Identity and Decolonisation:
the policy of partnership in Southern Rhodesia 1945-62

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The fieldwork for this thesis was undertaken in the mid-1990s, when Zimbabwe exhibited authoritarian tendencies but had not yet collapsed into economic ineptitude and wide-ranging state corruption and violence. For a western postgraduate it worked well enough without being openly menacing. A few years later, in the early 2000s when I lived in Johannesburg, revisiting my fieldwork was virtually impossible without putting my Zimbabwean friends and colleagues in peril. I am grateful that I was able to access Zimbabwe during a stimulating, but not yet obviously alarming, time.

Finally, my deepest thanks go to Dr Kate Flynn, who encouraged me and supported me in every way in the final stages of this work, and with whom my dreams have taken wing. Our voyage through life continues, now with the addition of our little crew member.
This thesis is my analysis of information, opinion and (occasionally) prejudice from hundreds of people, alive and dead, who contributed to this period of Rhodesian history. All errors of fact or judgment are my own.
Abbreviations

ARNI - Association of Rhodesia and Nyasaland Industries
AVL - African Voters’ League
BAN - Build a Nation campaign
BSAC - British South Africa Company
CAP - Central Africa Party
EWP - Papers of Edgar Whitehead (Rhodes House, Oxford)
FISB - Federal Intelligence and Security Bureau
HHP - Papers of Hardwicke Holderness (Rhodes House, Oxford)
IASR - Inter-racial Association of Southern Rhodesia
NAA - National Affairs Association
NADA - Native Affairs Department Annual
NAZ - National Archives of Zimbabwe
RATG - Rhodesia Air Training Group
RF - Rhodesian Front
RST - Rhodesian Selection Trust
SRANC - Southern Rhodesia African National Congress
UCRN - University College of Rhodesia and Nyasaland
UFP - United Federal Party
UP - United Party
URP - United Rhodesia Party
WP - Welensky MSS (Rhodes House, Oxford)

Note on word usage

I use the terms ‘white’ and ‘European’ interchangeably, as with the terms ‘black’ and ‘African’, although ‘European’ and ‘African’ were the more commonly used at the time.
I use the term ‘Rhodesian’ to refer to the whites only.

The colony itself was officially called ‘Southern Rhodesia’, until 1964 when it became simply ‘Rhodesia’. I use both versions of the name throughout the thesis, as ‘Southern Rhodesia’ and ‘Rhodesia’ were synonymous.

Note on footnotes

All archival citations in the footnotes are from the National Archives of Zimbabwe, unless stated otherwise.
In 1953, the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland was created through an agreement between the British government, the Southern Rhodesian government, and the elected legislators of Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland. An integral part of the Federal project was the policy and ideal of ‘partnership’ between the races, as distinct from South African apartheid and African nationalism. It was hoped by many of the participants, both white and black, that partnership would be a new approach to race relations in a continent which was in considerable ferment.

This thesis evaluates the concept and practice of partnership from 1945 to 1962. It argues that partnership was an attempt by the Rhodesian elite to effect a self-decolonisation: ceding enough power to co-opt the African middle class without radical alteration of the Rhodesian system which thus far has provided a comfortable lifestyle for the whites. Partnership arose from the Rhodesian mental ‘reality’ which held that there was a ‘ladder of civilisation’ which everyone, regardless of race, could climb, allowing the system a certain flexibility. As such was markedly different from South African apartheid which discriminated on the basis of race alone. This thesis analyses the concept and practice of partnership separate from any moral judgements on failures to deliver on its promises, treating it as an exercise in realpolitik by a white elite trying to accommodate change.
Long Abstract

This thesis is about the concept and policy of multiracial partnership in Southern Rhodesia after World War II and up to 1962, and about how the elite of a small white settler community in southern Africa, whose own population was in a constant state of flux due to migration patterns, tried to create, extend and develop structures to withstand the pressure of both the African nationalists and the British Government. It is about how the Rhodesian elite used the concept of partnership to attempt a self-decolonisation by yielding enough political power without endangering its vested interests. The analysis impinges on two main strands of thought. The first is with reference to the Rhodesian elite’s view of the world, which informed the formulation of partnership and explains why a policy and idea which appeared dated and illiberal in western Europe seemed sensible in central Africa. The second is the debate about inclusive nationhood. In particular, I use the examples of the franchise debates and developments from the mid-1950s to 1962 to illustrate the white elite’s concept of inclusivity.

This thesis is fundamentally about elite thought, institutions and machinations. In addressing the themes set out above, it is heavily based on archival sources, which is to be expected since archives generally reflect the powerful and the literate. There are omissions: I do not discuss the African ‘experience’ of the period except inasmuch as it impinged on the white elite’s moves to co-opt middle class Africans and create a buffer between itself and the majority of the population.

In the Introduction I undertake a literature review and set out the problematics which this thesis addresses.

In Chapter One, the worldview of the white elite is analysed. Specifically, attention is paid to the development of Rhodesian identity which explains the structures and mentality out
of which the concept of partnership developed, but also why the Rhodesia system itself could not accommodate greater membership of Africans. The variety of interest groups and pressures within both the white and black elites are also analysed.

In Chapter Two, I examine the philosophy of separate development, or ‘two pyramids’, by way of setting the scene and explaining why partnership was not especially out of step with previous Rhodesian moves towards segregation. This is especially pertinent because after 1962 the Rhodesian government reinstated separate development under the guise of native council, community development and, for the first time in Rhodesian history, a racially demarcated franchise. Following on from the acceptance that the two pyramids model was unsustainable, I analyse the effect of World War II on Rhodesia’s position in the British Empire and the resultant effect on Rhodesian political thought.

Chapter Three discusses the establishment of the Federation inasmuch as it affected the domestic debate, hence the discussion about the National Affairs Association, which was established by white ex-servicemen to encourage debate about the future of the colony. In particular I examine the way in which the NAA was an experiment in bringing the races closer together so that they could discuss issues of common interest. Connected to the NAA was the Inter-Racial Association of Southern Rhodesia (IASR) and the Capricorn Africa Society, and all three organisations were prominent fora for increased contact between the white and black elites. It also examines the distancing from South Africa which the new policy of partnership implied and, to a certain extent, necessitated. It also discusses what the African middle class which the Rhodesians wanted to co-opt was thinking about the implication of federation and partnership.
Chapter Four examines white immigration and social composition, providing an overview of a small population. Specifically, it focuses on the heterogeneity within the white population, emphasising who would support partnership and who would not.

Chapter Five analyses the franchise and citizenship debates in the Federal and Southern Rhodesian spheres in 1956-7, within the framework of carefully extending limited rights to Africans rather than denying them wholesale. The franchises were the most tangible manifestations of partnership, but also a totem of Cecil Rhodes’s aphorism ‘equal rights for all civilised men’.

Chapter Six examined the differences within the white elite regarding partnership by focusing on the print media, which was emerging as an important outlet for middle-class Africans. It examines the Federal Government’s efforts to control ownership of newspapers aimed at Africans. In addition, it analyses the efforts of certain sectors of the industry to accelerate the practice of partnership, as shown by the establishment of a liberal magazine, the Central African Examiner, by the mining company RST.

Chapter Seven takes stock of how little the practical implementation of partnership had progressed by the late 1950s and early 1960s, and discusses the efforts of the Federal government to assess and hasten the progression of partnership through the Cabinet Partnership Implementation Committee. It also briefly examines the exasperation within much of the African elite and the roles of middle class Africans as ‘window dressing’. Also examined the Federal and Southern Rhodesian governments’ Build a Nation Campaign (BAN) in the context of the post-Monckton Report era and the 1961 constitution, and as a last effort to build an inclusive nationhood before the reactionary Rhodesian Front went back to an updated version of separate development.
The Conclusion and Epilogue take stock of the analysis in the preceding chapters and briefly examine post-1962 developments. UDI was an anti-imperial move in practice, and yet in term of identity it was also an affirmation of the Empire and the imperial spirit. A different type of Rhodesia was created from the one which partnership had envisaged. However, it could also be argued that one aspect of true ‘Rhodesianness’ was allowed to dominate, one where Africans were not welcome as partners. The way in which Rhodesian identity developed once the metropole had abandoned Rhodesia by granting independence to Zambia and Malawi was significant – the new justification of the re-worked Rhodesia national identity was not the British Empire, but the anti-Communist western alliance, especially the more right-wing element of it, such as South Africa and the far right in the Unites States.
**Introduction**

The conqueror faces a dilemma as soon as the last battle is won. He cannot forever maintain the high mood of the paean and the feast; he will wake, with victory sour in his mouth, to a colder light in which he must make peace ... the dilemma is the more poignant if the victor proposes to live in the country of the vanquished.\(^1\)

Philip Mason thus summarised the problem facing the white Rhodesian elite by the 1950s. The old certainties were gone and the days of paternalist rule were apparently over. Southern Rhodesia had played an important part in World War II. It was the destination for thousands of white migrants from Britain, South Africa and elsewhere. And its economy was expanding rapidly, attracting investment and increasingly more African workers to the towns, whose skills were developing, whose needs and wants were far removed from the old days, and who could not simply go back to the reserves if they became unemployed.\(^2\) Outside Rhodesia’s borders, the war had also demonstrated the fragility of white rule and the European empires were starting to unravel. Although Southern Rhodesia did not see a war of liberation until the 1970s, it was not immune from the realisation that African nationalism was an increasingly important factor. At the very least the political relationship between the white elite and the black majority had to be renegotiated and redefined.

This was in marked contrast with the time before World War II. Then, Southern Rhodesia’s ‘native policy’ was one of separate development, and ideas of multiracial citizenship, or of a constituency outside the small white population, barely existed in elite white circles. Buttressed by the Land Apportionment Act of 1930 which demarcated land occupation on a racial basis, the Industrial Conciliation Act of 1934 which effectively enshrined white job reservation, and a qualified franchise which excluded all but a handful of Africans, separate


development, or ‘two pyramids’, was supposed to separate Africans and Europeans so that each could develop without competition from the other. While in reality African areas were left underdeveloped and European areas were provided with a pool of cheap labour, in practice segregation was not as stringently implemented as might appear.

Partnership was supposed to end the philosophy of separate development and augur an era of multiracial co-operation and harmony, by promising the extension of citizenship in all its forms to the black majority - with heavy qualifications along the way. At the time, partnership and Federation were broadly welcomed by many whites and some Africans in Central Africa, and by Britain, as a middle way between African nationalism on the one hand and South African apartheid on the other. Southern Rhodesia did not go the way of South Africa in the 1950s despite the similarities in legislation. This is partly due to the relative homogeneity of the whites, and the lack of challenge to British supremacy by other white groups (such as Afrikaners, Greeks, Jews, and Italians), as well as the more affluent yet transient character of the white population, but also because the presence of South Africa, especially after 1948, meant that Southern Rhodesia could counter Afrikaner threats by emphasising the British umbrella.

This thesis is about how the white Rhodesian political elite tried to decolonise itself by redefining its relationship with its white constituency and also the African majority, especially the African middle class, between 1945 and 1962, through the concept of multiracial partnership, particularly during the time of the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland (1953-63) when most of the debates on partnership took place. It also examines the composition of the Rhodesian elite and the interaction between its different constituent parts. Also analysed are the assumptions held by the Rhodesian elite which explain why partnership was considered a reasonable policy, hence the importance attached below to the development of Rhodesian identity. These questions have wider relevance in broader terms about the way in which elites

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react when faced with certain issues, problems and crises. As a result, this thesis fundamentally concerns elite thought, people, institutions and manoeuvres.

There are certain omissions. The significance of the 1959 Northern Rhodesia constitution which gave the vote to about 25,000 Africans,\(^4\) for instance, is not discussed in detail, neither is the Federation-wide Emergency\(^5\) of the same year which was the start of the unravelling of the Federation, except briefly inasmuch as they contributed to the retreat of the white mental landscape into Southern Rhodesia. Also largely omitted is the African ‘experience’ of Federation, except where it impinges on white politics, rhetoric and identity, because whites lived in remarkable isolation from the lives of Africans, and their mentality and institutions reflected this.

**Literature review**

White Rhodesia was a small settler community, which never numbered more than a quarter of a million during our period, yet considering its size it has been extremely widely researched, everything from its history, anthropology, social relations, governmental and legal systems.\(^6\) Much of this literature is of variable quality, and all too often focuses on UDI. As a result, the Federal period is sometimes considered something of a chimera in Rhodesian and Zimbabwean history, and there is no satisfactory single-volume history of the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland.\(^7\) Kenneth Young’s short chapter on the Federation is called ‘The

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\(^7\) However, for a view from within the liberal elite, see Hardwicke Holderness, *Lost Chance*. 
Federal Interval’, as if normal service was suspended during that time. Many scholars discuss the Federal period as a prelude to UDI to demonstrate how little white politics actually deviated from protecting white supremacy, without examining the reasons why partnership, as opposed to naked apartheid, was conceived, or the fact that many people across the racial divide viewed it as a genuine cause for optimism. Larry Bowman, for example, wrote that white politicians’ ‘irrevocable commitment to white domination was never a secret; they always viewed partnership as a meaningless slogan to assuage British opinion’. Too many writers, such as Patrick Keatley, dismiss partnership and the Federation as simple hypocrisy, with little analysis of the white elites which were involved, the changing structure of Rhodesian society, or the sense that partnership was not only an extension of Rhodesian paternalism, but also moved against the trend of white southern African politics which were characterised by South African-style apartheid.

There is nonetheless a considerable body of academic literature which deals with the Federal period, but all too often it ignores or skates over the nuances, debates and changes in political philosophy which Federation wrought, and especially the regional context in which the Federation was moving away from South African-style rhetoric and legislation. Philip Mason’s two books on Rhodesia come closest to a dispassionate analysis of the origins of white mentality and structures of power, and the way in which these structures reacted when faced with the issues mentioned above. Mason’s only real drawback is that his analysis effectively stops in 1960, three years before Federation unravelled.

Ian Hancock’s excellent book on the liberal wing of Rhodesian politics is one work


Mason, Birth of a Dilemma; Mason, Year of Decision.
which overlaps in part with this thesis. However, there are fundamental differences between his approach and that taken here. Hancock seeks to rescue Rhodesian liberals and moderates from obscurity, rightly pointing out that white Rhodesian society could too often be seen as monolithic whereas in fact there were important political, ethnic and class divisions in this small settler society. However, over half his book deals with liberals in opposition and often in disarray, and he treats partnership as a prelude to liberals’ inability to break the Rhodesian Front’s (RF) hold on power. After 1962, liberals were in opposition, and after 1965 were electorally annihilated. Throughout UDI, the RF had no serious rivals who could conceivably sell a vision of a multiracial Rhodesia to the white Rhodesian public, and indeed to the population as a whole beyond the white electorate. This thesis, in contrast, examines the visible face of power. The legacy of the Federation and the comparatively progressive legislation and attitudes which were often exhibited in 1953-63 was such the RF found it extremely difficult to roll them back - which is not to say that it did not try and succeed in some instances.

Colin Leys’ seminal work on European politics in Southern Rhodesia is another work which overlaps with this thesis. Leys’ approach is broadly similar to Mason’s, except that Leys analyses the systemic nature of Rhodesian discrimination more deeply. However, his study came to an end in 1958 and the important Southern Rhodesian election of that year was hurriedly discussed in an appendix. In addition, his examination of white interest groups and the relationship between them focuses more on their similarities than their differences. What this thesis adds to his work is a sense of perspective acquired from examining the Federal

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12 Ian Hancock, *White Liberals, Moderates and Radicals in Rhodesia 1953-1980* (London, Croom Helm, 1984), pp. 1-4. This is also discussed in the next chapter.

13 See the Epilogue.

14 For example, one of the first acts of the RF was to re-segregate public swimming pools, and to stop the proposed racial integration in schools, although the university college remained multiracial.

experiment to the end. In addition, useful though Leys’ chapter on white interest groups is, it does not adequately detail the divisions within the white elite, and does not illustrate how the inter-relationships of the various interest groups were affected by Federation and partnership.

A variety of social scientists conducted surveys on political and social attitudes. An article by J.H. Holleman and others is an excellent examination of the dynamics of a siege mentality and the resultant effects on white opinion on the copperbelt at a time when many whites felt threatened by black advancement. Cyril Rogers and Charles Frantz conducted a valuable in-depth survey of white attitudes in the late 1950s, which remains the most useful investigation of its type into white attitudes in Rhodesia. Their results dovetailed with Peter McEwan’s PhD thesis on white immigration and assimilation, and the results of these two analyses convincingly examine the ways in which the white electorate, on whom the success of partnership ultimately depended, developed and maintained its attitudes and cohesion.

Richard Woods’ mammoth volume The Welensky Papers is a valuable gazetteer of events in the 1950s and early 1960s, an excellent source of facts, and the closest there is to a history of the Federation. However, it has three major flaws. The first is that the footnotes from the Welensky Papers themselves are now obsolete. Secondly, and linked to the first, is that Woods’ narrative is light on footnotes, which means that sometimes sources for important events are not available. Third, and most importantly, Woods is very partisan, and critical

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20 When Welensky deposited his papers at Rhodes House, Oxford, the papers were reorganised and catalogued by James Hargrave, making the task of using them immeasurably easier for the researcher while making Woods’ own footnotes from the papers extremely difficult to follow up.
evaluation of his sources is sorely lacking. His book is not a good source of motivation or investigation. In addition, discussion of important events during the Federal era, such as the building of the Kariba dam, is often scattered throughout the book, impairing clarity.

However, the Federal period also spawned a large number of monographs and other works from a variety of observers, some local, some from outside, who considered partnership a new experiment in social and political development, and were drawn to investigating it. They were not necessarily academics, but journalists, travel writers, and likewise interested observers. Some are discussed in Appendix II, but it is worth drawing attention to them at this stage.

