on the government to adopt “a communistic attitude” to the “archaic estates” by breaking them up and replacing their foreign owners with young farmers or ex-servicemen types.¹³⁰

The problem of profitability and debt in the capitalist sector of the beef industry was aggravated further by static producer prices. Forced by circumstances to keep the cost of living in the country at a minimum level, the RF government found itself treading on a politically sensitive path by pursuing a “cheap beef” policy during the war period.¹³¹ In January 1978, the Minister of Agriculture, Mark Partridge, explained the government’s reasons for such a policy when he noted that:

Government has definitely had a policy of endeavouring to peg prices to curb inflation and quite obviously, it must look to the issue of food costs very closely because of the low level of wages in a society which has only recently become urbanised and where there is a lack of know-how and capital.¹³²

As a result of the above mentioned policy, beef was wholesaled by the CSC at a significantly lower price, to cushion the urban consumer, than what the Commission paid the producer. Hence:

between 1970 and 1980, the average producer price for beef rose by 127 per cent from 35.76 cents per kilogram to 81.11 cents per kilogram while the average wholesale price increased at a lower rate of 86 per cent from 33.92 cents per kilogram to 63.01 cents per kilogram. As a result, the margin by which producer price exceeded the wholesale price increased from 1.84 cents per kilogram or 5.4 per cent in 1970 to 18.10 cents per kilogram or 28.7 per cent in 1980.¹³³

However, by trying to balance the contradictory interests of the producer and the urban consumer in this way, the RF government not only risked alienating white ranchers further

¹³⁰ For more details on this point see, RNFU, Rep. Ann. Congr., 1975.

¹³¹ RH., 25 April 1977; RPF, No. 215, January 1974, 6.

¹³² Rhodesian Farmer, XLVIII, xxvii, (1977/78), 9; For more information on how the cheap food policy operated, see T. D. Shopo, “The State and Food Policy in colonial Zimbabwe, 1965-1980,” in T. Mkandawire, The State and Agriculture in Africa, (London, 1987), 204-205.

¹³³ AMA, Beef Sit. and Outl. Rep., 1982, 14.

but it also placed itself in a subsidy trap from which it could not extricate itself. With the cheap or low cost food element built into both the general price structure of the beef industry and consumer incomes, it became increasingly difficult for the government to raise beef prices even when it was absolutely necessary, without the raising the ire of the already restive black and white urban consumers. Thus, a situation arose whereby all revenue growth was directed towards funding a growing subsidy because every time the producer price was increased to match rising costs, the amount of the subsidy would also increase simultaneously.¹³⁴ (see table 6.4 below). Not surprisingly, the policy became a source of political conflict between the government and white capitalist ranchers most of whom were already reeling under a combination of heavy debts, cattle rustling and rising costs. The situation in the beef industry particularly worsened in the last four years of the war during which the average producer price remained pegged at 57 cents per kg. This was in spite of the fact that production costs in the industry had risen astronomically due to the effects of war and sanctions.

¹³⁴ Report of the Commission of Inquiry into Incomes, Prices and Conditions of Service, 1981, Chairman - R. C. Riddell, 192.

Table 6.4: Disparities Between the CSC's Average Producer Price and Average Wholesale Price (Cents per Kg.)

Year	Average Producer Price (1)	Average Wholesale Price (2)	Average Price Differential (2-1)	Wholesale Price as a Proportion of Producer Price (%)
1970	35.76	33.92	- 1.84	94.9
1971	36.76	33.96	- 2.80	92.4
1972	40.38	34.97	- 5.41	86.6
1973	48.81	37.41	-11.40	76.6
1974	56.82	41.47	-15.35	73.0
1975	58.96	44.82	-14.14	76.0
1976	57.00	47.42	- 9.58	83.2
1977	57.91	47.66	-10.25	82.3
1978	57.26	51.42	- 5.84	89.8
1979	70.46	59.39	-11.07	84.3
1980	81.11	63.01	-18.10	77.7
1981	93.06	69.83	-23.23	75.0

Notes: (1) Average cost of beef purchases by the CSC. (2) Average realisation on the CSC's bone-beef sales in the local market.

Source: AMA, Beef Sit. and Outl. Rep., 1982, Appendix 21.

Due to low producer prices, confidence in the industry sagged and most white ranchers responded by liquidating breeding stock to pay off debts. The main reason, as one young rancher put it to fellow parliamentarians in 1978, was that the beef industry was not "a healthy industry. No young man goes ranching today because he is going to make money. He is fooling himself if he does."¹³⁵ What shook the confidence in the industry even further especially towards the late 1970s, was the fear of political change and the hardening in the attitude against the industry by creditors.¹³⁶

¹³⁵ Leg. Ass. Debates, 29 November 78, Col. 1373-74, Mr Goddard, MP for Fort Victoria.

¹³⁶ Econ. Rev. Agric. Ind., 1980, 13.

For instance, owing to the fall in the value of ranching and the general uncertainty caused by sanctions and war banks stopped issuing new loans and instead they started recalling all old loans. In 1978, one angry rancher complained that:

Loans are more difficult than ever to obtain. Financial institutions are not interested in land as security because they have no value. No-one wants to buy farms in a battle field.¹³⁷

The same rancher was also quoted in another paper saying that:

Tobacco and cattle kings may have made it easy in the past but not so the farmer at war. And their problems are not just A K. [47] bullets. The bank managers' words, across a plush oak desk in a city office are just as lethal to the future on the land. Because of the security situation, which is markedly reducing the value of ranching and cattle stock commercial banks are refusing to give loans; therefore, producers are off-loading their cattle - including breeding cows heavily in calf on to the CSC and the open market at low prices to raise capital in order to go on with their business.¹³⁸

Because of the liquidation of breeding stock, the large-scale commercial sector herd shrank rapidly in the period between 1977 and 1980. The largest reductions in the commercial herds occurred in Matabeleland where total holdings fell by some 73 000 head. The seconded biggest reduction occurred in Mashonaland south and north where cattle holdings fell by 64 000 head and 57 000 head, respectively. On the other hand, holdings in the eastern district of Manicaland fell by 52 000 head, while in the Victoria province, holdings were reduced by 45 000 head. The lowest reduction occurred in the relatively untroubled Midlands province where cattle holdings fell by 35 000 head only.¹³⁹ (see table 6.5 below). The reduction in the provincial commercial cattle holdings was also accompanied by a noticeable decline in the number of individual herds in the large-scale commercial sector. Thus, while in 1975/76 season, there were 4 336 capitalist producers in the beef industry, by the end of 1978/79 period, the number of producers had fallen by some 10.1 per cent to 3 608. The fall in the total number of producers indicated the extent of white exodus from the land because of lack of profitability and debt.¹⁴⁰

¹³⁷ RDM, 15 December 1978.