A number of journalists wrote about the Federation, the most prominent of which were Patrick Keatley and Cyril Dunn, both of The Observer. The overriding problem with both books is that they were written before Federation was dissolved, and so they lack a certain perspective. Nonetheless, they offer valuable insights on the Federation from two men who were informed outsiders. Keatley’s work is stronger on the earlier history of Rhodesia and is a broader sweep of white society than Dunn’s, while Dunn is less polemic and judgmental. In Keatley’s book there is little analysis of the Rhodesian mental ‘reality’ which made policies which were unrealistic and even offensive in Britain acceptable in central Africa, nor of the significant collusion of African elites in the relative lack of internal challenge to white rule. Dunn was similarly unimpressed with the application of partnership, although his analysis is both shorter and more focused. His opinion on partnership is encapsulated thus:

let us stop deluding ourselves about central Africa. Its present leaders are not trying to direct it towards any new form of race relationship. The whole aim of the policy is to keep things as they are for as long as possible. Such plans as there are for African political advancement are intended only to confuse and frustrate African opposition, to justify the white community’s present privileges in its own eyes and in those of the world, and to engage the support of the British Government.22


22 Dunn, Central African Witness, p. 238.
Clyde Sanger, a British emigré, was also a journalist, but differed from Keatley and Dunn because he was employed by local publications - Drum and the Central African Examiner - and so was much more involved in Federal politics than the former two, as outside observers, were. His Central African Emergency was informed primarily by his involvement with the Examiner, although his conclusions do not differ greatly from Keatley and Dunn.

There was also a number of local commentators who wrote useful and insightful accounts of partnership. We should bear in mind that some of these writers over-emphasise how unique partnership was, the natural reaction of people who often had worked hard for their vision of partnership and wished to place their intentions in the kindest light possible. Hardwicke Holderness’ Lost Chance is the best memoir of the ferment, as he saw it, of ideas and the new approach which partnership promised. Significantly, it was written before apartheid in South Africa had collapsed, and Holderness makes clear his despair that not only Rhodesia, but also southern Africa, had lost an opportunity to encourage an atmosphere in which both races could mitigate antagonism and co-operate in the task of nation-building. Holderness was in a good position to write about the time. He was an erudite lawyer who had been decorated in the war, and he was the driving force behind the National Affairs Association and the Interracial Association before becoming a Southern Rhodesia MP for Garfield Todd’s United Rhodesia Party. In the book, he was eager to point out how definitively Rhodesia turned away from South Africa, devoting a whole chapter to the differences in politics and dynamics.

B.G. Paver, the South African newspaper proprietor who was responsible for founding two chains of newspapers ‘produced by Africans for Africans’ in South Africa and the

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24 Holderness, Lost Chance.

25 ibid, pp. 57-66.

26 B.G. Paver, His Own Oppressor, (London, Peter Davies, 1958). The dustjacket blurb refers to Paver’s ‘vantage post [that] no other European has held in Africa’.
Federation, wrote his own impression of the policy of partnership five years into its life. It is not the best account of partnership. Paver tried to be philosophical rather than dealing very much with empirical evidence, but it is worth noting his book because it tried to create an intellectual justification for partnership, and also because of his role within the white elite. With his younger brother Cedric he was an important figure in the development of a print media for Africans, which fostered prominent Africans such as Lawrence Vambe, M.M. Hove, Nathan Shamuyarira, Jasper Savanhu and Willy Musarurwa. In *His Own Oppressor*, Paver compared partnership to apartheid in South Africa, reaching the conclusion that the Federation was uniquely placed to advance and solve the problem of race relations in Africa in a way that the Union was steadfastly refusing to do. Discussing what he, in common with many whites, saw as the distinctive nature of race relations in Southern Africa, he wrote:

> In Africa ... civilisation does divide multiracial societies. Constitutions are in the making. There is no universal franchise, and the white man insists, rightly, that the franchise and government should always remain in the hands of civilised men. This gives civilisation a political connotation.

> Basically, the battle for Africa is not a question of colour but of civilisation. This is the cardinal difference between the homogeneity of a civilised state in America or Europe and the underlying uncertainties and apparently unavoidable inequalities in the status of the majority of the population of any African State. In all of them, civilisation and barbarism are bed-fellows: inevitably one must oust the other.

Paver believed that partnership was the only logical way in which civilisation would defeat barbarism. *His Own Oppressor* placed the Federation’s partnership policy in direct contrast with South African apartheid, and in so doing emphasised how partnership was not only an original solution to the problems of race relations, but also how it stood as a mark of all that was fair and just about the British Empire in Africa. This, in stark contrast to the increasingly untrustworthy

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28 Paver, *His Own Oppressor*, p. 45.
and distinctly anti-British Afrikaner nationalists: ‘This is an ever-widening gulf in the degree of loyalty which each State [the Federation and South Africa] shows to the Crown and Commonwealth, and in the degree of liberalism evident in laws of their respective legislatures’. 29

Doris Lessing’s Going Home 30 is a valuable addition to Holderness and Paver, and should be read in conjunction with them. Through her Rhodesian upbringing, Lessing qualifies as local, and she has an insider’s understanding of the Rhodesian mentality, but her outlook sets her apart from other Rhodesian writers and commentators. Through her politics and move to London, she detached herself from the Rhodesian mainstream. Going Home is a worthwhile book because of her outsider’s eye, but also because in its later editions she was not afraid to change her mind with the benefit of hindsight and experience. 31 Holderness and Paver considered Rhodesian discrimination to be something unfortunate which should be mitigated at some point, whereas Lessing is much more direct, believing it to be morally and practically obtuse. While this is not very different from Keatley or Dunn, Lessing’s sense of moral outrage is enhanced by her innate understanding of why Rhodesians acted as they did, without seeking to excuse or justify them.

Africa was also of interest to travel writers during the 1950s, and many people who would have come across African political developments would have first read about them in travel volumes. Travel writers can be notoriously unreliable as writers of historical fact; however, as chroniclers of attitudes and zeitgeist they are more dependable. Their value lies in two areas in particular. The first is that they often travel more widely, and speak to a wider cross-section of people, than do other commentators. If they are good writers, they can bring this to bear on their analysis of wherever they are. The second is that they often use their investigation of the countries they visit to comment on the current state of affairs in the

29 ibid, p. 80.


31 ibid., pp. 238-56.
metropole. Some travel writers believed that the brave new world which African decolonisation might represent was in some instances a beacon of hope for the metropole, in others a living admonition for the injustices of colonialism.

John Gunther and Reginald Reynolds both wrote about Central Africa in the early and mid-1950s, when the policy of partnership was still an ideal which had not yet been tarnished. John Gunther’s Inside Africa was an attempt in the mid-1950s to write a commentary on evolving Africa which arose as a result of his travels on the continent. He travelled extremely widely, starting in Morocco and finishing in South Africa. The book was a companion volume to his previous travel writings, Inside Europe, Inside Asia, Inside Latin America and Inside USA. He and his wife generally flew from capital to capital ‘either to save time, or because no other means of transport were available’, and they endeavoured to make at least one trip outside the capital by car ‘into the surrounding bush or hinterland’. Gunther tried to make his an all-encompassing book, more detailed than any other travelogue and more accessible than Hailey’s African Survey. Like many others, he too noted that Federation was ‘a kind of barrier preventing the successors of Malan from coming north, and the disciples of Nkrumah from coming south and east’.

Although Gunther claimed to have made notes of conversations with over 1,500 people, what emerges from Inside Africa is a recounting of official policy and propaganda, with barely critical comments attached. He talked to Huggins, Welensky and Todd - and does not report on any conversations with the new African Members of Parliament. To be fair, there are a couple of critical paragraphs. He admitted that he did not meet a single African who actively favoured

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34 ibid, pp. ix-x.

35 ibid, p. ix

36 ibid., p. 602.
Federation, and that the fate of partnership would depend on the extension of the franchise and the lowering of the colour bar, and ‘many earnest Britons in the Federation do not think that the pace towards reforms is fast enough’.

If Gunther represented one aspect of what a travel writer saw and believed about the prospects for multiracial partnership in Central Africa, Reg Reynolds exemplified another. Reynolds was a British Quaker who ‘was always tearing comfortable conventions to tatters and replacing them with something new ... To him life was a continual plea for honesty, tolerance, racial equality, justice, truth and spiritual freedom for man’. He wrote serious tracts and books as well as lighthearted monographs on ‘historical serendipity’, discussing beards and beds. He spent much of his life travelling - indeed, he died while travelling in Australia - and since he was passionately concerned with justice and racial tolerance, Africa in the 1950s was an obvious place for him to visit.

Unlike Gunther, Reynolds made a point of staying with Africans rather than Europeans whenever he could. Here he was helped by the Quaker network, which meant that he had personal introductions to prominent African Quakers and Methodists. He was much more aware of the Africans’ perspectives on colonialism and the relationship between white and black. He noticed, for instance, how much more at ease the editor-in-chief of African Newspapers, Jasper Savanhu, was when his boss, Cedric Paver, was not in the room, and therefore how much more freely Savanhu spoke. He wrote of a ‘surface liberalism’ in government circles in Southern

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37 ibid., p. 606.
38 I am extremely grateful to Tim Dauth of the University of Western Australia for sending me a wealth of material on Reynolds.
41 Reynolds, Beware of Africans, p. 247.
Rhodesia. He also perceptively saw how double-edged the comparison with Smuts was: ‘Many shrewd judges in Central Africa compared Huggins to Smuts. That meant a great deal. For Smuts in Europe talked democracy and liberalism, but radical opinion in South Africa regards him today as the man whose racial policy paved the way for Malan’.\textsuperscript{42} Of all the above commentators writing on partnership in Central Africa, Reynolds was the only one who actively sought Africans’ opinions, and who clearly saw that partnership was, in so many ways, built on very shaky foundations.

Analysis

This thesis is not concerned with moral judgements about partnership, as so many commentators and scholars have done, but rather it investigates the Rhodesian mental ‘reality’ which made partnership understandable and palatable as a course of action. The analysis considers the discourse of partnership and its results separate from any failure to deliver on promises. An important aspect of partnership to consider while reading this work is that partnership was reactive, not proactive, so while its philosophy promised much, its inability to deliver was based on its lack of a clear programme.

As Philip Mason noted, Southern Rhodesia was a conquest society. The lack of a programme to deliver partnership can partly be explained by the southern African liberal mindset, of which partnership was a manifestation. The development of Rhodesian society had been deeply influenced by South Africa, and Rhodesian liberalism came from nineteenth-century Cape liberalism.\textsuperscript{43} Ironically, but quite understandably, much Rhodesian discriminatory legislation was adapted from South Africa’s own. However, the southern African liberal could believe that there was something pragmatic about segregation, helped partly by the presence of missionaries, the overview of the imperial government which retained power over

\textsuperscript{42} ibid, p. 248.

discriminatory legislation in Rhodesia, and a sense that the eventual assimilation of Africans into the colonial mainstream was ultimately desirable, with thresholds and qualifications to mark the way. There was much less emphasis placed on any supposedly inherent superiority or inferiority of the races. Ethel Tawse Jollie believed that Africans ‘remind one of a superior race whose education and surroundings have left them unsophisticated’. This is not to credit colonial society with too much altruism, but it is important to remember that segregation in Rhodesia did not develop into ideological absolutes the way it did in South Africa, allowing scope for flexibility, and partnership was one manifestation of such adaptability. Rhodesian rhetoric had held that a kind of humanitarian imperialism was a good thing, evidenced by the widespread support - or at least, a lack of concerted opposition - for the Land Apportionment Act various spheres, including many missionaries and some elite Africans. The liberal southern African mindset believed that while the material and educational gulf between the races was so wide, segregation would protect the Africans from unscrupulous Europeans and allow them to come to terms with the colonial order smoothly. The influence of missionary teachings, emphasising a personal relationship with God, and by extension an emphasis on personal, as opposed to communal, responsibility could prepare Africans for membership of the new society.

Given that a pragmatic angle, however qualified, to segregation existed in many elite Rhodesian circles, it is understandable that an establishment figure like Godfrey Huggins could assert in 1941 that separate development was unsustainable and that the system had to take this into account without appearing to have undertaken a volte-face. However, it also followed that the liberals who believed that, given time, Africans would become full members of colonial society, also ignored the fact that the process of colonisation entailed conquest and force.

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45 The qualifications for the franchise are an example. One became eligible for the vote through personal achievements, not communally.

46 See chapter 2.
Believing that the humanitarian uplift of Africans was good meant liberals could believe deeply in their own good intentions, and they could not recognise the inherent violence and dislocation visited on African society, meaning that the good intentions might not be read as such by the intended recipients.

It will be apparent to the reader how close the relationship between Britain and Southern Rhodesia was, especially compared to Britain’s increasingly strained links with South Africa. We should be aware of Louis Hartz on the development of settler societies, especially concerning the concept of ‘fragment’ and the development of settler elites which were creole, rather than metropolitan, in character, since it is an approach which has been used explicitly and implicitly by a number of writers on Rhodesia.\(^{47}\) However, use of Hartz’s fragment theory should be heavily qualified. His analysis is useful in proposing a baseline of assumptions and beliefs which the fragment held on leaving the metropolis, and which might influence the subsequent development of the settler society - that much can be said to hold for Southern Rhodesia, a product of Victorian imperialism. Hartz argues that a fragment represents a snapshot of the metropolis at a given point in time and that subsequent separation from the metropolis breeds a certain sclerosis: the fragment which arrives on new soil ‘loses the stimulus towards change that the whole provides’.\(^{48}\) However, he places too much emphasis on this without examining the influence of subsequent waves of migration, which in turn create problems for the concept of a singular fragment.\(^{49}\) In Southern Rhodesia, for example, the white population tripled between 1945 and 1960, and many of these new migrants became members


\(^{48}\) Hartz, *The Founding of New Societies*, p. 3.

of the elite, with assumptions moulded by experiences which would have differed from, say, the original settlers’ of 1890. In addition, Hartz assumes the ‘European’ character of the fragment.\textsuperscript{50} In the case of Southern Rhodesia, the British imperial idea was filtered through a South African social and political milieu.

Hartz is also weak on the influence of events outside the settlement colony, such as decolonisation around its borders, the changing relationship with the (usually) British government (as opposed to the concept of Britain), and indeed the influence of domestic challenges to the settler society’s power, such as the rise of African nationalism, or economic problems. That a settlement colony was physically isolated from the metropolis did not mean it was insulated from either news or changing circumstances at ‘home’. In fact, Rhodesian ties with Britain were very close. Events in Britain were closely followed, distance and communications permitting; Rhodesia played an important part in the British war efforts after 1899, and shared British elation at victory; and when partnership, with its gradual opening to Africans, was proposed, direct and well-informed comparisons to the piecemeal extension of the franchise in Britain were made, in stark contrast with the closing of the franchise in South Africa.

Finally, Hartz’s proposition of sclerosis ignores the fact that while the settler society might not develop the way the metropolis did, it was subject to a variety of pressures, sometimes unique to its environment - certainly different to much the metropolis might face. In addition, although the fragment did not develop or react the way the metropolis might have done, this does not mean that nothing changed, or that settler elites were incapable of trying to redefine the baseline of their power according to changing circumstances: in our case, the baseline was the Rhodesian identity and the political and social structures which supported white power, but which much of the white elite believed could be flexible enough to accommodate elite Africans. This is why a policy like partnership, which looked arcane and illiberal in Europe, made sense in Rhodesia, since it arose from the settlers’ own mental reality

\textsuperscript{50} Hartz, \textit{The Founding of New Societies}, pp. 3-10.
which was now developing with a certain detachment from the metropole. As a result, this thesis is in part an examination of the way in which white Rhodesians reacted to various pressures through the policy of partnership.

Hartz’s analysis is of limited use for Southern Rhodesia. While Rhodesia was the product of selective immigration, so was its original fragment, the English speakers of South Africa, who were themselves the product of such a policy: the 4000 migrants who made up the 1820 settlers were chosen from 90,000 applications. Southern Rhodesian society was mostly South African in origin and assumptions, one step removed from Britain itself. Yet it was not a mirror of South Africa. Rhodesian society had different dynamics - for example, a relative lack of inter-white conflict, unlike South Africa. It was much closer emotionally to Britain, and its loyalty could be taken much more for granted. While it is true that much of English-speaking South African society was intensely loyal, its loyalty was diluted by the presence and growing power of Afrikaner nationalism and the English-speakers’ eventual loss of political power, something which was never the case in Southern Rhodesia.

We should also be aware of Benedict Anderson and Linda Colley’s work on the co-option of elite groups and elite control of the machinery of power, such as the print media. Significantly, while Anderson and Colley are useful prisms through which to see Rhodesian society, both their end-points, the founding of new nations, patently did not happen in Rhodesia. Beyond Hartz, Anderson and Colley, discussions on the franchise in chapter 5, the politics


55 A key issue throughout this thesis is the question of the franchise and representation, as
behind the print media in chapter 6, and the final attempts to sell partnership in chapter 7 all combine to show two things. The first is fissures within the white elite regarding the practical implementation of partnership by the late 1950s, and the second is the way in which Rhodesian discourse had moved forward in a short space of time, from efforts to limit and even exclude African participation in the body politic to actively trying to register African voters, especially in contrast to regional developments as exhibited by the extension of apartheid in South Africa.

The dates between which the thought of the Rhodesian elite is discussed are easy to demarcate. 1945 saw the start of moves to end separate development, and the December 1962 election, won by the Rhodesian Front, saw the end of moves towards a multiracial partnership and the renewed ascendancy of the philosophy of separate development.

Although this thesis discusses debates which took place during the Federal era when Southern Rhodesia was but one of three constituent territories, it concentrates on Southern Rhodesia because the Federal elite was overwhelmingly drawn from that colony, and because Southern Rhodesia was clearly the senior partner in the Federation. The great majority of whites in the Federation lived there, and the assumptions about the structure of society and various groups’ share of power were informed by Southern Rhodesian white society and its various identities. The Federal capital was placed in the Southern Rhodesian capital, Salisbury, which made the city home to the two most important administrations in the Federation and brought government jobs to Southern Rhodesian whites. The great majority of the individuals who played important roles during our period were based in Southern Rhodesia, and the Federal project was in effect Southern Rhodesian ambitions extended northwards.

The analysis employed here differs from the way in which the Rhodesian politics of this period has normally been treated. Rhodesian ideas are often treated as an unconvincing attempt to mask racial domination - although it is quite true that the very foundations of Rhodesia were access to the electoral process is a yardstick by which inclusive citizenship can be measured. This is especially pertinent in Southern Rhodesia where access to the franchise was so limited for Africans.
predicated on such domination⁵⁶ - and too few sources place Rhodesia in a southern African context, preferring to make broad judgements which place Rhodesian actions in a western context instead. Rather than note the considerable similarities between Rhodesia and South Africa as so many scholars do, this thesis concentrates on the way in which Rhodesia differed in terms of policy and rhetoric. One of the most significant aspects of partnership is how far removed the rhetoric was from that of South Africa, and so the Federation could make a claim for a broadly new approach to race relations. By the late 1950s and early 1960s the Rhodesian elite was trying to shift the discursive definition of ‘Rhodesian’. Instead of ‘Rhodesian’ meaning the small settler population, it would be widened to include Southern Rhodesia’s African population, especially the more ‘advanced’ Africans, the emerging middle class.

Indeed, this thesis argues that much of the value of partnership was to display the fundamental differences between Southern Rhodesia and South Africa. Although both were in origin white settler colonies, with similar patterns of racial domination, their history of conquest and imperial connections were different, as was, crucially, the composition of their respective white societies. Rhodesia, in clear contrast to the Union of South Africa, was not the result of a compromise between white ethnic groups with a history of mutual suspicion and antagonism. Therefore, this thesis explores the way in which the rhetoric and policy of partnership evolved from the Rhodesian mental ‘reality’, which itself developed from the early days of Rhodesia when the colony was defining itself against South Africa. In addition, few sources examine the significant cleavages within the white elite as the 1950s progressed, as this thesis does. In other colonial societies, a starting point of discrimination did not necessarily discount later liberalisation or hinder the co-option of elites and masses outside the immediate settler mainstream.⁵⁷ In addition, partnership can be considered an example of the weakness of Rhodesian society in confronting pressures from within its own borders. Since Rhodesians

⁵⁶ Mason, The Birth of a Dilemma, passim. For an especially caustic analysis, see A. McAdam, ‘Rhodesia’s phantom ‘liberalism’: imperialism, federalism and rebellion in British Central Africa’, African Perspectives, 1, 1976, pp. 47-54.

⁵⁷ Anderson, Imagined Communities, pp. 47-65.
could not hope to rule in perpetuity by virtue of a police state or military superiority, they turned to co-option as a way of protecting themselves from the masses. In the absence of military force, many Rhodesians believed that they had to at least attempt to co-opt the African elite.

However, it should be kept in mind that if taken to its logical conclusion, partnership threatened to overthrow the hegemony of the Rhodesians. Rhodesian discourse could assuage itself and many of its critics by emphasising thresholds of ‘civilisation’, but it is too easy to simply consider Rhodesian liberalism, and its precursor from the Cape, as a legalistic and moral counter-weight to explicit racial discrimination. The language of such liberalism was in contrast to ‘its fundamental compatibility with cultural imperialism, class domination and, ultimately, racial subjugation’, and, just like Rhodesian partnership a century later, the ideals of Cape liberalism served to emphasise the weakness of the colonial society in having to compromise with social and economic realities. Such discourse obscures the issue of race, on which settler societies in southern Africa were based. Timothy Keegan treats race as ‘an autonomous variable with a life of its own’ since colonial society in southern Africa was based on the sine qua non of racial superiority, however such a sentiment might be masked by references to culture or equal rights for all civilised men. The discourse of racial hegemony was a fluid process, and partnership was a manifestation of how the discourse of a white Rhodesian elite seeking to accommodate the changing world while maintaining its own position shifted under the name of ‘partnership’. This thesis seeks to show how the discourse of partnership, from being a continuation of Rhodesian paternalism, ended up by highlighting the discrepancies in Rhodesian philosophy and action and effectively, and ironically, helped to create the conditions for its own failure.

In effect, partnership had three main purposes. The first was to stymie any nationalist agitation by depriving African nationalists of educated middle-class leaders who would instead

59 ibid, p. 290.
60 ibid.
be slowly enveloped by the existing white political and social elite, and would come to share its vested interests - making the prospect of insurrection and instability unappealing. The second, and intimately connected to the first, was that despite a process of slowly opening up the heights of the Rhodesian system, the white elite wanted a structure which would ensure their continuing domination. The third was that it would contribute to imperial unity by blocking the northward expansion of South African-style apartheid and the southward expansion of African nationalism. As such, partnership was an exercise in realpolitik on the part of the whites, ‘the sensible and familiar ambitions of a currently privileged community’, and so judgements about how the system did not live up to its own rhetoric and some people’s expectations are misplaced. Certainly by the early 1960s the rhetoric had moved towards encouraging the development of a Rhodesian political nation of black and white working together, even though the realistic prospect of a multiracial Rhodesian ‘nation’ was an extremely distant one. Nevertheless, the white elite hoped that a shining example would be presented to the rest of Africa and to the British Government, so that the Federation, with Southern Rhodesia as its most important component, might be granted full dominion status within the British Commonwealth.

The attempt by the Rhodesian elite to decolonise itself has to be seen against the background of both Rhodesian and imperial history. From the beginning of its establishment as a colony, whites in Southern Rhodesia explored varying and interlocking identities - as subjects of the British Empire and Crown, as southern African whites, as citizens of the geographical and emotional territory of Rhodesia. Elite Africans, too, had alternative identities available to them. They too might consider themselves pre-eminently as subjects of Empire or as part of the southern African black race or as destined citizens of a territory which came to be called

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61 Eric Hobsbawm wrote that ‘it is a characteristic of empires that they turn their victims into their defenders’, and this is, in many senses, what was happening in Southern Rhodesia. Eric Hobsbawm, Industry and Empire (London, Weidenfield and Nicolson, 1968), p. 266.

Zimbabwe. Relations between the white and black elites were not necessarily confrontational - very often, they were quite the opposite. The varying elite white and black identities could - and did - combine in different ways, and in the post-1945 period the white elite wanted to harness African affection for the Empire to a Rhodesian identity.

In the rest of this thesis, the ways in which partnership developed is discussed, including the white and (occasionally) black elites who formulated, debated and sometimes followed the policy, and the themes of Rhodesian identity which relate to how partnership came to exist.

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63 The name ‘Zimbabwe’ for Rhodesia only emerged in nationalist circles in the early 1960s. Previously, there had been no alternative name for the colony.
Chapter 1

White elites and their view of the world

White elites

Colin Leys’ chapter on interest groups in Rhodesia is a good starting point for a discussion on Rhodesian elites.¹ The picture he builds up is of a small society whose political processes were dependent on compromise and consensus between varying interest and pressure groups, leading to the ‘establishment party’, which from 1934 to 1962 was in office uninterrupted. The name changed, from the Reform Party, to the United Party, the United Rhodesia Party, and lastly the United Federal Party. Leys was supplemented by D.J. Murray’s in-depth study of how the interconnected groups formed the governmental system in Southern Rhodesia, although Murray all but ignored the existence of Federation, which severely limits the usefulness of his book.²

This thesis takes Leys and Murray into account, adding to them the analysis of how such interest groups understood the concept and practice of partnership at its inception, and the way in which relations between various interest groups, notably within the powerful mining industry, and the government were affected by the policy and rhetoric of partnership. It also analyses the way in which the Rhodesian elite’s view of its world informed the development and practice of partnership.

Rhodesian identity and the Rhodesian elite’s worldview

The Rhodesian settler identity and worldview is crucial to understanding why the Rhodesian elite conceived of partnership as a reasonable and viable solution to the issues of decolonisation and African advancement. Rhodesian identity developed in a Southern Rhodesia

¹ Leys, European Politics, pp. 98-130.
² Murray, The Governmental System in Southern Rhodesia.
which had never been ruled directly from London and had had internal self-government since 1923. Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland, by way of contrast, were colonies governed directly by the Colonial Office. Despite a large white presence on the copperbelt after 1945, there was little prospect of a self-perpetuating settler state ever taking power. To further complicate matters, within Northern Rhodesia Barotseland was a separate protectorate.

There were two Others against which Rhodesian identity developed, and through those the Rhodesians largely solved the problem of ‘self-definition’ inherent in the process of fragmentation which developed into the founding of a new society. The first was the Africans, who were considered to be an overwhelming, menacing majority. The ‘founding battle’ of Rhodesian identity was the African uprisings of 1893 and 1896-7, and more emotively the Allan Wilson patrol in 1893 which became ‘a symbol of heroic courage and determination in fulfilling the frontiersman’s Manifest Destiny’. The threat of physical violence by Africans served to knit together the small settler community, and magnified the hostility the settlers felt towards the African majority. The actual fighting against the Africans legitimised the animosity, but once peace was established and the polarisation of violence had abated, this animosity continued in less clearly defined ways. The overwhelming characteristic was fear. The whites rarely believed themselves to be at peace with the land and its inhabitants around them.

Huggins’ comment below is a powerful one which illustrates the point well:

The Europeans in this country can be likened to an island of white in a sea of black, with the artisan and the tradesman forming the shores and the professional classes the highlands in the centre. Is the native to be allowed to erode away the shores and gradually attack the highlands? To permit this would mean that the

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3 Hartz, The Founding of New Societies, p. 11.

4 For further background on these uprisings, see T.O. Ranger, Revolt in Southern Rhodesia (London, Heinemann, 1967) and David Beach, War and Politics in Zimbabwe 1840-1900 (Gweru, Mambo Press, 1986).

5 Allan Wilson and thirty-five men of the British South Africa Police (BSAP) pursued the defeated Ndebele king Lobengula to the River Shangani where they were massacred by Ndebele impis. For Rhodesians, the patrol exemplified Rhodesian bravery, but also highlighted the threat the African majority could pose to the whites. L.H. Gann, A History of Southern Rhodesia, Early Days to 1934 (London, Chatto & Windus, 1965), p. 118.
leaven of civilisation would be removed from the country, and the black man would inevitably revert to a barbarism worse than ever before. I say this because the ancient controls and inhibitions of tribal custom and superstition on which Bantu society rested are going, or have gone, never to return. But the white man’s law, religion and example can take their place. Rightly or wrongly, the white man is in Africa, and now, if only for the sake of the black man, he must remain there. The higher standard of civilisation cannot be allowed to succumb.  

Huggins suggested that African and European society were polar opposites, and that the latter could be obliterated by the former, the hard-won complexity of white society washed away by a hostile, formless mass: a black ‘sea’.

Connected to such a fear was a pastoral sentiment which developed within Rhodesian identity, encompassing only the whites. The Rhodesian self-image was one of hardy pioneers who had tamed nature and made a precarious living out of a hostile environment. This was ironic, given that from the late 1940s onwards a significant majority of whites had not been born in the country, were not of pioneer stock and were living in comfortable suburbs, a pattern they shared with, for example, white Australian society. Significantly, many - but by no means all - of the white urban elite also owned farms, even if they did little farming, as such. Nonetheless, the pioneer identification with the landscape was a powerful one, and one which was deeply embedded in Rhodesian national identity. Rhodesian pastoralism stressed that the threat which this ‘wild’ land and its ‘untrustworthy’ Africans posed was contained only by the standards of ‘civilisation’ which the whites had introduced, and to ‘weaken before its unfriendliness, to sink into its rhythms, was to invite a loss of identity, a severance from the western inheritance’. The Rhodesian arcadia, therefore, was not a source of comfort, but a manifestation of the way in which whites had overcome adversity to subdue the land which would turn on them if their

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6 Herald, 31 March 1938.


9 ibid, p. 92.
vigilance faltered. Although Africans - at least, the middle class - were to be co-opted into the Rhodesian identity, attitudes towards African rural life were very different, and African traditions were not part of the founding myths of Rhodesian nationalism. They were seen as interesting museum pieces, unsuited to modern life but nonetheless quaint. They were also part of the idea of the noble savage, the primordial African tradition which Rhodesians identified themselves against.

The greatest problem with the African Other was that the Africans were not an external threat. Conceptually and culturally the Rhodesians considered the Africans different to them, but could not ignore the fact that one of the greatest perceived threats to a Rhodesian identity was a group of people who were the original inhabitants of the country and who massively outnumbered them. This was not an outside group - and so by the 1950s the Rhodesian elite was anxious to co-opt the African majority, and the African elite in particular. The fact that whites and blacks did not share an emotional attachment to the same identity means that the Rhodesian elite’s own efforts by the early 1960s to encourage a multiracial Rhodesian nation were facing serious obstacles. Additionally, the Rhodesian way of life depended completely on cheap African labour, inextricable entwining white and black in an economic relationship. Giving Africans jobs requiring a high level of personal trust - such as nanning white children - did not mean that whites felt safe.

The second Other were Afrikaners. It was much easier to portray Afrikaners as an outside threat to Rhodesian nationhood and identity and to emphasise a physical as well as emotional division between them and the Rhodesians, and in many ways Rhodesia was ‘an ideological as well as geographical frontier’ since Rhodesian discrimination had never

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10 The Rhodesian attachment to the land was also manifested in comparisons between ‘efficient’ European agriculture as opposed to ‘wasteful’ African cultivation. In particular, whites perpetuated the myth that they knew how to conserve the land and its resources as opposed to the Africans, although in actual fact until the 1940s white agriculture was responsible for massive erosion and misuse of land. See Ian Phimister, ‘Discourse and the Discipline of Historical Context: Conservationism and Ideas about Development in Southern Rhodesia 1930-1950’, Journal of Southern African Studies, 12, 2, 1986, pp. 263-275.
translated into ideological absolutes.\textsuperscript{11} The differences with Afrikaners were especially pronounced after the National Party won the South African election in 1948, setting itself apart from the Empire and emphasising, by way of contrast, the depth of Rhodesian imperial loyalty. Significantly, Godfrey Huggins refused to attend the opening of the Voortrekker Monument outside Pretoria in 1949 because he feared it would indicate Rhodesian approval of South Africa’s growing detachment from the Commonwealth and the Empire.\textsuperscript{12}

Rhodesian antipathy towards Afrikaners went back well before 1948. Although the Pioneer Column had included a fair proportion of Afrikaners, the Jameson Raid and the South African War a few years later galvanised Rhodesia on the side of Britain and against the Afrikaner republics.\textsuperscript{13} The Rhodesian police spent much of their time tracking Afrikaner commandos on the banks of the Limpopo during a war which pitched Afrikaners and Britons on opposite sides. In addition, many white immigrants to Rhodesia in the 1890s were escaping anti-uitlander prejudice in the Transvaal, which some considered especially galling since the uitlanders comprised the vast majority of Johannesburg’s white population. Before the war, one of the uitlander grievances had been that they were denied the franchise due to strict qualifications which included fourteen years residence, something many of the transient fortune-seekers on the Rand would have difficulty fulfilling.\textsuperscript{14} The franchise issue was a useful one for the British Government which was seeking an excuse to interfere in the Afrikaner republics with the aim of controlling the vast mineral wealth, and Paul Kruger, President of the Transvaal, was understandably wary of enfranchising a large number of non-Afrikaners who were in his


\textsuperscript{12} S482/113/4/49 Message for Voortrekker Monument.


country on a different basis from the Boers. But just as the Transvaal franchise was designed to protect the rights of burghers as opposed to aliens, so the Rhodesian franchise was formulated with an eye on the exclusion of Afrikaners as well as, of course, Africans.

When Southern Rhodesian whites voted for responsible government in the 1922 referendum, the anti-Union vote was inspired to a large extent by Rhodesian reluctance to join an Afrikaner-dominated Union. At least in their own country, Rhodesians of British origin were the great majority of whites, they could speak ‘Cecil Rhodes’ tongue in Cecil Rhodes’ country’, and they would not have to compromise with people with whom they had been at war just twenty or so years earlier. The Afrikaners were the largest white minority, and they showed few signs of integrating into the dominant mainstream. Their language and religion were different, they tended to live in the rural areas, they did not mix as much as other minorities, such as the Jews, did, and ‘many refused to assimilate to the British values and culture of the Colony’. To make things worse for the Rhodesians, Afrikaners tended to have larger families, and a higher proportion of them settled on the land than did Britons or other immigrants, implying they were there to stay and would be difficult to shift. It is hardly surprising that in the early days of Rhodesia, the local magistrate at Marandellas was harsher towards Afrikaners than Africans.

15 ibid, p. 419.


18 Gann, A History of Southern Rhodesia, p. 237.


20 ibid, p. 616.

Nonetheless, most Rhodesians had deep connections with English-speaking South Africa. Their antipathy towards Afrikaner domination of the Union did not necessarily mean that connections with South Africa as a concept were severed or strained, just that they identified with only one part of the white South African population. Virtually all the prominent white liberals in our period had been to university abroad, mostly in South Africa, but also quite often in Britain and to Oxford as Rhodes scholars. Many had been to boarding school in South Africa, such as Robert Tredgold who went to the Boys High School at Rondebosch. In addition, since so many settlers had come up through South Africa, they had family connections there. That meeting-place of the elite, the Salisbury Club, had reciprocal arrangements with over a dozen clubs in South Africa. What South Africa represented to the white elite was two things. On the one hand, it educated them, was their nearest large-scale English-speaking community and provided their access to the outside world. Even though Rhodesians were British settlers by identity, and keen to stress their differences with South Africa, Rhodesia also competed in cricket and rugby as a South African provincial side. On the other hand, South Africa was now dominated by Afrikaner nationalists who were hostile to the Empire. It was a very complicated relationship.

Official links between the two countries went deeper as well. They shared a Roman-Dutch legal system, inherited from the Cape, and the appeal court in Bloemfontein heard cases passed on to it by judges in Salisbury and Bulawayo. The Rhodesian judiciary and legal profession had all been trained, at least in part, in South Africa, and there was a certain amount of movement and overlap between the two. One of the biggest companies in the Federation, Anglo American, was South African. But the political developments during Federation meant that for the first time the Rhodesians were looking beyond South Africa, and making a

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concerted effort to draw away from association with an Afrikaner nationalist government. South Africa itself was distancing itself from Rhodesia’s own emotional base, the British Empire, and Afrikaner politicians ‘moved away from the accommodation with English ideas made by Botha and Smuts’, which was absolutely contrary to what Rhodesia, with partnership, was attempting. Emphasising the connection with Britain, when the Rhodesians came to reforming their franchises in the 1950s, they looked to Britain, not South Africa, for inspiration, and did not engage with liberal South Africans, who by then in any case were in no position to put any of their ideas into practice. As a result, the two countries were diverging in how their political establishments viewed race relations.

The central imperial factor in the development of the Rhodesian identity was the British monarchy, which bound the disparate imperial possessions and Dominions into one common loyalty. James Loughlin encapsulated the meaning of the monarchy thus:

The context of the royal ritual could be described as a ‘purified’ one for the demonstration of national identity: uncomplicated by party political issues, identity could be communicated with a clarity and immediacy not possible otherwise; an identity moreover, that could register simultaneously at the level of everyday experience and at the national level. It was a context defined, less by action, than by perception and by highly regulated contact between monarch and subjects.