¹³⁸ Illustrated Life Rhodesia, 4 January 1979.

¹³⁹ Econ. Rev. Agric. Ind., 1980, 18.

Table 6.5: Provincial Distribution of the Large Scale Sector Beef Herd, 1975-1979

Province	1975/76	1976/77	1977/79	1978/79	Perc. Distrib. (1978/79- %)
Manicaland	192 000	195 000	159 000	107 000	4.5
Mash. North	476 000	479 000	459 000	402 000	16.9
Mash. South	603 000	608 000	573 000	509 000	21.5
Matabeleland	657 000	711 000	706 000	633 000	26.7
Midlands	477 000	500 000	501 000	467 000	19.7
Victoria	350 000	343 000	296 000	251 000	10.6
Nat. Total	2 755 000	2 836 000	2 695 000	2 369 000	100.0

Source: Econ. Rev. Agric. Ind., 1980, 18.

After increasing from 2.6 million head in 1972/73, to a peak of over 3 million head of head in 1976/77, the commercial herd fell to an all time low of just over 2.5 million head in 1978/79. By 1978/79, the commercial beef herd had further declined by an estimated 320 000 head or 12.5 percent. Table 6.6 below shows the shift which occurred in the cattle ownership pattern across the beef industry's constituent sectors, and it is clear that the country's cattle industry was in a state of decline by the close of 1970s.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.

Table 6.6: National Herds, 1972-1979.

Year	European Herds	African-owned Herds	Small Scale Sector Herds	National Total	Percentage Change
1972/73	2 609 900	2 887 900	184 700	5 672 500	+1.0
1973/74	2 603 800	3 056 000	192 100	5 851 900	+3.0
1974/75	2 818 200	3 070 100	196 900	6 079 200	+ 3.9
1975/76	2 930 500	3 147 100	202 100	6 279 700	+3.3
1976/77	3 007 600	3 363 600	218 200	6 589 400	+ 4.4
1977/78	2 851 000	2 950 000	226 200	6 027 200	- 8.5
1978/79	2 509 900	2 860 000	199 000	5 569 000	- 7.6

Source: Econ. Rev. Agric. Ind., 1980, 13.

The dumping of breeding stock on the CSC and the erosion of the industry's capital base resulted in the shift in the structure, size and the composition of the large-scale sector herds. (see Table 6.7 below). The liquidation of female stock forced the government to set up the Breeder Finance Scheme, whose task was to save from slaughter all female stock, still deemed suitable for breeding. The retained stock were then placed with producers still willing to expand their breeding herds and carry out ranching in spite of sanctions and war.¹⁴¹

¹⁴¹ Rev. Agric. Ind., 1980, 12.

Table 6.7: Percentage Change in Herd Composition/Structure in the Large Scale Sector, 1974-1979.

	1974/75	1975/76	1976/77	1977/78	1978/79
Breeding Herd	37.7	37.3	35.3	32.0	33.4
Bulls	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8
Calves	22.8	23.5	22.6	22.7	20.9
Other Females	15.1	15.9	17.2	20.6	19.9
Other Males	22.6	21.5	23.1	22.9	24.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Econ. Rev. Agric. Ind., 1980, 15.

Thus, between June and July 1979 alone, nearly 14 000 head of breeding stock were saved from slaughter, while by the end of the year approximately 24 506 head had been placed under the new Scheme.¹⁴² The government's response to the erosion of the beef industry's capital base was, however, a case of too little too late. Already, in 1978, and during the first half of 1979, respectively an estimated 50 per cent and 13 per cent of all animals slaughtered in the country were either cows in calf or valuable breeding stock.¹⁴³

At the level of producer prices, the government tried to revive confidence in the beef industry by first increasing the producer price by 12.5 percent with effect from the 1st of January, 1979. When this increase failed to generate significant interest in the industry, another 10 per cent price increase was announced in May 1979, and was added on to the original, thus, bringing the total price increase to 22.5 per cent over the 1975 prices.¹⁴⁴ This increase in the producer price was "the largest in the history of the industry,"¹⁴⁵ and reflected the government's renewed but belated attempt to restore confidence in the industry. With effect from the 1st September 1979, the government also introduced the Farm Gate Pricing policy

¹⁴² AMA, Beef Sit. and Outl. Rep., 1982, 8.

¹⁴³ RH., 24 April 1979; BBC, Salisbury Home Service, 1745 GMT, 7 August 1979.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

¹⁴⁵ Shopo, "The State and Food Policy," 207.

under which costs incurred by producers in transporting cattle to the CSC's abattoirs and feedlots were borne by the CSC itself.¹⁴⁶

The measures yielded some positive results. For instance, the share of the CSC's total cattle kill accounted for by breeding stock fell from 48 per cent in 1978, to 42 per cent in 1980.¹⁴⁷ Also, the proportion of breeding stock put to the bull increased from 60.8 per cent in 1978, to 64.7 per cent in 1980, while the percentage of beef farms running breeding herds rose from 74 to 80 per cent over the same period.¹⁴⁸ Despite these positive results, the issue of remunerative producer prices remained unresolved until the end of the war. For example, in a letter addressed to David Smith, Minister of Finance in May 1979, R. E. Gilmour, a local rancher, argued that:

Cattle production has to be seen to be profitable for the people to remain in the business. The 12.5 per cent, plus the recent 10 per cent, will be swallowed up with inflation very quickly. It will not assist us in setting up our commitments to the financial institutions, where there has been a reduction rather than an increase in facilities.... It is imperative that there be a massive injection of cash into the industry to restore confidence and allow cattlemen some peace of mind. I believe this should take the form of supplementary payments on 1978 slaughterings, rather than the promise of better times.... People are tired of having a carrot dangled in front of them only to find that they are no better off because of inflation.¹⁴⁹