Within Britain itself, British nationality was defined by the crown. All legislative and executive power was (and still is) exercised in the crown’s name, even if the monarch had little real


26 Liberal South Africans in turn did not seem to engage with the Federation. There were few connections between the Rhodesian United Party and Federal Party, and the liberal South African parties. In 1955 Helen Suzman made a 3-week tour of the Federation, but her observations were tempered by her scepticism that partnership would work without genuine application. Janet Robertson, Liberalism in South Africa 1948-63 (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1971), p. 103.

power. The fact that British nationality was based on allegiance to the crown meant that British and imperial identities could be elastic and allow for the incorporation of various nationalities both within and outside the British Isles. Loyalty was not horizontal between citizens and institutions, but a vertical, personal bond between individuals and the monarch. The British and the peoples of the Empire were subjects, not citizens. As such, the very existence of the monarchy meant that differentiated citizenship was not only understandable, but ingrained within the system itself. Within Africa, the British, and the Rhodesians, did not wish to rule through force of arms, and sought African collaborators. Terence Ranger encapsulates how the British visualised this:

The collaboration was in essence a very practical affair of exchanged benefits. But the colonial rulers felt the need for a shared ideology of Empire which could embrace whites and blacks alike, dignify the practicalities of collaboration and justify white rule. The British ... found this in the concept of the Imperial Monarchy.

The Rhodesian writer Philippa Berlyn wrote in 1967, a time when Rhodesian loyalty to Britain was in question, that:

Loyalty to the Queen of England - and Rhodesia? - is as natural to the people of this country as it is natural to breathe ... This feeling of loyalty is probably an outmoded emotion in the eyes of the English. My husband, who spent six weeks in London during December and January of this year [1965-6] was surprised to discover that no one plays the National Anthem in English theatres - here in Rhodesia, it is always played; has been ever since I can remember.


Berlyn’s polemic gave credence to Rhodesians’ status as subjects, and happy ones at that, even if at the time when she was writing she believed that Britain was abandoning Rhodesia. Nonetheless, given that Rhodesians themselves based their identity on subjection to a distant monarch, it was not unreasonable that they could advocate a differentiated citizenship. It was not absurd that Rhodesians could call on Africans to show loyalty to the British monarchy and encourage them to be subjects of the Empire while at the same time denying them basic rights.

However much Rhodesians emphasised their loyalty to the crown, the British monarch was physically a distant figurehead. In many ways, the monarchical assumptions in Rhodesian identity were represented by the person of Cecil Rhodes himself, for the man himself aroused the kind of intense loyalty a monarch would through his personal dealings with both the settlers and the Ndebele. The statue on Jameson Avenue in central Salisbury was not of Queen Victoria or some other British grandee, but of a rather rumpled Rhodes looking as though he had slept in his clothes. He was given to grand schemes which were good at broad sweeps and somewhat lacking in detail. Since he could not be pinned down, he could be easily mythologised, a process doubtless helped by his early death. The Rhodesian poet Kingsley Fairbridge accurately observed ‘To Rhodesians Cecil Rhodes was something more than human ... He was Rhodes, the Colossus’. John Gunther described how Rhodes was considered the uncrowned king of Rhodesia, even in attitude:

Rhodes took several of Lobengula’s sons as his servants. He made it quite clear that the duty of these young princes would be to shine his boots and the like. There is no need to sentimentalize about the fate of these boys, who were savages and who were probably delighted to be introduced to the wonders and virtues of western civilization. The episode is worth mention only because it

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shows how the Rhodes magnificence had become almost casual - lighthearted. It seemed to him perfectly natural that the King’s sons should be his servants. Alexander the Great might have had much the same attitude.33

The Federal authorities were happy to continue in the vein of pinning themselves to Rhodes’ name, using a poem by the Rhodesian poet John Spicer to grace the front cover of one of their publications after Federation had been agreed but before it was fully functional:

And now - what of the Queen’s young pioneers?  
How do they stand in Rhodes’ mighty shade?  
Will they shrink back and mutter craven fears?  
Or measure to the greatness he has made.34

Until 1923 Rhodesia was governed by Rhodes’ company, the BSAC, and was ‘almost a monarchy, with Cecil Rhodes its uncrowned king’.35 So the person of Cecil Rhodes, and the myth which followed his early death, served as an extension of monarchical ties into Southern Rhodesia.36 As late as 1953 the BSAC advertised its ideals as a continuation of Rhodes’ own.37 Both whites and blacks frequently made a point of venerating his memory in public, the latter using his aphorism ‘equal rights for all civilised men’ as a retort to Rhodesian attempts to remove Africans from the common roll.38 For some whites, his gung-ho attitude to what he considered stifling domestic opposition in Britain was an emotional safeguard against

33 Gunther, Inside Africa, p. 598.
34 WP 103/7 f. 29. Poem by John Spicer on the cover of Federation, n.d. (probably 1952).
35 Schutz, ‘The development of fragment and the political development of white settler society in Rhodesia’, p. 52.
36 Gann, A History of Southern Rhodesia, p. 208.
38 Ironically, Rhodes had not meant his adage to extend to Africans. When he first coined the phrase, he was referring to South African whites and was trying to soothe Afrikaner suspicion of British ambitions. Robert Rotberg, The Founder. Cecil Rhodes and the Pursuit of Power (Oxford, OUP, 1988), p. 610.
interference by the imperial government in Rhodesian affairs. But Rhodes, by his vagueness, could be all things to all men. To whites he could symbolise imperial ambition and white supremacy; to blacks he could represent trusteeship and a certain protection through the imperial government against South African-style discrimination.

The building blocks of white Rhodesian national identity were quite pronounced and blatant. They were also more overtly and deliberately introduced in order to inculcate a national identity because of the Rhodesians’ isolation from the Empire, the metropole and the African population. An excellent example of this is the reasoning behind the education system which was introduced for whites, discussed below. In addition, the conspicuous trappings of statehood such as the naming of public holidays and the British flag were greatly in evidence, as if Rhodesia needed to trumpet its own identity. Another example of statehood, the National Archives, was developed in the 1950s. A repository for government papers was created in the 1920s, and in 1935 was named the ‘National Archives of Rhodesia’. When the archives outgrew their original site in the middle of Salisbury, they moved to their present site in the suburb of Gun Hill in the 1950s. This move which was bankrolled by the large industrial concerns in the Federation, demonstrating once again the close relationship between the companies and the political elite. From the 1950s, and especially the 1960s onwards, the National Archives engaged in the proactive collection of Rhodesiana, personal papers, photographs, and so forth. The most telling example of the Archives’ role in supporting Rhodesian identity is the Oral

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39 In 1960, as a move towards greater ‘partnership’, Occupation Day (12 September, the anniversary of the hoisting of the Union Flag over Fort Salisbury) was renamed Pioneer Day, which was supposed to sound somewhat gentler.

40 After 1969 when the republic was declared, the Rhodesian green-and-white flag replaced the Southern Rhodesian light blue ensign and the Union Flag, although the new flag retained the original Rhodesian coat of arms. See www.rhodesia.com for links to the historical flags of Rhodesia.

41 Federal Debates, 10 July 1958, col 452. The BSAC loaned £250,000 to build a new Archives building and the copper companies Anglo-American and RST donated enough money to cover the interest on the loan until June 1961. The Beit Trust donated £10,000 to equip the Archives.
History Project which began collecting interviews from settlers in the 1960s. It continued after independence by adding Africans to the list of people interviewed.\textsuperscript{42}

\textbf{Interest groups and structure of the Rhodesian elite}

As with power structures elsewhere, the Rhodesian elite relied on the constituency which legitimised its power: the white electorate, and white society in general. What makes the Rhodesian elite all the more useful to research is the way in which it was the elite of an elite. After all, even the lowliest white worker was, by virtue of his colour, automatically a member of the colony’s social, economic and political aristocracy. As a result, this thesis will question not only the Rhodesian political elite’s rhetoric and the way it reflected its own legitimising constituency, but also the way in which in the late 1950s and early 1960s it diverged from its constitutency and was replaced by the Rhodesian Front.

It is often tempting to imagine Rhodesian society as a monolithic bloc of privilege living off the labour of Africans. While it is much truth in this supposition, especially after 1945 when Rhodesians enjoyed a standard of living comparable and even superior to that of white South Africa and middle-class America, this picture is problematic in several respects. To begin with, although the dominant culture was British and English-speaking South African, and the only official language was English, there were significant Afrikaner, Portuguese, Italian, Greek and Jewish minorities.\textsuperscript{43} There were also definite class differences within the white population itself, which changed as the colony developed economically. For much of our period, Rhodesia had not one but two Labour Parties. The Rhodesia Labour Party was based around the railway industry, and was strong in Bulawayo. It was the party of the white artisan and working class. Its stalwart was Jack Keller, who represented the Raylton constituency in Bulawayo from 1934 to

\textsuperscript{42} As a result, the National Archives contains a surprisingly good cross-section of papers and deposits from both Europeans and Africans. The Archives also acted as a small museum, starting with pre-colonial days and ending in the 1980s. The original white displays about the occupation of Rhodesia have remained, and the post-independence government has added exhibits of its own.

\textsuperscript{43} See chapter on immigration.
1958. The RLP was never powerful in parliament, except when it supported the ruling United Party in the finely-balanced 1946-48 legislature, and was eclipsed by the Dominion Party in the 1958 election. The Southern Rhodesia Labour Party was rather different. It had developed out of the heightened political consciousness of the war and it was a more middle-class, intellectual movement. Its leading figures included the old Etonian Edward Harben and the writer Doris Lessing, and it stood for universal socialist brotherhood rather than for the blatant protection of the white working class.

From 1945 onwards the economy diversified in ways unimaginable a few years previously. Farmers who had struggled before World War II soon reaped the benefits of the tobacco boom, while small miners fell by the wayside, victims of rising costs and taxation, and the encroachment of conglomerates.\(^4^4\) Manufacturing in Southern Rhodesia doubled in size between 1945 and 1952, and gross output more than quadrupled.\(^4^5\) The professional and service sectors increased rapidly after the war, the cities expanded and white society acquired more white collar workers. What partnership promised, and in the eyes of many people threatened, was that the threshold of privilege would become more porous by allowing more Africans to cross that threshold and threaten the advantages which whites increasingly took for granted and were reluctant to share or give up.

After 1945, and especially after 1958, Rhodesian politics represented more clearly the division between big international and rather smaller domestic capital, and between urban and rural white elites. The driving forces behind lowering the colour bar and opening the political process to Africans were often people who represented business and industry, such as Ronald Prain, chairman of the mining giant Rhodesian Selection Trust (RST), and Thomas Chegwidden, the chairman of the Association of Rhodesia and Nyasaland Industries (ARNI). In addition, the expansion of the economy and the urban areas encouraged the growth of an urban-


based white political class, rather than one based in the rural areas. Key local players in the debate on partnership were often not farmers. For instance, people such as Hardwicke Holderness, Robert Tredgold, L.M.N. Hodson, Julian Greenfield and Charles Cumings were urban, erudite lawyers whose connection with Rhodesia predated World War II. Abe Abrahamson and Cyril Hatty, both ministers in Todd’s administration, served as President and Secretary of the Bulawayo Chamber of Industries. Abrahamson went on to steer the Federation of Rhodesian Industries, and was the first President of ARNI in 1957. He was also a close associate of Welensky’s. Importantly, the debate on partnership was driven largely through the efforts of the white urban upper-middle class, on which more throughout the thesis.

Local capital - small companies, small mining concerns, and farms - also expanded, especially as the economy became increasingly connected to international trade. The pastoral base of the Rhodesian identity was acquiring economic teeth. The climax was the fact that the RF was initially bankrolled by ‘Boss’ Lilford, a successful farmer. Indeed, the many political figures of the right wing of Rhodesian politics tended not to be urban-based. Farming was the main occupation of Ian Smith, Clifford Dupont, Angus Graham, and Lilford, among others.

The economic boom which followed World War II also saw a re-ordering of the size and influence of the various interest groups. Agriculture had traditionally been the most important, and therefore most influential, business. Farming was a prestige occupation in that whites who succeeded in other spheres often bought a farm. Huggins himself did, although he never spent much time there, it did not provide him with a sizeable income, and was frequently in a state of disrepair. However, by the 1950s, even with the tobacco boom, farming’s relative economic importance was declining. The Rhodesian National Farmers’ Union (RNFU) had had easy access to political power and influence. However, after 1931 mining experienced a boom,

46 See WP file 584/3 for extensive personal correspondence between Abrahamson and Welensky.

47 Not all prominent RF members had originally started as farmers. For example, Dupont had emigrated as a lawyer but taken up tobacco farming when it became clear he could make more money that way, and it became his primary source of income.
and coupled with the Depression which shrank the markets for Rhodesian produce, farming declined in importance.\(^{48}\) As if to illustrate the fact, the Rhodesian cabinet in 1935 was the first not to include a farmer.\(^{49}\) Now farming discovered that it was competing much more with industry and commerce. The balance of power was shifting to other organisations which did not exist when the RNFU had acquired its original position of strength.\(^{50}\) The RNFU remained a wealthy organisation, however. Every farm had to pay £5 per year for a licence, all of which the government allowed the RNFU to keep, and so on the figure of some 5000 farms, the RNFU had an assured annual income of £25,000.

Commerce and industry were growing at an exponential rate. Chambers of commerce in Rhodesia since World War II had actively lobbied for higher wages and better working conditions for Africans which would in turn transform them into consumers.\(^{51}\) The rather feeble Federation of Rhodesian Industries was supplanted by the Association of Rhodesia and Nyasaland Industries (ARNI), which absorbed the FRI by 1957. ARNI became something of a parent organisation of the individual Southern Rhodesian chambers of industry, and represented them effectively in its dealings with the Federal government. Along with the mining companies, ARNI pressed for greater liberalisation and increased opportunities for Africans. Its ‘Industrial Charter’ circulated in November 1957 stated that current discrimination and the disparity in living standards between white and black were ‘a fertile breeding ground for domestic and racial disturbances’ and that steps to alleviate the situation should be taken ‘on social, political and humanitarian grounds’.\(^{52}\) Both its presidents during our period, Abe Abrahamson and Sir Thomas Chegwidden, were regularly involved in debates and schemes at the top level of


\(^{49}\) Edwards, ‘Response to adversity’, p. 35.

\(^{50}\) Leys, *European Politics*, p. 103.


government concerning the implementation of partnership, and Chegwidden in particular was something of a confidant to Welensky.

Welensky’s most important confidant, however, was Ellis Robins, Resident Director in Salisbury and later President of the BSAC in London. The Welensky Papers contain extensive correspondence between the two. Clearly, Welensky relied on Robins for advice, but also as a sounding board for his own frustrations. Some of the correspondence involved political machinations, but Welensky never hesitated to give his personal opinion on matters which concerned him. He thought, for instance, that Edgar Whitehead had a ‘poor ministry’ with no strong men to disagree with him. He also wrote that he had ‘a job persuading Edgar not to take a more serious line’ on rioters in 1960, and that Tredgold had ‘made an ass of himself’ by resigning as Federal Chief Justice. Concerning the Central African Examiner’s choice of Jack Halpern as editor, he said ‘I can tell you between ourselves that we seriously considered refusing him a permit into the country ... but I decided it was better to take the chance’. In the tone of a weary uncle, Welensky concluded his letter: ‘I don’t know what’s coming over us as a people, Ellis. Are we determined to destroy the way of life we have built by playing into the hands of these Leftist elements all the way?’

The composition of the white elite was certainly varied, as were the interest groups its members represented. There is one detail, however, which is almost universal among them. They were almost all members of the Salisbury Club, which was situated in the heart of Salisbury off Cecil Square and adjoining the Chamber of Commerce. There is no satisfactory history of the club, although Colin Black’s memoir comes closest. Certainly, the club is not

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55 ibid f. 43, Welensky to Robins, 10 November 1960.
56 WP 662/5 f. 43, Welensky to Robins, 6 July 1960.
57 Black, Sable.
analysed in any academic monograph. 58 Senior civil servants, politicians, MPs, leaders of industry and commerce, and individuals who through class, wealth or connections would be considered members of the elite are all represented in its membership. The existence of the club as a meeting point would be difficult to exaggerate, and it was said that in the 1920s and 30s Rhodesia was run from the Salisbury Club. 59 The omission of its inner workings in this thesis is mostly because ‘the Club agreed that nothing said within its precincts would be reported to the Press’, 60 thus limiting the number of sources directly related to the club and making any kind of investigation of its tangible influence and inner workings considerably more difficult. As a result, the power it manifested is inferred rather than explicit. The Salisbury Club had members from across the political spectrum, from William Harper on the far right to the socialist (but also old Etonian) Edward Harben and (white) workers’ champion Jack Keller. It would be as well to treat the club as an assimilatory structure for elite whites, many of whom, in our period, were post-1945 migrants. The Salisbury Club fulfilled the role of a meeting place for the white elite that organisations such as the Caledonian Society, 1820 Settlers Association or the Freemasons might have undertaken for other classes in the white population. 61

The mining companies

The most prominent interest group in the Federation - as opposed to Southern Rhodesia - was big business as typified by the big three mining companies, RST, Anglo American, and the BSAC. The importance attached to them here is because while the system of government

58 It is mentioned only once in D.J. Murray’s examination of the political dynamics of Southern Rhodesia, referring to the Solicitor General in 1926, Robert McIlwaine, who was ‘a stalwart of the Salisbury Club’. Murray, The Governmental System in Southern Rhodesia, p. 47.

59 Black, Sable, p. ix.

60 ibid., p. 181.

61 Freemasonry was a lower-class pursuit in Rhodesia, in stark contrast to Britain. Masons were especially well-represented on the railways, partly as an assimilatory club for new arrivals, but also as a sign that what would be lowly workers in Britain could aspire to be aristocrats in the colonies. Lunn, Capital and Labour, p. 87.
and interest groups in Southern Rhodesia has been examined, notably by Leys and Murray.\textsuperscript{62} Similar influences on the Federal plane have attracted less attention, and the mining industry was of key importance to the financial wellbeing of the Federation. In addition, the mining companies were large-scale employers of skilled labour, the kind of companies which would be at the forefront of not only employing more skilled African workers, but also in engaging with the concerns of an increasingly insecure white workforce. In one sense, the mining companies can be considered a microcosm of Rhodesian racial politics, with competing black and white workers. The way in which RST and Anglo American diverged in the 1950s invites direct comparison with the way in which Rhodesia moved away from South Africa in dealing with African advancement.

The mining companies were by far the wealthiest organisations in the Federation and often appeared to act in concert in funding projects in the Federation. Their taxes effectively bankrolled the Federal government, providing its chief revenue,\textsuperscript{63} and they contributed over half the Federation’s total export earnings.\textsuperscript{64} They paid for infrastructural development, such as when Anglo American bought £7.5 million of rolling stock which it then leased to Rhodesian Railways, as well as lending Rhodesian Railways a separate sum of £1 million. In addition, Anglo American held large parts of the Federal cement industry, while RST had substantial holdings in Risco, the iron and steel company.\textsuperscript{65} In the biggest single investment of all, RST and Anglo American lent the Federal government £20 million for the building of the Kariba dam, while the BSAC lent a further £4.5 million.\textsuperscript{66} Their financing of Kariba was surpassed only by

\textsuperscript{62} The politics of the mining giants is entirely absent from Murray’s \textit{The Governmental System of Southern Rhodesia}, presumably because he treated them as a Northern Rhodesian phenomenon, but this omission leaves a big gap in his analysis.

\textsuperscript{63} In 1957 copper revenue contributed over £30 million, or 37 per cent, of tax revenue in the Federation. Leys, \textit{European Politics}, p. 112.

\textsuperscript{64} ibid. In 1956, copper exports came to 60 per cent of total exports from the Federation, some £114 million.

\textsuperscript{65} ibid.

\textsuperscript{66} ibid.
the World Bank which lent £28.6 million.\textsuperscript{67} Because of the scale of their operations, their contributions to the Federal exchequer, and their resultant exercise of and influence on power on a Federal level - the only level of government clearly established under the promise of partnership - the mining concerns should be considered separate from, for example, the smaller and more localised Chambers of Commerce or Industry.

As well as supporting the industrial development of the Federation, the mining companies lent money for a wide variety of social projects, and generally had a high philanthropic, nation-building profile, for example, they provided low-interest loans and grants for public projects, such as African housing and funded scholarships.\textsuperscript{68} Such activities were driven as much by a desire to be as close as possible to political power as by a corporate culture which stressed local roots and industrial philanthropy. Historically, they represented the very reason for Rhodesia’s existence, since Rhodesia had initially been considered a second Rand and many whites who migrated there did so to prospect for minerals, not farm. As already noted, the National Archives’ relocation in Salisbury was made possible by such largesse, and the companies provided funds for historical research.\textsuperscript{69} However, the threesome fell apart in the Federal period, a development which is important in charting the course of partnership. Because of the crucial role RST played in the debate on partnership in actively pushing for reform rather than simply reacting to events, and the way in which it distanced itself from Anglo American and the BSAC in the 1950s, it merits a section to explain its actions and its chairman, Ronald Prain.

\textbf{Ronald Prain and the Rhodesian Selection Trust}


\textsuperscript{68} Leys, \textit{European Politics}, p. 112. In 1956 RST lent the Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland governments £2 million and £1 million respectively for African advancement.

\textsuperscript{69} Gann, \textit{A History of Southern Rhodesia}, p. vi. Gann’s series of books on the Rhodesias was made possible by financial support from RST, Anglo and the BSAC.
Prain justified RST’s interest in the wider implications of the political developments taking place in the Federation. In the atmosphere of co-operation, and the attempts to extend citizenship in all its forms to the African majority, RST believed it could play a leading role. Significantly, it was not owned by any local interests, which made its greater independence from the Rhodesian political culture both easier and more comprehensible. While RST’s own head office was in Salisbury, the company was owned by American Metal Climax, based in the US and therefore not an organisation which had developed in a southern African context, with all the racial and social assumptions which went with it. Prain himself, who was British, was an ‘establishment liberal’, and ‘fused an element of romanticism into his acute business mind’, liking the ideal of inter-racial harmony. He was a supporter of Federation, as indicated by his donation on behalf of RST to the Capricorn Africa Society’s pro-Federation campaign in the early 1950s.

Support for Federation in itself was not unusual. A majority of businessmen and industrialists supported the Federation’s promise of a larger market, and stable and equitable political progress, so they financially supported the ruling United Party’s campaign accordingly. But Prain chose to give money to Capricorn, which was more concerned with ideas and ideals of multi-racial citizenship, and which did not have the ear of the government to the extent it would have liked. He wrote in *Horizon*, the RST magazine, that ‘RST’s stake in the mining interests of Central Africa is not exclusively a financial one. It has a political and social

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70 See, for example, Mason, *Year of Decision*, p. 103.

71 Conversation with Theo Bull, 19 January 1996. This term was used by Bull to describe the kind of people who epitomised the *Examiner*’s ‘mood’.

72 Hancock, *White Liberals, Moderates and Radicals*, p. 44.


74 ibid, p. 52. Hancock writes that in the early days of Federation, Capricorn’s founder Colonel David Stirling often met with Huggins and Sir Roy Welensky, ‘sustaining an illusion of political significance’.
responsibility towards the territories in which it operates’, mentioning the ‘social imbalance’ caused by the movement of people from the rural to the urban areas and the decline in food production. He continued:

RST is acutely aware of this, and it is a measure of its acceptance of a share of the responsibility that, in 1956, it made loans, interest free until 1960, totalling £2,000,000 to the Northern Rhodesia Government, to be devoted to the capital cost of African development. Because the copper mines of Northern Rhodesia, by attracting Africans away, have created similar problems in its territory, loans totalling £1,000,000 were made at the same time to the Nyasaland Government.75

Prain explained the rationale in a speech at the University College of Rhodesia and Nyasaland:

the more responsible manager … goes on to accept still further responsibilities with respect to the goals and methods of our society as a whole. Here, of course, the businessman blends with the citizen. But, since business is central in our society, it seems to me that the businessman has a special and central responsibility as a citizen … The plain and simple fact is the truly effective business manager in our society makes a major contribution to the welfare of both individuals and of society as a whole.76

Quoting Sir Alexander Fleck, chairman of ICI, Prain said:

Three characteristics are necessary if a business is to survive … First, it must contribute to the well-being of the community and its social evolution. Secondly, it must have the capacity to change its methods and, if necessary, its objectives. Finally, if it is to be self-perpetuating through growth or modernisation it must dispose of its services at a profit.77

75 Sir Ronald Prain, ‘RST’s Stake in Central Africa’, Horizon, 1, 1, 1 January 1959, pp. 5-14.


77 ibid.
RST thus believed it could marry a social conscience with the pursuit of profit. Prain was able to put this into practice in 1953 when the white Northern Rhodesia Mine Workers’ Union threatened to strike at the prospect of the lowering of the industrial colour bar and the advancement of Africans in the mining industry.\(^78\) This episode is interesting because it illustrates the difference in approach between British/American-owned RST and South African-owned Anglo American, both of whom had the same vested interests.\(^79\) The threat affected both RST and Anglo American, and the two companies’ different styles and aims are made apparent by Anglo American’s chairman, Harry Oppenheimer, writing to Sir Roy Welensky, the Federal Transport Minister, and future Prime Minister, about the possible trouble:

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\text{As you know, Selection Trust have been very anxious for some time to bring this matter to the fore, and only held their hand in order to not prejudice the Southern Rhodesia Referendum [on Federation]... [but] they have returned to the charge ... They [Prain and other RST directors] said they were determined to approach the Union at once and to give the matter the greatest publicity. They said quite clearly that their object was to do away with the Colour Bar in principle.}^{80}\]

RST was proposing to eliminate Clause 42 of the companies’ agreement with the union, the clause governing the ‘rate for the job’ which guaranteed that cheaper African labour could not be substituted for European labour without prior agreement. Prain was prepared to ‘terminate the agreement and face up to whatever action the Union might take’ if the union refused to co-


\(^79\) Prain himself was also aware of this. See Sir Ronald Prain, *Reflections on an Era. Fifty years of mining in changing Africa* (Letchworth, Metal Bulletin Books, 1981), p. 86. See also Verrier, *The Road to Zimbabwe*, p. 38.

\(^80\) WP 251/5, ff. 1-4 Harry Oppenheimer to Welensky, 28 April 1953. Oppenheimer later joined RST in pressing the government to open up more opportunities for Africans, and in 1959 withdrew Anglo American funding for the UFP. See Hancock, *White Liberals, Moderates and Radicals*, p. 87.
operate. Oppenheimer continued:

We find ourselves quite unable to agree to this procedure. In our opinion an attempt to coerce the Union into abolishing the Colour Bar would offend the deepest convictions and sentiments of Europeans throughout Southern Africa ... We shall inform them [RST] that while we think it may be desirable that Africans should be allowed to do certain jobs not now done by them, we have no intention whatsoever of attacking the industrial colour bar in principle.  

The wrangle with the Mine Workers’ Union continued until July 1955 with Anglo American, and October with RST. Giving lip-service to the supposed spirit of the day when Anglo settled its dispute with the MWU, Sir Ernest Oppenheimer said:

To appreciate the full significance of this event it is necessary to view it in the light of prevailing opinion and custom in Southern Africa. Here is a case of the European workers in a large and important industry voluntarily and formally handing over certain of the jobs they have been doing to African workers in order that the latter can progress within the industry. It is difficult to think of a precedent for an action as generous and enlightened as this. In effect, it is a practical example of the spirit on which the new Central African Federation has been founded - the spirit of partnership.

Whether Anglo American gave much thought to what partnership really meant is open to debate. The important matter in this dispute is that RST seemed to take the wider view that

81 ibid


the colour bar in its present form was unsustainable, and this tallied well with the new spirit of partnership. Out of the two mining giants, it appeared that if anyone took the notion of partnership seriously, it was RST, who thought it worthwhile to promote the welfare of its African employees in those sort of terms. It is easy to be cynical about RST’s motives behind supporting the liberalisation of the political and economic scenes - the bottom line for any company is profit - but there is much evidence that RST took its philanthropic and liberal bent seriously, especially since Prain believed RST should contribute heavily to helping the people whose labour it employed. Therefore, RST funded scholarships, and Garfield Todd considered an approach to RST worthwhile when he needed to raise money for his ‘ultra-liberal’ Central Africa Party.

Rhodesians in their world

To be a white Rhodesian meant that one was automatically a member of the small economic, social and political elite. Privilege was synonymous with race, and so it is unsurprising that Africans could not win: if they did not satisfy European standards, they were ‘uncivilised’; if they did, they were ‘too big for their boots’. Whites were generally suspicious of African encroachment on their domain of privilege. Westernised Africans were accused of having but a ‘veneer’ of civilisation which could easily fall away to reveal their true atavistic nature, or they were ‘spoiled’ as though their real place was as the noble savage. Ian Smith

84 It should be noted the the 1950s were extremely profitable for RST, since the Korean War and Cold War both boosted the demand for copper.

85 Daily News, 6 September 1961. RST was offering scholarships for people who wished to study mining-related disciplines, although there was no obligation to work for RST, and no guarantee of a job with RST at the end. There were also scholarships for arts subjects.

86 MS 390/2/1 [Todd Papers] Telegram, Todd to Prain, April 1958. Susan Paul, who is currently writing a biography of Garfield Todd, does not believe that Prain gave Todd’s CAP any financial assistance. In any case, Todd’s request was badly timed. Both RST and Anglo American stopped contributing to political parties in 1959. Examiner, 15 August 1959.

87 Kennedy, Islands of White, pp. 162-3.
himself preferred the ‘traditional’ Africans who did not have ideas above their station. In the early days of the colony there were those who blamed missionaries for laying ‘too much emphasis on the “man and brother” theory with the result that the black man was led to regard himself as the equal of the white and became troublesome and uppish,’ and educated Africans were known as ‘trouser niggers,’ attitudes which persisted among many whites in the 1950s. Given such attitudes, greater African inclusion in the mainstream of Rhodesian political life through the policy of partnership was a tremendous threat.

White Rhodesia had, to some extent, conquered the class divisions which were still prevalent in Britain. This is not to say that white society was classless, but many of the class differences which would have been striking in Europe were subsumed in Rhodesia in an effort to maintain ‘standards’ and an emphasis on shared values which would protect it against encroachment from outsiders. So the belief that a person in white Rhodesia was judged by his achievements, not his birth, was widely held, a harking back to the pioneer era of ‘all in one boat’. This was bogus, since the employment market was so heavily loaded in favour of the

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88 Eugene Wason, *Banned. The Story of the African Daily News, Southern Rhodesia, 1964* (London, Hamish Hamilton, 1976), p. 7: ‘Perhaps Ian Smith summed up best the average European’s attitude to Africans. He was asked whether he liked them. He replied that he liked the respectful, rural Africans, but he couldn’t stand the city slickers. He was referring to those Africans who had been educated rather beyond head-waiter standard; who were beginning to think for themselves; who were wondering how much longer they would have to be second-class citizens in the in the land of their birth; who formed political parties and made threatening noises: the Africans of the townships, not the Africans of the Chiefs’.


92 Clear class differences did exist among the whites in Rhodesia. See Kennedy, *Islands of White: Lunn, Capital and Labour*, especially chapter 3.


whites, and a low-level glass ceiling operated against Africans. There were moves to raise the ceiling in the 1950s, but they were too limited to make a real difference to the rise of nationalist organisations. Consequently, the Rhodesian system could not in reality accommodate Africans, despite the rhetoric to the contrary. Seen in this light, the assumption that the political elite and the white population in general were keen to ‘educate’ Africans, and thus allow them to access the Rhodesian system, falls down.

An important aspect of this system was the welfare state of sorts which had been built up by successive Rhodesian governments to support the white population, what Jeffrey Herbst has called ‘Socialism-for-the-Whites’.95 There was no health service comparable to the National Health Service in Britain, but medical care for white Rhodesians was paid for out of a combination of government subsidies and private medical insurance, and was mostly undertaken in well-equipped private clinics.96 There was also help for white immigrants in finding housing and employment,97 a protected agricultural market which discriminated against African farmers,98 and an extensive free education system.99

95 Jeffrey Herbst, State Politics in Zimbabwe (Harare, University of Zimbabwe Press, 1990), p. 22.
96 ibid, pp. 166-167; also Godwin and Hancock, ‘Rhodesians Never Die’ (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1993), pp. 32-33.
The Rhodesian education system is perhaps the best example of how an exclusive framework was built to support white society, and also in creating and perpetuating a Rhodesian identity. Education was a particularly pertinent issue since a certain level of education was a franchise qualification. Also, the very real lack of resources for African education made the European system especially attractive to those who were outside it, and as a result much goodwill from the African middle class was conditional on the expansion of opportunities for Africans after Federation.

The Rhodesian education system’s very foundations lay in its need to ensure that the colony remain loyally British, and that the people it educated were aware of their position at the top of the heap. It was purposely restricted, demarcating the division between the whites and the blacks. Within European education, there was virtually no provision for the study of African society, which might in time have softened the sharp divisions in the country. Education for whites was compulsory until the age of fifteen, and it was free. No such provision existed for Africans, whose education was voluntary and largely reliant on the ability of parents to pay for it. In addition, there was relatively little government involvement in African education for the first fifty years of the colony’s existence, so the first government secondary school for Africans,

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100 In 1956, after three years of partnership, expenditure throughout the Federation on African education was £3.5 million. This compares with expenditure of £5.2 million for European education (in which is included Asian and Coloured education). Pupil numbers were 800,000 Africans, and 56,000 non-Africans, so African education was costing about £6 per head per annum, and non-African education about £100. Figures from Rungano J. Zvobgo, Colonialism and Education in Zimbabwe, p. 43.

101 ORAL/233 Lawrence Vambe interview.

102 Challiss, The European Educational System in Southern Rhodesia, 1890-1930, pp. 47-56. Also Lowry, “South Africa without the Afrikaners”: The creation of a settler identity in Southern Rhodesia”.

Goromonzi, was not established until 1946. Apart from the practical difficulties of providing a free education for so many children, the existence of large numbers of educated Africans would not serve the practice of Rhodesian democracy well, since an increase in the provision of education for Africans would result in a corresponding increase in the number of African voters. So Godlonton’s idea that education held the key to an enlightened electorate, while good on paper, attracted little support in practice.

Nonetheless, educational opportunities for Africans did increase after Federation.104 The university college, which opened in 1956, was completely multiracial, although certain accommodation blocks were segregated. Its foundation stone was laid on Rhodes Day, 14 July, in 1953,105 one of the first acts of the Federal government, making the connection between Rhodes’ aphorism and this tangible step in the direction of partnership. The debate about how to define the limits of the university’s multiracialism was interesting, however. The Central Council of the Rhodesia University Association, the body which organised the foundation of the university itself, was concerned about the reaction of white students if too many Africans enrolled. In addition, L.M.N. Hodson, chairman of the council, thought in 1949 that ‘the African population was in a backward state and had no tradition of civilisation enabling it to support high standards of culture in a university’,106 and so the university would have to be multiracial so that the Europeans could give the lead relating to matters of university life. There is no doubt that the new rhetoric of partnership made a multiracial university more palatable to the white population in general, but it was also a financial decision to mix the races - the Carnegie and Ford Foundations in the US would be more willing to make grants if there was no colour bar.107

It was also desirable for the new university to accept African students because the expansion of education remained a territorial responsibility, whereas European education was Federal. Todd thought that his administration’s greatest advance, along with the franchise, was the expansion of African education. Interview, Garfield Todd.

104 African education remained a territorial responsibility, whereas European education was Federal. Todd thought that his administration’s greatest advance, along with the franchise, was the expansion of African education. Interview, Garfield Todd.

105 Mason, Year of Decision, p. 181.

106 Gelfand, A Non-Racial Island of Learning, p. 57.

107 ibid, p. 73.
apartheid in South Africa meant that the latter would not admit more Rhodesian blacks for higher education after 1954. Coupled to such a development, and since partnership was attracting attention from abroad, it would be a good advertisement for the Federation if one of its flagship projects was specifically designed to increase contact between the races.\textsuperscript{108} Still, the attendance of African students was under a certain amount of sufferance. As Huggins wrote to Leo Amery:

\begin{quote}
The Salisbury University Project was sponsored and developed by Europeans for Europeans. It has, however, been generally accepted that Africans would be admitted, but not to the extent of swamping an institution founded on European Christian civilisation.\textsuperscript{109}
\end{quote}

The same fear of ‘swamping’, a word which peppered other of Huggins’ speeches and writings. There were significant practical difficulties encountered by Africans seeking a formal education, which many Rhodesians believed would automatically limit the numbers who could qualify for university education, or for the matter, the vote. But the very Africans whom Huggins and others were afraid of, the ones with the resources to be educated and climb the ‘ladder of civilisation’, were the same ones who would be most anxious to share in the Rhodesian system, rather than overthrow it. Despite the rhetoric about ‘educating’ Africans in politics, the actual prospect of increasing numbers of Africans qualifying for the vote frightened the Rhodesians, and this was one of the biggest contradictions in the policy of partnership. Most significantly, despite UCRN starting life as a mostly white university, it soon acquired greater numbers of black students. The reason for this was that the university operated an admissions procedure based on the British A Level examination. By the early 1960s, the number of black students reaching this level was beginning to outstrip the whites. The result was that black students went to university in Rhodesia, and more whites, who could not achieve the A Level grades, went to

\textsuperscript{108} Muriel Rosin interview, 8 February 1995, Harare.