The unprofitable nature of beef production during the war explains why tobacco, which had fallen behind beef in terms of contribution to total agricultural production value, clawed its way back by the late 1970s, to bring about some economic equilibrium in the capitalist agricultural sector in general. For instance, while in 1973, beef production accounted for 27 per cent and tobacco 16 per cent of total agricultural production value, by 1979, beef production now accounted for 20 per cent while tobacco's contribution had risen to 21 per cent.¹⁵⁰ The falling trend no doubt reflected the extent to which confidence in the beef industry had been battered by war and sanctions. In fact, a report by the RCPA noted in 1976, that in comparison to all other agricultural commodities in the country beef production had shown the lowest average return of only five percent on invested capital. This was, for

¹⁴⁶ AMA, *Beef Sit. and Outl. Rep.*, 1982, 8-9.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, Appendix 6.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁹ *1310/F39, R E Gilmour to D. Smith, Minister of Finance, 22 May, 1979.

instance, in contrast with maize and tobacco where economic returns on invested capital ranged between 20 and 100 per cent.¹⁵¹

Conclusion

This chapter has tried to assess the economic impact of the Second Chimurenga or War of Liberation in Zimbabwe on the country's beef industry throughout the 1970s. As if to symbolise a ritualised end to colonialism, the war caused the death of hundreds of thousands of cattle, mostly African owned, by causing the outbreak of tick-borne diseases and Anthrax. Also, thousands of cattle owned by white capitalist ranchers were killed after being rustled by guerrillas and peasants as part of a larger strategy to bring down the pillars of the white colonial economy. Even worse, the war brought economic problems created by international sanctions into sharp relief. By causing the destruction of fences and the death of hundreds of thousands of cattle, the war plunged the commercial beef industry into debt and many inefficient small capitalist ranchers were forced to draw the appropriate conclusion and abandon the struggle entirely. The above situation, which was given an added twist by the unprofitable nature of beef production, culminated in the collapse of confidence and the erosion of the industry's valuable capital base: the breeding herds. The worst hit was however, the African cattle sector which traditionally been a crucial element in the beef industry's production equation. Not surprisingly, the industry's exportable surplus fell from 81 500 tons in 1973, to a mere 12 050 tons in 1979.¹⁵² The severe battering which the beef industry received during the war was a direct cause of the critical shortage of beef on the domestic market from 1980 onwards. That the Liberation War should leave the newly independent country of Zimbabwe faced with the prospect of celebrating independence at a time when the country was in the midst of a 'meat famine', was indeed, one of the most ironic aspects of the Liberation struggle in the concluding chapter of colonial rule in Zimbabwe.

¹⁵⁰ AMA, *Beef Sit. and Outl. Rep.*, 1982, Appendix 1.

¹⁵¹ *1310/F39, Cattle Marketing and Production, RCPA, "Report of the Working Party of the Production Sub-Committee," 5 January 1976, 2.

¹⁵² AMA, *Beef Sit. and Outl. Rep.*, 1982, 16.

Chapter Seven

Conclusion

This study traced the historical development of the beef cattle industry in colonial Zimbabwe in the years 1939-1980. Special emphasis was placed on the impact of government policy on the production, marketing and pricing of cattle in the country's industry as a whole. Although the study does not compare Zimbabwe's situation with that of neighbouring countries so as to judge whether the policies of the colonial government of Zimbabwe should be deemed more successful or unsuccessful, there is no doubt still that many lessons, on which future government policy in the beef industry could benefit from, can be drawn from the experience gained in the last 40 years of colonial rule.

Given the unwillingness of the world's largest meat combines to come and invest in the country's nascent beef industry and also the problem of undercapitalisation of the local settler ranching elite before and even after the Second World War, it was necessary for the government to step into the breach and establish a public utility company to help develop such an essential food industry in the country. Thus, in the late 1930s, a non profit making public company offering guaranteed market and prices for producers was badly needed to lift the beef industry out of depression and to put ranchers on a sound and stable economic footing. However, while this was clearly the most pragmatic policy the government could ever have adopted under the circumstances, it is ironic that the CSC itself became the single most important factor to hamper development and efficient beef production in the country's industry. Indeed, just as B. L Gardiner predicted in 1937, the CSC was not only "subjected to political pressure and wire-pulling" by the government, but it also, in the end, imposed an "onerous financial responsibility on the state and on the tax payer".

The tendency of the government to continuously dish out subsidies to white producers meant that they would be under no compulsion to improve production and efficiency at all. For instance, in 1966, George Rudland, the Minister of Agriculture himself, expressed doubt

whether price subsidies in the white dominated capitalist agricultural sector had brought any significant results to the sector. He noted that “over the past 18 years nine million [*pounds sterling*] has been spent in this way without anything in the way of capital improvements to show for it.”¹ What made the situation even worse was that money for subsidies was mainly extracted from Africans by underpaying them for their cattle. Yet, by taxing African producers in the interests of white survival in this manner, the government actually contributed to the precipitous decline of the African beef industry. This was in spite of the fact that the African cattle industry often supplied the country’s beef needs when white cattle ranchers themselves could not. There is no doubt that the systematic underdevelopment of the African cattle industry, before and after the Second World War, robbed the country of the opportunity to become one of the largest beef producers and exporters on the continent.

The government’s arbitrary control of retail prices and its cheap beef policy in general completely rendered beef production unprofitable. To make matters worse, the policy led to a situation where beef was sold on the domestic market at a loss to cushion consumers from price increases. Not surprisingly, the CSC suffered heavy losses which, ironically, had to be continuously subsidised by the government itself. Even when the CSC posted profits from export realisations like in the late 1960s and early 1970s, the CSC Act itself required that the CSC use the money to subsidise the local selling price of beef. In spite of its obvious weaknesses, the CSC Act remained virtually unchanged throughout the period under consideration. This was in spite of the fact that both African and white cattle producers complained endlessly about low prices in the industry. The use of what amounted to “producer money” as subsidies not only made very little economic sense, but also did much to hamper development in the cattle industry as a whole. Because government policy rendered beef production virtually unprofitable, no changes could be expected to take place in the industry’s methods of production unless the policy itself was revamped. Thus, government policy largely explains why supplementary feeding remained a rare characteristic in the industry. Because there wasn’t much money to be made in beef, many of the undercapitalised ranchers chose to rely heavily on veldt pasture, a cheaper alternative. This tendency explains

¹ *Financial Mail*, (London) 7 October 1966, 40.

why the average off-take rates and slaughter weights in the industry remained far below that of major cattle producers such as Argentina. The government however was not entirely to blame for this state of affairs. White settler ranchers themselves remained grossly inefficient in spite of the fact that the colonial government created for them some of the most enviable conditions for primitive capitalist accumulation in the world such as ultra cheap labour and land.