\textsuperscript{109} MS 281/2/PM 11 Federation, April 1951-April 1953. Huggins to Leo Amery, 17 April 1953.
South Africa, so the only university in Rhodesia soon acquired a distinctly non-white character, educating many future nationalists in their home country, and showing up as an island of black in the otherwise white northern suburbs of Salisbury.\textsuperscript{110}

**Why the Rhodesian system could not cope with a large electorate**

If partnership was an attempt by the ruling white elite to widen the constituency which legitimised its rule, the heart of the problem where the concept of multiracial partnership was concerned was that it was inherently contradictory. It held up Rhodesian values, identity and achievements as the touchstone whereby ‘civilisation’ would be measured, and promised entry to this elite club to those who could fulfil the conditions of ‘civilisation’. The success of the Rhodesian system, as Ian Smith saw it in hindsight, was that ‘Africa to our north was in chaos ... Africa is the continent of coups, assassination of political leaders, governments mesmerised by communist mentors and thus riddled with corruption, incompetence, nepotism and top jobs for comrades irrespective of ability, experience, training or professionalism’.\textsuperscript{111} He contrasted this with his picture of Rhodesia as ‘an oasis of peace and contentment’, and added his own litmus test: ‘there is no doubt that the majority of our black people agreed with us’.\textsuperscript{112} Many Rhodesian politicians believed that, unlike South Africa, Southern Rhodesia was a meritocracy, with a single ‘threshold of civilisation’ which anyone, white or black, could cross and therefore claim full civil and political rights. Although the Rhodesian elite essentially abandoned any pretences to multiracial nationhood in 1962, even Smith, whose government was the most reactionary Rhodesia ever had, maintains that after 1962 there ‘was simply no change in philosophy or policy’,\textsuperscript{113} and that today’s Zimbabweans owe Rhodesia a debt of gratitude for a system of

\textsuperscript{110} This information was provided by Terence Ranger and Ian Phimister.


\textsuperscript{112} ibid, p. 408.

\textsuperscript{113} Interview, Ian Smith, Harare, 24 September 1996.
‘evolution as opposed to revolution’\(^{114}\) and for ‘introducing proper standards of freedom, of justice, and the basics of education, health and hygiene’.\(^{115}\) On the other hand, Sir Robert Tredgold, the Federal Chief Justice until 1961, thought this paternalistic attitude made Southern Rhodesia ‘a museum of archaic political thought’\(^{116}\).

However, the Rhodesian system was built on exclusion, and access to its workings was a privilege, not a right, for the vast majority of the population. It was erected with the express aim of protecting the small white minority in what was often portrayed as a ‘sea’ of Africans, and as such the exclusivity of its institutions was central to the continuation of white hegemony and the white Rhodesian identity. The racial divisions in Rhodesian society were deep, and the Rhodesian system could not reconcile them.\(^{117}\) Indeed, the very reason for the system’s existence was to preserve them, and its survival depended on them. But it was also the system into which inclusion was promised for those Africans who were deemed ‘civilised’, and up until the 1950s, the African elite sought to be included in the system, not to control or overthrow it. In addition, the Rhodesian system’s role in the lives of those for whom it did work is important in showing us why it could never work for those outside it.

Rhodesian politics were extremely accessible for those with a voice in the political process. Constituencies contained about 2,000-2,500 voters, so it was possible for an MP or parliamentary candidate to be personally acquainted with a majority of his (rarely her) voters.\(^{118}\) This meant two things. The first is that the system was seen to be down-to-earth, and that individual electors had a very tangible effect on it through their acquaintance with their MPs. Policy could be discussed at friendly ‘sundowners’ with the local MP. But secondly, it also

\(^{114}\) Smith, *The Great Betrayal*, p. 408.

\(^{115}\) ibid, p. 3.


\(^{117}\) See, for example, Kennedy, *Islands of White*, pp. 148-66.

\(^{118}\) See Holderness, *Lost Chance*, Chapter 10, pp. 122-135 for his account of his own campaign to be elected to the Southern Rhodesia legislature.
meant that it would be difficult to open up this system to serve the majority of people. Personal contact, so important a feature of Rhodesian politics, would inevitably be diluted if an MP had to serve a greatly increased number of voters. So it is very doubtful whether a system such as this would be willing to change to accommodate an increase in voters, and an increase which was mostly unwelcome at that. The first African MPs in the Federal House were elected in 1953. Only in 1962 did African MPs sit in the Southern Rhodesian House for the first time, and their inclusion was the direct result of the new B roll. They were not ‘proper’ MPs in that they had not been elected by the A roll, and they were all in opposition to the ruling Rhodesian Front. Despite the wishes of those who advocated partnership in the 1950s and early 1960s, it is doubtful whether in a society as racially polarised as Rhodesia an elector would consider an MP or candidate of a different race as ‘his’ or ‘her’ MP.

African elites

There is a wealth of literature on African elites in Rhodesia.\textsuperscript{119} Theories of democracy and inclusion in the European political structure were not a potent rallying cry for the masses for


the first half of the twentieth century. The main African organisations up until the 1940s accepted the ideas of the ‘ladder of civilisation’ and that the masses were unfit to vote. Nathan Shamuyarira remembered that ‘for many years I believed in a qualified franchise, because I felt that people in remote villages would not understand parliamentary democracy’. Most often the elite’s complaints were not that Africans in general were ill-treated, or that significantly more should be enfranchised, but that ‘advanced’ Africans were being lumped in with the masses, and that therefore their embracing of Western ‘civilisation’ was not being recognised in the shape of special privileges. For example, while the African Voters League wrote that the advancement of ‘the primitive masses ... must be a joint concern’, and those masses should have a form of representation, it also wrote:

In the unanimous opinion of all African voters, the League humbly requests the Government to extend to all African voters full rights of citizenship, and an exemption that would exempt them and their families from:

1. (a) The operations of Native laws as administered in this Colony.
(b) The restrictions against acquiring land on a freehold basis and any other restrictions appertaining thereto, as far as Africans are concerned.
(c) The restrictions on participating in State Lotteries.
(d) The restrictions on obtaining firearms.
(e) The restrictions on obtaining European liquor.
2. African voters feel that there should be a clear distinction between Africans who have secured registration as voters and those who are not registered.

So, as well as advocating the retention of the common roll, the AVL was also seeking recognition of African voters’ status - in fact, to be granted ‘equal rights’, what Rhodesian

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120 Shamuyarira, *Crisis in Rhodesia*, p. 169.
121 S482/717/39 Native Franchise in Southern Rhodesia. W.D. Ntuli (Secretary of the African Voters League) to E.H. Beck (Secretary for Native Affairs), 2 December 1946.
122 ibid, J.W.G. Sojini to Huggins, 2 December 1946. Interestingly, the first Africans to be enfranchised in Southern Rhodesia were from South Africa. When they asked for special privileges on the grounds that they were more ‘advanced’ than Southern Rhodesian Africans, they were refused them, at least until the Southern Rhodesian Africans had ‘caught up’. See Ranger, *The African Voice*, pp. 45-63.
rhetoric promised would be theirs by right once they had crossed the threshold and proved that they were ‘civilised’ and ‘responsible’. The response to these requests is very telling indeed. Responding to J.W. Sojini, the head of the AVL, Captain Shewell, Staff Officer to the Commissioner of Police, refuted every one of the requests quoted above, ending with ‘the possession of a vote does not make the individual any more responsible. It seems to me quite impossible to differentiate between natives on national questions such as this’,\textsuperscript{123} a clear demonstration of the large gap between rhetoric and reality.

The AVL supported the colonial governmental framework, and its leadership, Sojini and D.B. Ntuli, accepted Cecil Rhodes’ dictum that every civilised man, regardless of his colour, was entitled to vote. Hence, they put forward the argument that the African could achieve his emancipation by constitutional means ... the more black people went on the voters’ roll, they propounded, the greater was our chance to gain power within the existing constitution.\textsuperscript{124}

Speaking for himself, Lawrence Vambe said:

if we played our game according to the rules, by going on the voters’ rolls in large numbers, we would in time gain our political rights by legitimate means. And certainly the constitution of Southern Rhodesia and the qualifications to attain the vote at that period of time held out, in theory, that possibility. Even the white politicians of that day took great pride in this feature of our constitution. They argued that the black people of this country had only to take time and trouble to register for the vote and they would achieve an effective share of power in the government of this country.\textsuperscript{125}

But this is not to say that there were not vociferous African protests within that

\textsuperscript{123} ibid, H.M. Shewell to Sojini, 16 December 1946.

\textsuperscript{124} ORAL/233 Lawrence Vambe interview.

\textsuperscript{125} ibid.
framework at the lack of democratic rights. It would be difficult to exaggerate the symbolic value politically conscious Africans ascribed to the common roll, and to the imperial concept of ‘fair play’, and this is best illustrated by the example of Thompson Samkange, President of the Southern Rhodesia African National Congress. When Huggins’ plan to deprive Africans of the vote was first aired, he wrote: ‘Any representation which moves away from the Franchise is detrimental to African progress ... and in course of time deprives him of one of the most important civil rights under the British Empire which is valued and jealously guarded by those who possess it’. Esau Nemapare, another prominent Congress member, called on African imperial loyalty, and demonstrated just how closely the British Empire was linked to justice in African eyes:

We Africans have proved our loyalty to the Empire and the King by our own blood ... Destruction of the Empire means destruction of our peace. The Empire is our house ... Those who legislate for taking the franchise from Africans are not interested in the solidarity of our Empire but in their own large purses. They have brought so much money to the Colony that they now fear giving a right to elect members of Parliament to Africans would jeopardise their capitalism. We fought for Empire, the King and Peace, and not for Mr. Capitalist ... Let us all say one thing together, ‘Equal Rights for civilised persons south of the Zambesi’.

Vambe also believed that the imperial connection was some form of guarantee for blacks in central Africa: ‘I reasoned that we had a better chance of liberation than the black people in South Africa who did not have this link with the Imperial Government at Whitehall ... I realised that whatever the colonial government did in Southern Rhodesia, the British Government was there to approve or disapprove’.

126 Ranger, Are We Not Also Men?, p. 102.


128 ORAL/233 Lawrence Vambe interview.
When Huggins persisted in attempting to deprive Africans of the vote, Samkange was embittered, and in his presidential address to Congress in 1947 he asked: ‘Shall we say we fought and defended a system which debars us from enjoying one of the recognised privileges in all purely democratic countries?’

Congress went into eclipse in the late 1940s, but it was resurrected in 1957, and the introduction of mass politics transformed African nationalism. It was at this time that the African elite began demanding a radical overhaul, and even actual control, of the system, rather than just a share of it, and elite attitudes to Rhodesian-style democracy became openly confrontational. It was the fear of the power of mass nationalism, coupled with the rise of the European right wing, which prompted Edgar Whitehead’s liberalising drive in 1960-62. However, the nationalist stance up until the early and mid-1950s gives us the best idea of the attractiveness of the prospect of inclusion in the Rhodesian system.

In the period between the late 1940s and the start of mass nationalist mobilisation in 1957, elite Africans generally responded well, if cautiously, to the concept of partnership. The position which the AVL took in 1946 did not change significantly. Educated Africans thought they should at least give this new philosophy a chance. In some ways, partnership was the vindication of Rhodes’ ‘equal rights for all civilised men’ dictum, something which elite Africans had pushed for vigorously. Enoch Dumbutshena believed ‘most enlightened Africans, including some of the present nationalist leaders, accepted multiracialism and the methods by which it sought to provide a final solution to the racial problems’. Nathan Shamuyarira on the other hand voiced a qualified optimism and hint of desperation with which the African elite greeted the ideal of partnership was voiced by - ‘they were ready to grab at

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129 Ranger, Are Not Also Men?, p.104.

130 See final chapter.


anything – and continued to place them in the context of continued white control over the body politic. Accordingly, Joshua Nkomo stood for selection for the Federal Parliament in 1954, but was defeated by Mike Hove in one of the two seats reserved for Southern Rhodesian Africans. Hove’s victory was significant for the white elite because, as his FISB file said, ‘he is respected and admired by the more moderate section of the African people’. In the other seat, Stanlake Samkange and Jasper Savanhu contested the nomination, the seat eventually going to Savanhu. Savanhu was chosen by the All-African Convention (AAC), a collection of African interest groups which vetted potential African candidates for the Federal nominations, and which put forward a shortlist of names to the Federal Party for inclusion on the ballot papers. It had been formed to ensure that if Federation was forced on the Africans, ‘those who went to the Parliament of the Federation would have been chosen by their own people’, and would thus have some sort of legitimacy.

Partnership also promised, in the eyes of much of the African elite, a stronger bond with Britain. As we shall see below, many Africans were proud of their status as British subjects or protected persons, and there was no immediate threat that they would seek to be otherwise. As a result, their co-operation was not necessarily out of the question. Mike Hove suggested in 1954 that where partnership was concerned, ‘a start can and should be made now with those Africans who have already advanced to make them able to say “I am a British Subject” with no less pride than a European citizen’.

The African elite was extremely varied. One result of the Land Apportionment Act was that Africans could carve niches for themselves outside the European areas, even though

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134 WP 238/2 ff. 19-20. B.M. de Quehen (Director, FISB) to Welensky, 8 December 1955.

135 The AAC comprised the Matabele Home Society, Bulawayo African Workers Union, the RICU, and the Southern Rhodesia African Association.

136 AOH/5 J.Z. Savanhu interview.

African areas were kept away from easy access to markets and the line of rail. For example, a number of Africans made large sums of money in the transport business around the major urban centres, running buses to and from town and the rural areas, a process facilitated by the rapid influx of Africans to the cities after 1945. One of these bus operators, Isaac Samuriwo, stood for the Dominion Party in 1958 and was elected to the Federal parliament. Other Africans, such as Joshua Nkomo, Benjamin Burombo, Charles Mzingeli and Reuben Jamela rose through the developing trade union movement. Burombo in particular acquired a reputation for challenging white abuses of power in the courts - beating the whites at their own game using the existing system.

In addition, the missions and churches provided another ladder for African advancement. Until well into the twentieth century, the missions were at the forefront of African education and until Goromonzi school opened, they were the only places where Africans could get a secondary school education. Africans were well-represented in the clergy and teaching staff. In addition, missions represented a threat to white hegemony, and were considered something of a fifth column, since so many clergymen were vocal critics of the exclusion of Africans from the body politic. Many liberal whites had connections with

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143 The Rev. Herbert Carter, Chairman of the Methodist Synod of Southern Rhodesia, criticised Huggins’ plans to disenfranchise Africans. Zvobgo, The Wesleyan Methodist
missions: Todd started life in Rhodesia as a missionary, while Greenfield and Tredgold both came from old missionary families.

By the time Federation was established, journalism was emerging as another area where Africans could get ahead, and many prominent figures emerged from its ranks. The Daily News and its parent company African Newspapers, owned by the South African Paver brothers, saw Jasper Savanhu, Nathan Shamuyarira, Lawrence Vambe, and many others, rise to positions of considerable prominence and responsibility. From there, many went on to careers in the forefront of politics. Savanhu was editor-in-chief of African Newspapers, was a member of the SRANC and went as a delegate to the London conference of 1952. He entered the Federal parliament in 1953, as did Hove (who later went to Nigeria as Federal High Commissioner). Vambe became press attaché at Rhodesia House, London. Shamuyarira, who succeeded Vambe as editor-in-chief in 1959, was ‘inheriting a chair which had produced plenty of evidence of black co-operation with the white régime’.

The quiescence and goodwill of much of the African middle class was emphasised as late as 1958, when Savanhu published a short chapter in F.S. Joelson’s edited collection Rhodesia and East Africa. He wrote that ‘this class of African may remain separate and distinct; or it may become an integral part in the foreseeable or distant future of its European counterpart, from which it draws its cultural inspiration’, as clear an exposition as one could wish for to illustrate how much so many of the African middle class wanted to join the system, not replace it. He quoted Colonel G.H. Hartley, director of Salisbury City Council’s Native Administration Department, who had suggested creating a ‘small but select’ middle class similar to the French evolués or the Portuguese assimilados. ‘He has my sympathy’, wrote

Missions in Zimbabwe 1891-1945, pp. 152-3.

AOH/5 Jasper Savanhu interview.

Shamuyarira, Crisis in Rhodesia, p. 17.

Savanhu. ‘I advocated such a course four years ago’. This class would be ‘exposed to the refreshing winds and nourishment of Western culture, thus blending into a harmonious whole the best in European and primitive African culture’. But Savanhu did not want the African middle class to act as a buffer, more as a bridge between white and black, and he warned that if the middle class’s aspirations were blocked by institutional discrimination, they could turn to African nationalism ‘with dire consequences for all’.

Savanhu’s warning was echoed by Bernard Chidzero, the first black Advocate in Southern Rhodesia for whom the Land Apportionment Act had to be altered specially to allow him to practise his profession in the centre of Salisbury. Chidzero bemoaned the lack of a racially integrated middle class which could encourage good governance across the racial divide. He argued that such a middle class would be ‘effectively responsive to African interests instead of being at the mercy of a small section of the population’, and he hoped that ‘professional ties ... would prove stronger than racial ties’. However, writing in 1959, he believed that the time for a slow evolution of such a class was gone, and that only by ‘immediately redressing the balance of the voting power of Europeans and Africans and producing a large segment of society with adequate political power to force parties to appeal to all sections of the population’ would further alienation of Africans be avoided.

Federation in essence saw the rise of an urban-based, educated and, for the first time, well-connected African elite. The African elite was not monolithic, and many leaders’ methods were a result of the paths they took to achieve their positions. For instance, Burombo hated the SRANC for being an elitist organisation, whereas Thompson Samkange who rose through the church, was a prominent figure in the old SRANC. Chiefs did not disappear, but with an increasingly urbanised African population they were sidelined by an expanding middle class. The journalists, businessmen, teachers and clergy bypassed the traditional hierarchy and

147 B.T.G. Chidzero, ‘Central Africa: the race question and the franchise’, Race, 1, 1, 1959, pp. 53, 58.

148 ibid, p. 59.
challenged the whites to cope with a new elite. Partnership and the assumptions about qualified franchises and conditional citizenship were designed, in part, to co-opt such Africans.