Although the five-year price agreement under the CSC operated was ideal for long term stability in the industry, the price schedule drawn from the agreement lacked flexibility. Hence it was not uncommon for producer price increases to be announced when other economic fundamentals such as costs of production had already changed. What the government failed to realise was that the cattle producer, more than the cropping farmer, naturally had a high proportion of his assets tied up in capital i.e. land, improvements and stock. Hence, the longer the cattle took to reach slaughter weight, the lower the profit to the producer and also the slower the transfer of the slaughter price to the breeder in the industry would be. This situation was of course given an added twist by low producer prices. Thus, besides being completely self defeating, the "no-profit-no-loss" clause in the CSC Act helped to turn the CSC into an expensive albatross and a drain on the country's scarce resources. In all, these factors help to cast serious doubt on the potential of statutory monopolies or public companies in general to allocate resources efficiently to any given sector of the economy. 'On the whole however, despite its many weaknesses, there is no doubt that the government itself played a crucial role in establishing and stabilising the development of the country's beef industry. There is no doubt that the development of such an industry was critically essential for the country's own future economic development. In the absence of committed private capital nothing much could be have been achieved and the country could still have been a net importer of beef at 1980. Indeed, many of the problems associated with the government's policy were not insurmountable and the advantages of maintaining a changed CSC far outweighed the disadvantages associated with scrapping it off altogether. This factor, coupled with the need to maintain stability in the industry and to cushion the urban poor from price increases, largely explains why the post-colonial government in 1980 decided to keep the CSC operating. However, with the political changeover, the most significant shift which

occurred was that the CSC ceased to be an exclusive instrument of economic patronage for the white settler ranching elite as its benefits were extended to African cattle producers as well.

It is the hope of the author of this study has shed some light on the successes and or failures of statutory monopolies in the development of essential service industries especially in agrarian economies. The study further sheds light on the debate on whether public utility companies can effectively direct development to targeted sectors of the economy or not. By doing this, the study provides a basis on which the efficacy of statutory intervention especially in critical sectors of the economy normally shunned by profit conscious private investors can be subjected to scrutiny. Hopefully, this analysis serves to poignantly highlight this point even more. In making these points however, the writer is fully aware of the gaps that still exist on the history of cattle industry in colonial Zimbabwe. In fact, far from portraying this study as the last word on the subject, the writer will be the first to acknowledge the difficulty one faces in obtaining archival data on the last twenty years of the colonial period. What is particularly striking is the fact that most of the vital information on the subject especially on the 1960s and 1970s, is still not yet available for public scrutiny. The writer suspects that some vital information is locked away in private archives where it has been kept away from the 'prying' eyes an inquisitive black historian with a special interest on the last twenty years of colonial rule. The situation is not any better by the fact that most government information especially on the sanctions period and on the war in the 1970s seems to have been destroyed in an apparent massive cover up operation. A combination of these factors explains why the last three chapters of this study tended to rely more on newspaper reports, published government commission of inquiry reports and a few books published by Rhodesian writers and historians with close links with the Rhodesian government. While most of the information contained in surviving government reports was heavily censored, that which is found in other 'unofficial' or 'independent' sources either generally lacks in objectivity or literary merit. Despite its many weaknesses however, it is hoped that the study has helped to clear the undergrowth in what otherwise is still neglected historical terrain and thus opened it to more academic scrutiny.

SELECTED SOURCES

1: Official Government Publications and Commission of Inquiry Reports

Agricultural Marketing Authority (AMA): Report on the Production Potential of the Rhodesian Beef Industry: European Areas, (Salisbury, 1976).

----- Beef Situation and Outlook Report, (Harare, 1982).

----- Production Potential of the Rhodesian Beef Industry: European Areas, 1976.

----- Economic Review of the Agricultural Industry of Rhodesia: General Survey and Future Prospects, 1970-1980.

----- Economic Review of the Agricultural Industry of Rhodesia: Beef Section, 1975-1976.

Agricultural Production in Rhodesia: African and European Areas, Central Statistical Office, 1964-1980.

Cold Storage Commission, Annual Reports and Accounts, 1938-1980.

Rhodesia National Farmers Union, Annual Congress Reports, 1945-1980.

Agricultural Finance Corporation, Annual Report, 1970-1980.

Annual Report of the Game Department, No. 5, for the Year ended 31st. December, 1957.

Reports of the Secretary, Department of Agriculture and Lands, 1908-1980.

Reports of the Secretary, Native Affairs, Chief Native Commissioner and Director of Native Development, 1939-1950.

Report of the Secretary, Internal Affairs and Chief Native Commissioner, 1962.

Report on Agricultural Policy in the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland, Chairman, Staples, R. R. (1956).

Government Notice No. 101, (1973).

Official Year Book of Southern Rhodesia, 1908-1952

Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Agricultural Industry, Chairman, Prof. Chavunduka, G. L. (Harare, 1982).

Report of the Minister of Agriculture and Lands on the Agricultural Development of Southern Rhodesia Chairman, Engledow, F. (Salisbury, 1950)

Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Cold Storage Commission of Southern Rhodesia, Chairman Danziger, M. (Salisbury, 1952).

Report of the Committee of Inquiry into the Economic Position of the Agricultural Industry of Southern Rhodesia, Chairman, Danziger, M. (Salisbury, 1934).

Report on a Survey of Urban African Conditions in Southern Rhodesia, Chairman, Ibbortson, P. (Bulawayo, 1943).

Report of the Commission of Enquiry into Certain Sales of Native Cattle in Areas Occupied by Natives, Chairman, Hudson, R. J. (Salisbury, 1939).

Report of the Commission of Inquiry into Incomes, Prices and Conditions of Service, Chairman, Riddell, R. C. (Harare, 1981).

Report of the Commission of Inquiry into Agricultural Input Costs, Chairman, Morley, D. S. (Salisbury, 1973).

Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Marketing of Cattle and Beef in the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland, Chairman, Murray, C. A. (Salisbury, 1954).

Report of the Committee of Inquiry into Parastatals, Chairman, Smith, L. G. (1988).

Report of the Commission of Inquiry into All Matters Relating to Human and Animal Trypanosomiasis in Southern Rhodesia, Chairman, Thomas, E. (1955).

Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Marketing of Slaughter Cattle and the Products Thereof, Chairman, Thomas, W. E. (Salisbury, 1942).

Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Marketing of Cattle for Slaughter and Distribution and Sale of Beef in Southern Rhodesia, Chairman Turner, H. S. E. (Salisbury, 1956).

Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Cost of Living on Cattle and Beef Prices, Chairman, Newman, C. M. (Salisbury, 1955).

Report of the Development of Economic Resources of Southern Rhodesia, with particular Reference to the Role of African Agriculture, Chairman Phillips, J. (Salisbury, 1962).

Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Beef Cattle Industry of Southern and Northern Rhodesia, Chairman, Horwood, O. P. F. (Salisbury, 1963).

Report of the Assistant Director of Veterinary Services, Tsetse and Trypanosomiasis Control, 1965.

Report of the Wild Life Commission, 1969, 1970.

Southern Rhodesia, Committee to Enquire into the Costs of Distribution of Imported Goods and Local Products in Southern Rhodesia: Interim Report on Livestock and Meat with special Reference to Cattle and Beef, Chairman, Burnett-Hurst, R. (Salisbury, 1936).

Southern Rhodesia, Past and Present (Salisbury, 1945)

Southern Rhodesia, Report of the Agricultural and Pastoral Production of European Farmers, 1948-1949.

Statistical Year Book of Southern Rhodesia, 1947.

Southern Rhodesia, Legislative Assembly Debates 1939-1980.

2: Newspapers and Periodicals

Rhodesia Financial Gazette

Rhodesia Herald

Africa Confidential

Bulawayo Chronicle

Cape Argus

Cold Storage Commission News

Illustrated Life (Rhodesia)

Farmers Weekly

Financial Times

New African

New Rhodesia

Rand Daily Mail

Rhodesian Farmer

Rhodesian Recorder

Rhodesia Property and Finance

Rhodesia Tobacco Journal

Sunday Mail

Sunday Times (Johannesburg)

The Star

Telegraph

Tempo

Times (London)

Umtali Post

3: OTHERS

British Broadcasting Corporation (Salisbury Home Service News)

4: Selected Theses and Unpublished Papers

Centre for African Studies, "Zimbabwe: Notes and Reflections on the Rhodesian Question," (Maputo, 1979).

Chamboko, T. L. "Cattle Marketing in the Communal Areas of Zimbabwe: Factors Influencing Cattle Marketing Behaviour," (University of Zimbabwe, unpublished MPhil thesis, 1993).

Chigumira, G. "The Zimbabwean Beef Industry: A Demand and Supply Analysis," (University of Zimbabwe, unpublished MPhil. thesis, 1993).

Goldberg, M. "Commercial Agriculture in Rhodesia, 1965-1980: Consolidation and Change," (University of London, unpublished MA thesis, 1982).

----- "Commercial Agriculture in Rhodesia: A Consideration of the Political and Economic Significance of the 'Rural Bourgeoisie'", (University of Cape Town, unpublished seminar paper, 1985)

Keyter, C. F. "Beef Control in Southern Rhodesia, 1931-1938, and its Significance to African Rural Underdevelopment," (University of York, unpublished paper, 1978)

Kwashirai, C. V. "The Operation of the Imperial Cold Storage and Supply Company in Southern Rhodesia, 1924-1938," (University of Zimbabwe, unpublished paper, 1990).

Machingaidze, V. E. M. "The Development of Settler Capitalist Agriculture in Southern Rhodesia, With Particular Reference to the Role of the State", (University of London, unpublished Ph.D. thesis, 1980)

Martins, D. "The Use of Poison and Biological Weapons in the Rhodesian War," (University of Zimbabwe, unpublished, paper, 1993).

Mazonde, I. N. "The Enterprise of Ranching in the Tuli Block: A Study of Cultural Adjustment and Social Change in Botswana," (University of Botswana, unpublished paper, 1991).

McKenzie, J. A. "Commercial Farmers in the Governmental System of Colonial Zimbabwe, 1963-1980," (University of Zimbabwe, unpublished PhD thesis, 1989).

Mlambo, A. S. "Building a White Man's Country: Aspects of White Immigration to Rhodesia, 1890-1970," (University of Zimbabwe, unpublished paper, 1997).

Moyo, M. J. "The Marketing of African Produce with particular reference to Cattle and Maize in the 1940s," (University of Zimbabwe, unpublished paper, 1986).

Mufema, E. "The Impact of the Second World War on Rhodesia Settler Agriculture with particular reference to Tobacco, Maize and Beef Cattle," (University of Zimbabwe, unpublished paper, 1992).

Muir, K. "Agricultural Marketing in Zimbabwe," (University of Zimbabwe, unpublished paper, 1983).

Murombedzi, N. "Pasture Research at the Grasslands Research Station, Veldt Management and their Contribution to the Cattle Industry of Southern Rhodesia, 1930-1980," (University of Zimbabwe, unpublished paper, 1988).

Pangeti, E. S. "U.D.I., Sanctions and the Manufacturing Sector in Rhodesia: 1965-1980," (University of Zimbabwe, unpublished paper, 1997).

Roberts, R. S., "Aspects of the Marketing of African-owned Cattle in Colonial Zimbabwe to the late 1940s," (University of Zimbabwe, unpublished paper, 1982).

Thompson, G. "Peasants, Production and Native Land Husbandry Act, 1945-1965," (University of Zimbabwe, unpublished paper, 1997).

Scoones, I. "Livestock populations and household economics: case study from Southern Zimbabwe," (Imperial College of London, unpublished PhD, 1990).