The Imperial Factor and British Decolonisation

The process which fostered the development of partnership took place within the way in which the British Empire developed, which was to be expected considering how central ‘Britishness’ was to the Rhodesian identity and worldview. The Rhodesian identity was based firmly in the imperial ideal. The Rhodesians’ own imagined political community was the British Empire and especially the white Commonwealth, and also the Rhodesian community and identity into which the Rhodesian elite wanted to co-opt middle class Africans. Rhodesians shared a certain kinship and empathy with white settlers throughout the Empire. Concerning Canada, Australia and New Zealand, the same kind of factors were involved as with Colley’s Britain: a communications system, an emotional attachment to a distant monarch, and an inclination to identify against non-Britons. South Africa, with which there were easy communications, from where most early settlers had come from in the first place, and which continued to provide a steady stream of new arrivals throughout our period, was a more problematic entity. Most Rhodesians had affection for and deep connections with the English-speaking side of white South African society, but this was simultaneously coupled with a mistrust and hostility towards the Afrikaner side. Much like the rest of the white Dominions, Rhodesians saw no dilemma in being both British and Rhodesian, something which certainly aided the growth of a local identity and Rhodesian nationalism. Indeed, the British Empire had seen a flourishing of colonial nationalisms, none of which - with the later exception of Afrikaner-dominated South Africa - threatened the fabric of the Empire itself.

149 For differing views on the development of Australian identity, see Helen Irving, To Constitute a Nation: a cultural history of Australia’s constitution (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1997) and Geoffrey Partington, The Australian Nation: its British and Irish roots (Brunswick NJ, Transaction, 1997).

150 Interview, Hardwicke Holderness.

other white Dominions, Rhodesia only came into existence as a colony when the other settlement colonies were several decades, if not centuries, into white settlement, and were beginning to assert their own local nationalisms. Rhodesian identity developed at a time when the Dominions were reforming their relationship with the metropolis.\textsuperscript{152} Settlers across the Empire were asserting their rights over their own territory, which required a rethinking of imperial structures. They did not necessarily see themselves as junior partners of, and dependent suppliers for, the metropolis, and few self-governing colonies would happily compromise their prosperity for the benefit of Britain. For instance, Canadians were offended when Joseph Chamberlain suggested they might be the ‘granary of the empire’, something which would condemn Canada to a far from affluent future as an overseas, rural breadbasket.\textsuperscript{153}

Political and social rights had grown through reform rather than revolution in Britain, and likewise the changing relationship and growing independence of the Dominions could be accommodated within the fluid imperial framework. Thus, ‘just as ‘Englishmen’ could claim to be both democrats and monarchists, so colonists saw no tension in being both nationalists and imperialists’.\textsuperscript{154} This was because

\begin{quote}
the Empire is not an English Empire, and the English are only one of many peoples in it. The union of the British Empire is best assured by building up various centres of strength, one, if you will, in each continent, rejoicing in its independence and perfect freedom.\textsuperscript{155}
\end{quote}


\textsuperscript{153} Eddy and Schreuder, The Rise of Colonial Nationalism, p. 41. Chamberlain was trying to assert the possibility of mutually-beneficial bonds throughout the empire, and so strengthening the colonies’ ties with Britain.

\textsuperscript{154} ibid, p. 6.

Rhodesia’s place in the imperial structures was in some ways atypical of the white Dominions. It was never a de jure Dominion, and did not have the physical size or economic importance of other white settlement Dominions. Its powers to legislate for Africans were technically circumscribed by the imperial government’s reserve powers affecting potentially discriminatory legislation. Those reserve powers were partly responsible for stopping Rhodesians moving towards full apartheid by encouraging behind-the-scenes negotiations with the British on potentially controversial legislation, working at a ‘gentleman’s agreement’ level rather than having to be openly enforced.\textsuperscript{156} Moreover, Rhodesia had never been ruled directly by London. Its relations originally went through the Dominions section of the Colonial Office, then from 1926 the Dominions Office and finally the Commonwealth Office. Its Governor was appointed in the same way as the Governors-General in the Dominions. Its Prime Minister attended the Commonwealth Prime Ministers’ conferences as a de facto participant. As if to emphasise Rhodesia’s similarity with Northern Ireland, Godfrey Huggins rode in the same coach as the Northern Ireland Prime Minister, Lord Brookeborough, at Elizabeth II’s coronation in 1953.

Throughout Rhodesian history, many Rhodesian politicians and commentators propagated the view that Rhodesia was somehow unique in the Empire, and that its problems could only be understood by those on the spot. In fact, while Rhodesia was constitutionally unusual, its development was far from unique. For its first four decades, the colony was a backwater reliant on South Africa for maritime communications, immigrants, manufactured goods, a variety of educational, cultural and sporting connections, and so forth. Its white population, while fairly varied in origin, was supported by a British dominant culture filtered through South Africa, and so Rhodesia was in many ways a fragment of a fragment.\textsuperscript{157}


\textsuperscript{157} A fragment of the British fragment which had migrated to South Africa. See Hartz, \textit{The Founding of New Societies}, for a full analysis of the fragment concept.
By the 1950s it was the process of British decolonisation which provided the impetus to formulate alternative ways of safeguarding the white position in central Africa, now that the imperial umbrella was withdrawing.\textsuperscript{158} Just as the British sought a controlled withdrawal from their African possessions while safeguarding vested interests, so the Rhodesian elite also realised that a certain self-decolonisation was necessary if they were to survive as a minority in Africa. As it was, the creation of the Federation devolved powers from London to Salisbury, creating a \textit{de facto} white Dominion in Central Africa, and abrogating certain British responsibilities towards Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland. Now within the Federation the white minority also had to draw more Africans into the political process, while hanging on to fundamental elements of the structures which gave it its political power. In this way, the issue of Rhodesian sub-imperialism in the post-1945 period is more complicated than at first sight.

It had been a central theme of British colonial rule after World War II that colonies were held in trust until such time as the indigenous inhabitants were considered able to rule themselves - as Arthur Creech Jones, the Colonial Secretary, said in 1948, ‘the central purpose of British colonial policy is simple. It is to guide the colonial territories to responsible self-government’\textsuperscript{159} It was especially the metropolitan government’s responsibility to extend welfare, health and education services in order to prepare for this - after all, the future development of Africa in African hands would largely be determined by what kind of social, political and material infrastructure the colonial powers endowed their territories with.\textsuperscript{160}


order to develop the colonies, a massive financial outlay would be necessary, and in 1945 the House of Commons passed a second Colonial Development and Welfare Act (the first was passed in 1940 and promised £5 million for five years) which earmarked £120 million over a ten year period. It was to be a quid pro quo arrangement. On the one hand, Britain was still short of food and dollars, and it was envisaged that colonial development would contribute to British recovery. On the other, Goldsworthy writes, ‘by the standards of social justice to which war experiences had given increasing moral force, it seemed that the development of such underprivileged countries as the British colonies, for the benefit of the inhabitants themselves, was probably the most urgent of the world’s post-war responsibilities’.  

Before any moves could be made towards self-government, basic infrastructural needs had to be addressed. Yet moves towards political emancipation were underway. During the war years, Ceylon and Jamaica were granted adult suffrage, Malta was promised the same, and the Gold Coast prepared for an unofficial African majority in the Legislative Council. The official thinking was still centred around a gradualist mindset, thinking in terms of decades rather than years.

However, the end of the war saw a weaker, emasculated Britain whose moral and military authority had been eroded. The war had devastated Britain, and the Empire was considered to be essential for recovery and as ‘contributors to the currency reserves of the sterling area’. In any case, the very nature of the war itself, as a fight against totalitarianism, had placed colonial rule in rather stark contrast to the rhetoric of democracy, self determination and liberation. In addition, powerful world opinion, in the shape of the United States and Soviet Union, the two new superpowers, was on the nationalists’ side.

In order to accommodate the growing demands for colonial self-government and the metropolitan reluctance to completely dismantle the empire, British colonial policy in the early 1950s sought a middle way. It was becoming more acceptable to decolonise since it was taken

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163 Hargreaves, *Decolonization in Africa*, p. 159.
to mean that Britain would adjust her relationship with the colonies and maintain close links, rather than sever those ties completely, and that essential trading and strategic factors would be preserved. Colonial policy should concentrate on ‘the permanent legitimation of the British connection’, centering again on the monarchy:

There must be a positive as well as a negative side to our constitutional developments ... Our real problem, surely, is that we have to create a sense of Empire citizenship, so that a man from Nigeria will talk about his status as a British subject permanently and with pride, just as a man would who was born in Yorkshire.

Just as the British government aspired to a quasi-decolonisation by extending the notion of an imperial citizenship, so the Rhodesian government sought to encourage a Rhodesian loyalty which could be felt by the African middle class in the Salisbury township of Highfield as much as by the old white pioneer farmers. In this way, both the British and Rhodesians wanted to defuse potentially dangerous nationalist sentiment by binding its potential adherents to an identity which flowed from the dominant metropole. As a result, British decolonisation and Rhodesian attempted self-decolonisation endeavoured to give up a certain amount of political power in return for the protection of vested interests - the British wanted the Empire to remain bound to Britain to help with metropolitan reconstruction, the Rhodesians wanted to prolong white rule and the comfortable white lifestyle in the face of the rising tide of African nationalism and international opprobrium towards colonialism. But in many ways the calls for increasing self-rule were interpreted as promoting ways in which white control over blacks could be continued. The South African-born Westminster MP Sir Ian Fraser commented:


I commend the doctrine of equality for all civilised men to the Minister for application or re-application in the Colonial Empire. It is a doctrine which bears examination. It gives all black men the feeling that there is no technical bar between them and others to the highest rights, including the right to vote, yet it admits a sufficiently small number of them to make the outvoting of the whites by the blacks impossible.\textsuperscript{166}

In reality, the Conservative government in Britain knew that the winds of change would be too strong to allow such a system to flourish throughout the Empire. The Suez crisis proved to be a major turning-point in British and French colonial policy. It was now clear that Britain had lost the military capability to defend its strategic interests abroad, especially as British defence policy (under American pressure) was shifting away from conventional warfare to nuclear deterrence. This would make colonial counter-insurgency campaigns all the more difficult. More importantly, it illustrated just how much British action was dependent on American consent.\textsuperscript{167} The Conservative Party itself, while in opposition between 1945 and 1951, ‘showed little inclination to fight a rear-guard action against the gradual transfer of power within the colonial territories’, accepting that eventually the colonies would be self-governing. Since African politicians were no longer content to merely participate in a piece-meal fashion in local political institutions, the Conservative government in the 1950s had no choice but to accept the gradual ascendancy of Africans over the Colonial Office. In settler colonies like Southern Rhodesia, the British hoped that African aspirations would be met within the framework of multiracial parties rather than more radical mass movements.\textsuperscript{168}

British colonial policy and decolonisation were shaped without much by way of a coherent policy, reacting instead to local crises and compromising to minimise disorder and

\textsuperscript{166} ibid, p. 178.

\textsuperscript{167} Holland, European Decolonization 1918-1980, pp. 191-200.

\textsuperscript{168} Murphy, ‘Conservative Party Politics and British Colonial policy in Africa’, p. 260.
bloosomed, and avoiding specific timetables towards self-government and independence. The Rhodesians similarly improvised when the situation demanded by creating the concept of partnership to avoid the uncertainties of ad hoc decolonisation and the ascendancy of majority rule.
Chapter 2

Before Partnership: ‘Two Pyramids’ and World War II

‘Two Pyramids’

The missionary Arthur Shearly Cripps was one of Godfrey Huggins’ chief critics, or as Huggins’ biographers L.H. Gann and Michael Gelfand put it, ‘an eccentric negrophile and the Fabians’ ecclesiastical contact man’. He wrote this ditty in the 1930s:

Oh Parallel Developer
How oft you paint us pictures bright
Of parallel development
As being just and sane and right.

But now what wrongs unparalleled
Africans bear! And who’s to blame?
Is not the race that rules them sick
With a developed sense of shame?¹

In contrast, in 1935 Ethel Tawse Jollie, the first female parliamentarian in the overseas British empire, said in rejection to South African-style segregation ‘our design is to make our native people an integral, locally autonomous part of our body politic’, and that Africans would be part of a ‘composite civilisation’.² While it is not clear how ‘autonomy’ differed from segregation, calling Africans a potentially ‘integral ... part of our body politic’ at least blurred the lines of rigid segregation and left the question of moves towards future integration open.

By the late 1940s, it looked as if a policy based on segregation, however loosely defined, was becoming less defensible and more problematic. Liberal establishment figures like Garfield Todd, Robert Tredgold and Julian Greenfield were advocating aggressive moves towards the

¹ Gann and Gelfand, Huggins of Rhodesia, p. 171.

creation of an African middle class in order to give Africans in the urban areas more stability and something to aspire to. By 1951 even Huggins had moved forward, by his standards, in accepting the wisdom of this course.\textsuperscript{3} The development of a liberal political discourse among elite circles in Southern Rhodesia came from a starting point of separate development, or the ‘two pyramids’ concept, the framework from which developed the exclusionary Rhodesian system to which, therefore, the white Rhodesian identity was connected. Huggins defined this concept as being one of ‘gradual, differentiated development’\textsuperscript{4} in which the fear of African advancement and the determination to maintain European supremacy were linked to a ‘firm, paternalistic conviction that the presence of European settlers could provide the only structure for a permanent civilization in Africa’.\textsuperscript{5} The Chief Native Commissioner, C.L. Carbutt, believed that even the Land Apportionment Act had a limited life-span due to the pressure of population on the reserves which would spill over into the European areas, and he voiced European fears more directly:

Owing to the numerical superiority of the black race, there is no doubt that the whites fear their ultimate political domination; and because of their lower standard of living, their rivalry in the economic field if they are given free scope to develop to their full capacity.\textsuperscript{6}

In addition, he thought that ‘to say that the white man will never submit to political domination by the black man is, in Southern Rhodesia, an undeniable truism. It follows that no matter what


\textsuperscript{5} Gray, The Two Nations, p. 151.

heights of civilisation the Native attains, the white man will not admit him in large numbers to political equality’. In other words, a clash of interests between the races was unavoidable. The solution, thought Carbutt, if strife was to be avoided, was to establish a protectorate stretching from Nyasaland to Uganda, a ‘Native Dominion’, for the Africans’ exclusive use, where they could advance at their own pace without threatening European interests. In this way, the European presence in Southern Rhodesia would be protected, and the Africans would have enough physical space to establish their own state which in time would aspire to become a Dominion.

Although two pyramids was clearly an attempt to protect the white electorate from the competition of cheap African labour, Huggins softened the blow by adding that this would also protect Africans from competition from the more sophisticated aspects of European society, and would allow them to gradually adapt themselves to ‘civilisation’. In the African pyramid, the Africans would be their own artisans, working class, and bourgeoisie. Huggins said that ‘every step of the industrial and social pyramid must be opened to him except only - and always - the very top ... The two races will develop side by side under white supervision, and help, not hinder, each other’s progress. The interest of each race would be paramount in its own sphere’. Such an approach was considered enlightened by senior permanent officials in the Dominions Office, so what by the 1950s appeared highly discriminatory was not considered objectionable in the 1920s or early 1930s. It also allowed the Land Apportionement Act to be regarded as ‘an essay in trusteeship’. Significantly, provision was made in the act to exempt missions, the only places where both races could legally live side by side. So while on the surface Southern Rhodesia appeared to be rigidly structured into a caste system of dominant whites and

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7 Herald, 31 March 1938.
8 Palley, The Constitutional History and Law of Southern Rhodesia, p. 239.
subordinate blacks, segregation meant different things to different people, and ‘there was incomplete consensus among Europeans on the advisability of maintaining the system’. Within Southern Rhodesia, legal and humanitarian pressures from Britain discouraged the complete institutionalisation of a rigid caste system, something which was not the case in South Africa, so while there was segregation on the surface, it would appear that the system could be flexible enough to be changed, especially as the number of educated urban Africans increased.

A combination of Acts of Parliament established the framework for the two pyramids, the foundation of which was the Land Apportionment Act of 1930, which demarcated land ownership and occupation along racial lines. The Native Registration Act of 1936 in particular enshrined in law the requirement for every African male over the age of 14 to carry a pass which would serve as a means of identification, and a tax receipt. African men would also be required to carry passes seeking permission to look for work, a certificate from the Native Commissioner confirming that they were earning a lawful living in the towns. In short, the Act buttressed the whiteness of the urban areas. On the other hand, two pyramids also saw the passing of the Native Councils Act and Native Law and Courts Act (both in 1937) which enabled chiefs and headmen to begin to exercise a limited jurisdiction in matters concerning the African pyramid, the reserves. There was a wide increase in the number of clinics and sub-clinics in the reserves (from thirteen in 1936 to 37 in 1938), often staffed by African orderlies, and outside the main urban areas of Salisbury and Bulawayo, the ‘model’ townships of

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10 Many whites wanted security through job reservation, leading to economic segregation. Some whites and not a few blacks advocated certain social segregation on the grounds that African culture was inherently different. Missionaries supported dividing the land in order to protect Africans from the rigours of European capitalism, but not in perpetuity, while many white farmers welcomed the obstruction of competition from African farmers. Summers, From Civilization to Segregation, pp. 228-231.


Highfield and Luveve were built. These improvements made an impression on observers, one of whom commented that ‘the native policy of Southern Rhodesia has been almost revolutionised by Mr. Huggins, and is among the most progressive and most enlightened in Africa’.\(^{14}\)

The main intellectual stimulus behind the two pyramids policy was N.H. Wilson.\(^{15}\) Wilson came to Rhodesia as a twenty-year old in 1906, where he joined the Native Department and founded the influential *Native Affairs Department Annual, NADA*. He was heavily involved in politics, founding first the White Rhodesia Association in the 1920s with Huggins, and was active in the Reform Party and its successor, the United Party. Wilson was perhaps the best example of a person who had a populist ‘Rhodesia first’ mentality. He flirted with putting Rhodesia on a wider world stage, co-founding the Capricorn Africa Society, but left disappointed in 1957 to form the Southern Rhodesia Association.\(^{16}\) He was also a vocal advocate of mass white immigration, something which dovetailed with his work for the White Rhodesian Association which itself was dedicated to turning Rhodesia into a white man’s country.