Steele, M. C. "The Victoria and Gutu Cattle Culling Sales of 1938," (April, 1978)

Strack, H. R. "The International Relations of Rhodesia Under Sanctions," (University of Iowa, unpublished PhD, 1974).

Tarutira, M. T. "A Review of Tsetse and Trypanosomiasis in Southern Rhodesia: Economic Significance up to 1955), (University of Zimbabwe, unpublished MA thesis, 1988).

Vorster, T. H. "Factors Influencing the Growth, Production and Reproduction of Different Breeds of Beef Cattle under Range Conditions in Southern Rhodesia," (University of Stellenbosch, unpublished PhD, 1962).

5: Selected Journal Articles and Chapters in books.

Ainslie, K. S. and Elliot, R. C. "Observation on Beef Production in the High Rainfall Areas of Rhodesia," Rhodesia Agricultural Journal, Vol. 55, No. 1 (1958).

Allen, 'Yank', "Hunt the Lion," NADA, No. 29, 1952.

Barnes, D. L. "Problems and Prospects of Increased Pastoral and Production in the Tribal Trust Lands," Zambezia, Vol. 6, No. 1 (1978).

Bembridge, T. J. and Steenkamp, J. D. G. "Beef Production Potential with Special Reference to the Matabeleland and Midlands Province," Rhodesia Agricultural Journal, Vol. 27, No. 6 (1971).

"Choice Beef," Rhodesia Agricultural Journal, Vol. 42, No. 2 (1945).

Clarke, R. H. "The Economic Implications of Government's Imposition of a 10% Levy on the Commercial Produce of the African Purchase Land Farmer," Rhodesia Journal of Economics, Vol. 10, No. 2 (1976).

Cross, E. G. "An Economic Appraisal of the Production and Marketing of Rhodesian Beef," Rhodesia Journal of Economics, Vol. 5 (1971).

----- "Zimbabwe: Strategies for Economic Development and Equity," Symposium on Zimbabwe's Economic Prospects, (New York, 1980).

De al Rue, I. "Address to the History Society of Zimbabwe," Heritage, No. 5 (1985), 13-15.

Hunt, A. F. "European Agriculture," in Leistner, G. M. E. (ed.), Rhodesia: Economic Structure and Change, (Pretoria, 1976).

----- "Agricultural Pricing in Rhodesia," Rhodesia Journal of Economics, Vol. 7, No. 4 (1973).

----- "Problems of Cattle Country," (1960).

Jarvis, L. S. "Cattle as Capital Goods and Ranchers as Portfolio Managers: An Application to the Argentine Cattle Sector," Journal of Political Economy, Vol. 82, No. 3 (May/June 1974), 489-520.

Mlambo, A. S. "The Cold Storage Commission: A Colonial Parastatal, 1938-1963," Zambezia, Vol. 23, No. 1 (1996).

----- "Civil Aviation in Colonial Zimbabwe, 1912-1980", Zambezia Vol. 19, No. 2, (1992).

----- "A Decade of Civil Aviation in Zimbabwe: Towards a History of Air Zimbabwe Corporation, 1980-1990", Zambezia, Vol. 22, No. 1, (1995).

Le Roux, P., Stubbs, A. T. and Donnelly, P. H. "Problems and Prospects of Increasing Beef Production in the Tribal Trust Lands," Zambezia, Vol. 6, No. 1 (1978).

Mosley, P. "The Development of Food Supplies to Salisbury (Harare)," in Jane, I. (ed.) Feeding African Cities: Studies in Regional Social History, (London, 1987), 203-224.

----- "Agricultural Development and Government policy in Settler Economies: the case of Kenya and Southern Rhodesia, 1900-1960," Economic History Review, (1982), 35.

Mtetwa, R. M. G. "Myth or Reality: the Cattle Complex in South-East Africa, with special reference to Rhodesia," Zambezia, Vol. 6, No. 1 (1978).

Murray, C. A. "Report on the Cattle and Chilled Beef Industry in South America," Rhodesia Agricultural Journal, Vol. 36, (1939), 179-193.

Mutwira, R. "Southern Rhodesia Wildlife Policy, 1890-1953: A Question of Condoning Game Slaughter," Journal of Southern African Studies, Vol. 15, No. 2 (January, 1989), 250-262.

Ndlovu, L. R. "Livestock Research and Development," in Rukuni, M. and Eicher, C. K., Zimbabwe's Agricultural Revolution, (Gweru, 1994), 245-257.

Phimister, I. R. "Meat and Monopolies: Beef cattle Southern Rhodesia, 1890-1938," Journal of African History, Vol. 19, No. 4 (1978), 391-414.

----- "Rethinking the Reserves: Southern Rhodesia's Land Husbandry Act Reviewed," Journal of Southern African Studies, Vol. 19, No. 2 (1993), 225-239.

----- "Zimbabwe: The Path of Capitalist Development," in Birmingham, D. and Martins, P. History of Central Africa, Vol. 2 (London, 1983), 251-290.

----- "The Combined and Contradictory Inheritance of the Struggle Against Colonialism," in Stoneman, C. Zimbabwe's Prospects: Issues of Race, Class, State and Capital in Southern Africa, (London, 1988), 8-15.

-----, "Secondary Industry in Southern Rhodesia: The 1948 Customs Agreement Between Southern Rhodesia and South Africa," Journal of Southern African Studies, Vol. 17, No. 3, (1991).

Pollack, O. B., 'The Impact of the Second World War on African Labour Organisation in Rhodesia,' Rhodesia Journal of Economics, Vol. 7, No. 3, (1973).

----- "Black Farmers and White Politics in Rhodesia", African Affairs, 1975, 74.

Ranger, T. O. "Tales of the 'Wild West': Gold Diggers and Rustlers in south-west Zimbabwe, 1898-1940, An Essay in the use of Criminal Records for Social History," South African Historical Journal, Vol. 28, (1993), 40-62.

Roberts, H. W. "The development of the Rhodesian tobacco industry", South African Journal of Economics, (1951), 19.

"Report on the Cattle Cost Investigation Carried Out By the Economics and Markets Branch, July, 1950-June, 1951," Rhodesia Agricultural Journal, Vol. 48 (1951), 518-536.

Rukuni, M. "The Prime Movers of Zimbabwe's Agricultural Revolution," in Rukuni and Eicher, Zimbabwe's Agricultural Revolution, (Gweru, 1994), 1-9.

Rupiya M. R. "The History of the establishment of Internment Camps and Refugee Settlements in Southern Rhodesia, 1938-1952", Zambezia, Vol. 22, No. 2, (1995).

Rutman L. G. and Werner, D. J. "A test of the 'Uneconomic Culture' thesis: An Economic Rationale for the 'Sacred Cow'," Journal of Development Studies, Vol. 9, No. 4 (1973).

Schutz, B. M. "European Population Patterns, Cultural Persistence, and Political Change in Rhodesia," Canadian Journal of African Studies, Vol. 7, No. 1, (1973), 3-25.

Scoones, I. "Households, Lineage Groups and Ecological Dynamics: Issues for Livestock Research and Development in Zimbabwe's Communal Lands," in Cousins, B., Jackson, C. and Scoones, I. (eds.), Socio-Economic Dimensions of Livestock Production in the Communal Lands of Zimbabwe, (Masvingo, 1988),

Shopo, T. D. "The State and Food Policy in Colonial Zimbabwe, 1965-1980," in Mkandawire, T. and Bourehane, N. (eds.), The State and Agriculture in Africa (London, 1987), 191-221.

Smith, R. C., "Cattle in Zimbabwe," Heritage, No. 2, (1982).

Steele, M. C. "The Economic Function of African-owned Cattle in Colonial Zimbabwe," Zambezia, Vol. 9, No. 1 (1981).

Stigger, P. "Volunteers and the Profit Motive in the Anglo-Ndebele War, 1893," Rhodesian History, Vol. 2, No. 12 (1971).

----- "The Land Commission of 1894 and Cattle," Zimbabwean History, Vol. 11 (1980), 21-43.

Stoneman, C. "Agriculture," Stoneman, C.(ed.), Zimbabwe's Inheritance (London, 1981), 127-149.

Weinrich, A.K.H. "Strategic Settlements in Rhodesia", Journal of Southern African Studies, Vol. 3, No. 2, (1977).

6: Selected Books

Arnold, W. E. The Goldbergs of Leigh Ranch, (Bulawayo, 1980).

Arrighi, G. The Political Economy of Rhodesia, (The Hague, 1967).

Astrow, A. Zimbabwe: A Revolution that Lost its Way? (London, 1983).

Bhebe, N. Benjamin Burombo: African Politics, 1947-1958, (Harare, 1989).

Bishop, J. W. S. Agriculture: The Environment of the Rhodesian People, (Salisbury, 1976).

Blake, R. A History of Rhodesia (London, 1977).

Chipungu, S. N. Commercialising a Peasant Resource: Cattle Trade in Sukumaland, Tanzania, 1919-1961, (Lusaka, 1988).

Cilliers, J. K. Counter Insurgency in Rhodesia, (London, 1985).

Clarke, D. G. Agricultural and Plantation Workers: A Report on Conditions of Labour and Subsistence, (Gwelo, 1977).

Clements, F. and Harben, E. Leaf of Gold: The Story of Rhodesian Tobacco, (London, 1962).

Colvin, P. M. Welfare Economics and African Pastoralism: A Southern Africa Literature Review of Socio-Economic Features Arising from Traditional Cattle Ownership and Production, (Pietermaritzburg, 1983),

Cranfield, P. F. Science and Empire: East Coast Fever in Rhodesia and the Transvaal, (New York, 1991).

Drinkwater, M. The State and Agrarian Change in Zimbabwe's Communal Areas, (London, 1991).

Dunlop, A. A Practical Rancher's Ramblings, (QueQue, 1974).

----- The development of European Agriculture in Rhodesia, 1945-1965 (Salisbury, 1971)

Ellert, H. The Rhodesian Front War: Counter-Insurgency and Guerrilla Warfare, 1962-1980, (Gweru, 1989).

Faulk, O. B. Land of Many Frontiers: A History of the American South-West, (New York, 1968).

Flower, K. Serving Secretly, (London, 1987).

Frederickse, J. Non But Ourselves: Masses Vs Media in the Making of Zimbabwe, (Johannesburg, 1982).

Ford, J. The Role of the Trypanosomiasis in African Ecology: A Study of the Tsetse-fly Problem, (Oxford, 1971).

Godwin, P. and Hancock, I. Rhodesians Never Die: The Impact of War and Change on White Rhodesia, 1970-1980, (Harare, 1997).

Gann, L. and Henricksen, T. H. (eds.) The Struggle for Zimbabwe, (New York, 1981).

Gray, J. R. Ranch Economics, (Ames, 1968),

Grundy, T. and Miller, B. The Farmer at War, (Salisbury, 1979).

Handford, J. A Portrait of an Economy Under Sanctions, 1965-1975 (Salisbury, 1976).

Hodder-Williams, R. White Farmers in Rhodesia, 1890-1965: A History of Marandellas District, (London, 1983).

Hyatt, S. P. The Old Transport Road, Bulawayo, 1969).

Hermans, T. Those Were the Days, ([h://ds.dial.pipex.com/hemans/book/ch2a.htm](http://ds.dial.pipex.com/hemans/book/ch2a.htm)).

Kay, G. A Human Geography, (London, 1970).

Kent, R. and Rubert, S. C. Historical Dictionary of Zimbabwe, No. 46, (London, 1990).

Leys, C. European Politics in Southern Rhodesia, (London, 1959).

Mandaza, I. Zimbabwe: The Political Economy of Transition, 1980-1986 (Codesria, 1986).

Mkandawire, T. and Bourenane, N. State and Agriculture in Africa, (London, 1987).

Martin, D. and Jonhson, P. (eds.) The Struggle for Zimbabwe: The Chimurenga War (London, 1981).

Miller, B. Zimbabwe: Agricultural and Economic Review, (Harare, 1982).

Mlambo, A. S. and Pangeti, E. S. The Political Economy of the Sugar Industry in Zimbabwe, 1920-1990 (Harare, 1996).

Mosley, P. The Settler Economies: Studies in the Economic History of Kenya and Southern Rhodesia, 1900-1963, (London, 1983).

Murray, D. J. The Governmental System of Southern Rhodesia, (Oxford, 1970).

Ndlela, B. D. Dualism in the Rhodesian Economy, (Lund, 1981).

Nelson, H. D. (ed.) Zimbabwe: A Country Study, (Washington D.C, 1982).

Palmer, R. Land and Racial Domination in Rhodesia, (London, 1977).

Philbrick, F. S. The Rise of the West, 1754-1830, (New York, 1965).

Phimister, I. R. An Economic and Social History of Zimbabwe, 1890-1948: Capital Accumulation and Class Struggle, (London, 1988).

Ranger, T. O. Peasant Consciousness and Guerrilla War in Zimbabwe (London, 1985).

Riddell, R. C. The Land Problem in Rhodesia: Alternatives for the Future, (Gwelo, 1978).

Rifkin, J. Beyond Beef: the Rise and Fall of the Cattle Culture, (New York, 1992).

Robertson, W. Rhodesian Rancher, (London, 1935).

Rukuni, M. and Eicher, C. K.(eds) Zimbabwe's Agricultural Revolution, (Gweru, 1994).

Shamuyarira, N. Crisis in Rhodesia, (London, 1965).

Sommerville, D. M. My Life was a Ranch, (Salisbury, 1976).

Stiff, P. Taming the Landmine, (Alberton, 1986).

Stoneman, C. Zimbabwe's Inheritance, (London, 1981).

Strack, R. H. Sanctions: The Case of Rhodesia, (Syracuse, 1978).

Tickner, V. From Rhodesia to Zimbabwe: The Food Problem, Vol. 8 (London, 1979).

Tracey, L. T. Approach to Farming in Southern Rhodesia (London, 1945).

----- Beef on a Ranch and Farm, (Cape Town, 1963).

Truepenny, C. Our African Farm, (London, 1965).

Van Onselen, C. Chibaro: African Mine Labour in Southern Rhodesia, 1900-1933, (London, 1976).

Viljoen, S. Beef Cattle in Rhodesia: A Guide to Increased Calving Rates, Heavier Weaners and Better Veld Utilization for Southern Africa, (Salisbury, 1966).

Weinrich, A. K. H. African Farmers in Rhodesia: Old and New Peasant Communities in Karangaland, (London, 1975).

Weinmann, H. Agricultural Research and Development in Southern Rhodesia, 1924-1950 (Salisbury, 1975).

Williams, R. G. Export Agriculture and the Crisis in Central America, (London, 1986).

Wright, A. Valley of the Ironwoods, (Cape Town, 1972).

7: Oral Sources

Dzingira Moja, interviewed, Harare, 10 December 1996.

Dzingira Cosmas, interviewed, Harare, 10 December 1996.

Chabva John, interviewed, Harare, 16 December 1996.

Mr 'X', interviewed, Mwenezi, 22 December 1996.

8: Archival Files

BMS 21/8/19, Report of the Committee to Investigate the economic, social and health conditions of Africans employed in Urban Areas, Chairman, Howman, R. (1944).

S160AGR9/Policy/51, Cattle, 1953.

S87/2/10, Report of the Standing Committee on Agricultural Production on the State of the Cattle Industry, 1939-1951.

S2788/22, Marketing: Federal Government, 8 January, 1949-17 February, 1957.

S482/134/17/48, Government policy Towards Assisting the Development of Industries in Southern Rhodesia.

S482/243/139, Cold Storage Commission: Shipments of Chilled Beef.

S482/9/42, Slaughter Cattle and Control of Prices, 1942.

S990, Natural Resources Board: Memorandum on the Position of European Farmers in the Colony, December, 1942.

S2528/7 Meat Shortage in Rhodesia, 1955.

S2704/3/1, Cold Storage Commission (C.S.C), Expropriation of the Rhodesian Export and Cold Storage Company, 1937-1951.

S2704/1/1340/2, Cold Storage Commission: General, 1948-1950.

S1215/1342/1, Cold Storage Commission, Sept. 1939-Nov. 1942.

S89/1/1, Evidence to the Commission of Inquiry into Cost of Living on Cattle and Beef Prices, 1955.

S2528/13, Federal Cattle and Beef Marketing: General, 1963.

S4842, Agricultural Marketing Council (A.M.C), Reports on Cold Storage Commission Accounts, 1953-1955.

F478/1/2, Oral Evidence to the Commission of Inquiry into the Cattle Industry, 1956.

F2591/1131/1, Cattle Commission, Evidence 1962-1963.

F429/41/1091, Agricultural Prices and Market Conditions: Agriculture in the Federation, Feb. 1955-Jan. 1956.

F478/1/2, Oral Evidence submitted to the Commission of Inquiry into Cattle and Beef Marketing, 1951-1956.

F478/2/1, Written Evidence submitted by the Native Department to the Commission of Inquiry into the Marketing of Cattle, 1956.

F478/2/2, Written Evidence submitted by the members of the public to the Commission of Inquiry into Cattle and Beef Marketing, 1955-1956.

F478/2/3, Written Evidence submitted by Civil Servants to the Commission of Inquiry into Cattle and Beef Marketing, January-February, 1956.

F259/1, Evidence to Commission of Inquiry into the Cattle Industry, 1963.

F226/1091/3, Agricultural Marketing Council: Cattle, 1963.

F226/1112, Annual Report: Ministry of Agriculture, 1960

F226/1080/2/4, Cattle Drought Relief: General, Vol. 1, 1961.

* 1310/F5/1, Cattle Sales: African Areas Policy, Volume 1, 1965-1979 (N.B. This file has no letter prefixing as it is still an officially closed file).

F226/1310/F7, Cattle Imports and Exports from Bechuanaland Protectorate: Policy, 1963.

F2261320/F9, Meat Supplies to the Belgian Congo, Northern Rhodesia and Portuguese East Africa, 1962.

F226/1320F10A, Exports of Meat to the United Kingdom, West Germany and Other countries, Vol. 2, 1960.

F226/1320/F10B, Commission of Inquiry into the Cattle Industry, 1962-64.

F226/1320/7, Meat Exports to West Germany, United States of America and Canada, 2 Volumes, 1954-1961.

1310/F39, Cattle Marketing and Production, Nov. 1975-Dec. 1979.

MS 308/17/1, International Defence Aid Fund: Agriculture, 1968-1977.

MS308/58/1, International Defence Aid Fund: Security, 1972-1973.