Although Wilson did not agree with barring Africans from the European pyramid, he did not foresee a time when Africans would join the European pyramid in large numbers as mass white immigration would provide whites of all social classes. Essentially, two pyramids was a way of protecting white labour from competition, and providing enough demand for more white labour from abroad. The clearest explanations of two pyramids were written by Wilson, especially this one from *The New Rhodesia* in 1950, when two pyramids was about to be dumped for the more realistic and acceptable concept (in terms of world opinion) of partnership:

> It is not a *colour* bar: the law says nothing about *colour*. It protects a certain

\(^{14}\) Gray, *The Two Nations*, p. 156.


\(^{16}\) *NADA*, 38, 1961, Obituary of Neil Housman Wilson, p. 104.
standard, and if an African Native is a good enough workman to find an employer willing to pay him the prescribed level of wages, there is no law against against his being employed as a skilled building worker.

Admittedly, it does at present act very largely as a colour bar, but that is mainly a matter between employer and employee. It does not arise from the Two Pyramid Policy, which is concerned not to protect a skin colour, but a standard of living ... The European pyramid should be called the “European Standards Pyramid” to emphasise that the controlling factor is a standard of civilisation, not colour’.  

Wilson continued that for those Africans

unable or unwilling to make the adjustment to a European way of life, or to submit to the competition of European workers on a European standard of living, the Two Pyramid Policy demands ample Native areas (Native Reserves, Native Purchase Areas, and now Special Native Areas), where he can adhere to his traditional and tribal way of life, or advance from it at a rate of progress adjusted to his capacity or desire ... the Two Pyramid Policy demands an active development programme for the Native areas which should absorb such workers.

Wilson was especially anxious to point out that two pyramids had never been like South African apartheid. Although the differences in practice between the two are academic, the rhetoric and philosophy were different enough to be worth noting. While Wilson thought that apartheid on the one hand expressly rejected the notion that Africans should adapt themselves to white ways of life, ‘the Two Pyramid policy, on the contrary, accepts this adaptation as eventually both desirable and permissible’. Politically too, apartheid would deny Africans all representation, whereas two pyramids allowed Africans who had reached the threshold to vote and stand for election on the same basis as Europeans, making ‘no distinction between White and Black for political privileges’. Wilson happily added a postscript to the effect that since the article was written, the United Party Congress in Bulawayo formally adopted the continuation of the

17 The New Rhodesia, 6 October 1950.

18 ibid.
common roll for the franchise, while in South Africa only a few Africans would be retained in European areas, reducing apartheid ‘even more blatantly than before to a policy of mere repression’.  

However, by 1941 it was becoming apparent that two pyramids could not continue to determine the direction of ‘native policy’ indefinitely, and would have to be re-thought. In his ‘Statement on Native Policy in Southern Rhodesia’ published in November 1941, Huggins envisaged the possibility ‘of the two parallel lines in our parallel development policy coming together in some very distant future ... you cannot plan for the unknown, to state that the lines will never meet is stating what is not and cannot be known’. Despite the apparent rigidity of the ideal of segregation, government thought was not dictated by a belief that Africans were inherently inferior by virtue of biology or religion, and so Rhodesian judgement remained, to some extent, quite pragmatic. Huggins’ ‘Statement’ was in part a direct response to the circumstances of war, for unlike the South Africans he envisaged armed African troops. Moreover, the statement argued that differences between white and black were not inherent, but the product of environment and timeframe rather than biology. Gann and Gelfand commented on the daring of the ‘Statement on Native Policy’ admiringly:

Huggins’s statement left many of his white fellow-citizens aghast. Blood brotherhood between black and white was hardly a fashionable doctrine in the backveld, and no Rhodesian statesman has as yet dared to question ‘parallelism’ in public. Yet in some ways Huggins’s document caught the mildly reformist mood of the day.

The above is perhaps an optimistic reading of Huggins’ statement, because in actual fact,  

19 ibid.  


21 ibid; also quoted in Gray, The Two Nations, p. 277.  

22 Gann and Gelfand, Huggins of Rhodesia, pp. 172-73.
Huggins did not depart from segregation too much. When the Howman Committee\(^{23}\) presented its report on urban conditions to the Government in January 1944, Huggins responded by urging a tentative relaxation of the principles of segregation, accepting that the urban African population was there to stay. He said, ‘We have to realise that a permanent urban class is arising and is bound to grow in the future unless people in the European towns are prepared to manage without any native assistance ... [in addition, industry needed] an efficient, stable labour force’.\(^{24}\) But he also reproached the Howman Committee for blaming the disruption of family life on segregation. He said in the Southern Rhodesian Legislature that it was the lack of accommodation and insufficient wages to keep a family in the urban areas which disrupted family life - although it is hard to see the difference since the lack of accommodation and the low wages were direct results of the ideal of segregation which stipulated that the Africans’ ‘real’ home was the reserves and that they were but sojourners in the towns. Huggins finished by saying: ‘I mention this to the House because segregation is often blamed in error, and partial segregation is our policy at this present stage of development’.\(^{25}\)

Huggins’ party, the United Party, was also slow to advocate a wholesale re-think of two pyramids. An internal party document written before the 1946 election said that while ‘complete segregation [is] regarded as impossible’, nonetheless efforts would be concentrated on developing the reserves. This was justified as ‘development in the Native areas will open up avenues of employment for educated Natives, not in competition with Europeans’, but also because ‘improvement of the Native [is] essential for the development of the Colony’. Stereotypes about Africans abounded in a way which would be impossible shortly afterwards, for example, ‘the United Party believes that it is impossible to build up the Colony unless the lot of the ignorant, slothful, disease-ridden Natives is improved’.\(^{26}\) So while total segregation was


\(^{24}\) Quoted in Gray, The Two Nations, p. 280.

\(^{25}\) Quoted in Gray, The Two Nations, p. 281.

\(^{26}\) MS 281/1/16 Correspondence April-December 1954. ‘Native Affairs’, January 1946.
considered untenable, opportunities for Africans in the urban areas would still be circumscribed. As a result, the Rhodesian elite had yet to make the mental leap from paternalism to even a semblance partnership.

**Southern Rhodesia and World War II**

Separate development fell foul of events not only from within Southern Rhodesia, but also from abroad, something which had largely been prompted by World War II. After the war, two pyramids was clearly unworkable from the point of view of practical reality, given Southern Rhodesia’s economic development, but also in terms of the development of political thought towards a less discriminatory society, something which the war against fascism had encouraged.

Relatively speaking, Southern Rhodesia’s contribution to the 1939-1945 war effort was a remarkable one, from both the white and black perspectives. White Rhodesia was a society in which martial prowess (real and imagined) was an important form of self-definition, and although World War II did not acquire the emotional significance that the 1896 uprisings or the South African War did, it was still important in shaping perceptions of Rhodesia in the minds of both the established white population, and of recent immigrants.

As regards World War II, it was regularly boasted that a greater proportion of the white male population served in the war than was the case in any of the other white Dominions or indeed the UK itself. Ernest Guest, wartime Minister of Mines and Public Works was proud that initially white Rhodesians were ‘as keen as mustard’ to do their bit, and that conscription had to be introduced, not to force otherwise reluctant men to serve, but to stop too many economically vital Rhodesians from joining up. As *The African World* put it, setting up a conscription scheme

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27 The total number of people of all races who served in the war were (the number who served outside Southern Rhodesia in brackets): European males, 9187 (6520); European women, 1510 (137); Coloured males, 271 (228); African males, 15,153 (1505). Figures from J.F. MacDonald, *The War History of Southern Rhodesia 1939-45* (Bulawayo, Books of Rhodesia, 1976), Appendix.

28 S482/44/39 Contribution of Southern Rhodesia to imperial defence. Ernest Guest to Robert Tredgold, 19 February 1940.
would enable the Government to ascertain the number of men available as circumstances in the Colony and the state of the war changed from time to time. The necessity to preserve the economic life of the Colony had convinced the Government of the desirability of conscription. There was no lack of volunteers, but it was necessary for the Government to decide in what capacity the men of the country could render the best service.29

Guest’s exuberance and *The African World*’s ponderings were brought down to earth by the realisation that, despite initially having been ‘as keen as mustard’, realism soon took over. Guest complained to Tredgold that the patriotic ardour ‘has cooled off now and while the good employers and employees are willing to make any sacrifice the others are not playing the game’.30

Nonetheless, Rhodesia’s loyalty to the British Empire was not in doubt, and nor was her position among the white Dominions, and ‘Rhodesians will feel a glow of pride when Rhodesian squadrons are flying beside their counterparts from Australia, Canada and New Zealand’.31 Indeed, white Rhodesians distinguished themselves as RAF pilots, and Squadron No. 266 (Rhodesia) played a significant part in the campaigns in North Africa. In addition, Rhodesians formed much of the officer corps for African regiments in the imperial forces.

The greatest domestic contribution was in the form of the Rhodesia Air Training Group (RATG), part of the Empire Air Training Scheme, and the speed with which it was set up in time of war was a source of enormous pride for Rhodesians. Southern Rhodesia was ‘a country then as reliable for its political loyalty as for its flying weather’,32 an increasingly important

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29 *The African World*, 27 April 1940.


31 ibid, 17 February 1940.

32 Holderness, *Lost Chance*, p. 29. For more anecdotal material on the RATG, see John
consideration in the face of rising Afrikaner nationalism in neighbouring South Africa. The RATG was introduced by Sir Ernest Guest, the Minister of Mines and Public Works, and during wartime the Minister of Air, without legislation. Negotiations hurriedly took place in London about the nature of the RATG, and in January 1940 the Rhodesian High Commission released a statement:

The Imperial Government has approved of the establishment of an Empire Air Training Scheme in Southern Rhodesia and the cost will be borne by the Imperial Government, the Southern Rhodesian Government contributing thereto.

While the equipment and majority of the instructional personnel and pupils will be provided by the Imperial Government, the schools to be established under the scheme will be under the control of the Rhodesian Air Staff and the existing Air training Organisation in Rhodesia will be incorporated in the new scheme.

Rhodesian personnel when trained, will be posted to the Royal Air Force, retaining their identity, and, when sufficient numbers are available will form the Rhodesian squadrons of the Royal Air Force recently accepted for service by the Imperial Government.

The Rhodesian Air Staff is now in process of expansion and the necessary preparations for the accommodation of personnel and the reception of aircraft and equipment are actively in hand.33

As Sir Charles Meredith said, ‘the RATG was not only Southern Rhodesia’s main contribution to World War II, it was also one of the most important happenings in Rhodesian history’.34 It encouraged the development of secondary industry to support such a large enterprise, but it also meant that many aircrew who had trained in Rhodesia went away with fond memories, and many of them emigrated there after the war. The infrastructural

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33 S482/731/39 Royal Air Force training Schools in Southern Rhodesia Nov. 1939-July 1940. Huggins to High Commissioner (Goodenough), 9 January 1940.

development to accommodate the RATG was spectacular given the size of the white population and the limited availability of building material. In fact, there was a shortage of bricks as building contractors had anticipated a drop in demand in wartime, and they were caught on the hop. To make matters worse, the sudden leap in demand for bricks coincided with the rainy season, which meant that bricks could not be dried in the sun. Things were bad enough for the Director of Supply to cruise Salisbury in his own car requisitioning bricks from private plots. In the end, a concrete brick factory resembling ‘one designed by Heath Robinson’ was built in Salisbury. The existing buildings at the first stations were in any case unsatisfactory, being ‘the buildings outside which horses were hitched and ox-wagons outspanned in the days of the Colony’s infancy’, although they were ‘now the heart and brain of the child of modern science that is the Empire Air Training Scheme’. The stations were located near railway lines and power supplies to facilitate the transport of personnel and materials. The work was carried out extremely quickly, to the extent that all eleven stations were fully operational by mid-1941:

There was no scope for leisurely methods; plans had to be made and work carried out without the loss of a single valuable day. Peace-time mentality had to go; in its place was developed a vigorous, dynamic war-time mentality that brooked no obstacle, no delay, that said, in effect: “This station has got to be opened on such-and-such a date. Get on with it”. And everybody got on with it. And every station was ready by the scheduled date.

The RATG saw the influx of a large number of British RAF staff, numbering some 15,000 at its peak, or one fifth of the white population. As well as British men, there were many from other allied nations - the Australians had a ‘streak of rebelliousness in them’, while the

35 MS 281/1/16 Correspondence April-December 1954. Memorandum, ‘S. Rhodesia’s part in the Empire Air Training Scheme’, August 1941.

36 ibid.

37 ibid.

38 The RAF provided virtually all the instructors and ground crew.
Greeks were ‘very good, and anxious to get back to fighting’. The Southern Rhodesian government had no control over which nationalities were sent over by the British Air Ministry for training. In the initial stages of the RATG many instructors complained that the dregs of each squadron were being sent over from Britain and that discipline was often a problem. Quite often the young servicemen had no idea about Rhodesian race relations and regularly formed liaisons with African women, which proved to be ‘a bit problematic’. In addition, many of the British servicemen were working-class and left-wing, and this caused the Rhodesian political elite some concern - what would the effect of these young firebrands be on an apparently supine African population? As Sir Patrick Fletcher said:

We got the scum of the RAF to start with. You see, when the scheme was being started the different air stations in the UK were asked for volunteers, and the commanding officers were asked to help the scheme by sending some of their men so naturally they got rid of all the rubbish they could off the different air stations. They came out here. We had about 300 at one stage. They were out and out Communist types - horrible brutes.

Or as Doris Lessing put it,

Suddenly, overnight, the streets changed. They were filled with a race of beings in thick, clumsy greyish uniforms; and from these ill-fitting cases of cloth emerged pallid faces and hands which had - to people who above all always had enough to eat and plenty of sunshine - a look of incompleteness. In short, they were different. It never entered their minds to apologise for being different. They made no effort to become like their hosts.

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39 ORAL/ME4 Sir Charles Meredith Interview.
40 ibid.
41 ORAL/238 Jack Howman Interview
42 ORAL/FL 1, Interview, Sir Patrick Fletcher, June 1971.
43 Doris Lessing, A Proper Marriage (New York, Signet, 1966), p. 188.
Generally, immediate problems were soon ironed out by the sheer urgency of the war effort - the RATG allowed only thirty-nine weeks for raw conscripts to be turned into pilots and navigators, allowing precious little time for political subversion. But the effect of the sudden appearance of so many service personnel from abroad had far-reaching repercussions for Rhodesian society, not only by introducing potential migrants to the Rhodesian way of life, but also because these men brought with them political opinions from the outside world which, in some ways, were a rude shock to Rhodesia’s sleepy colonial society.

Regarding Rhodesian servicemen abroad, three squadrons of Rhodesians were formed. There were too few Rhodesian pilots to merit a Rhodesian air force in its own right, so the squadrons were subsumed into the RAF although the name ‘Rhodesia’ was included in the name of the squadrons and on the pilots’ shoulder badges. On the ground, there were too few white service personnel to form a distinct Rhodesian division (in contrast to other Commonwealth countries), and in any case the imperial command spread them out so as to avoid the flower of white Rhodesian manhood being wiped out in a single disaster, so they were dispersed throughout Africa. The imperial command thought that Rhodesians could best serve as officers and NCOs as they had a greater knowledge of African conditions and people which could be brought to bear:

East Africa is faced with a heavy military commitment which can only be undertaken if the quantity and quality of white leaders of African units is maintained throughout the war. Southern Rhodesian officers and NCOs are especially well qualified for this task.45

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44 Edgar Whitehead attributed the high level of competence in Rhodesians to the difficult conditions in pre-war Rhodesia. RHO Mss.Afr.s.1482/1a, Edgar Whitehead Papers (EWP), Original typescript of autobiography, 1928-45, p. 21.

45 S482/44/39 Contribution of Southern Rhodesia to imperial defence. ‘War Office Memorandum on the Employment of Southern Rhodesian Military Personnel. Based on a meeting held at the Dominions Office on 12th January 1940 between Mr. Tredgold, Minister for Defence, Southern Rhodesia, and representatives of the War Office’.
Apart from the idea of leadership and bravery emanating from the air force element, the role of Rhodesians in commanding African regiments from the rest of British Africa reinforced the idea of Rhodesians as a kind of military elite within the imperial forces. Edgar Whitehead, who served in West and North Africa, recalled General Horrocks saying ‘I have been in the Desert, Sicily, Italy, Normandy and every time I find a man doing a key job he is always a Rhodesian. You’ve only got two men and a boy, how do you do it?’

On the home front, Southern Rhodesia was clearly out of direct danger, unlike Britain, so in many ways everyday life went on as normal. The African World took up the ‘spirit of the Blitz’ and wrote that ‘the women of Southern Rhodesia are in one sense less fortunate than their sisters in England - they have few opportunities for satisfying their desire to take an active part in the war’. Of course, thousands of men, black and white, were abroad, and there were the large numbers of Allied servicemen connected to the RATG to deal with, but the prospect of actual danger was a remote one. That said, there were a few refugees from Europe who had arrived in Rhodesia, and brought with them the ferment of ideas which Rhodesia’s safe position might otherwise have missed. Doris Lessing’s husband Gottfried was one of them, and Lessing herself describes how her own political consciousness was honed through contact with refugees and British servicemen:

My new friends were refugees from Europe, by definition political, and men from the RAF, from that strand in British life that now seems to have frayed away: they were the product of night classes, working men’s colleges and provincial literary groups.

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46 EWP, Original typescript of autobiography, 1928-45, p. 182.

47 The African World, 16 March 1940.


Lessing’s writings, in particular her novel *A Proper Marriage*, are a clear indication of the way in which the influx of service personnel from abroad influenced local political currents. The ‘horrible brutes’ Fletcher complained about served to heighten awareness within certain segments of Southern Rhodesia’s cosy white society about the way in which the war would impinge on domestic politics.

One of the abiding effects of the war, quite apart from raising political consciousness, was that the Rhodesian infrastructure had to adapt quickly to a large influx of troops, and air stations had to be hurriedly built. This was to benefit the colony after the war, although as Tredgold said, ‘the benefit is purely incidental. The scheme was evolved primarily as a contribution to the effort of the Empire at war, and that we shall benefit is fortunate, but only secondary’.  

The war confirmed Rhodesians’ belief in themselves as ever-more vital cogs in the imperial machine. This took the shape of a confident determination regarding Southern Rhodesia’s role in the post-war Empire. In June 1947, Huggins took the initiative to badger the British Prime Minister Clement Atlee over the desirability of establishing an imperial defence network. He wrote: ‘I must ... ask whether you and your colleagues are satisfied that in fact UNO will be able to prevent a third attack on the British Commonwealth, that is to say another world war’, and suggested that a Commonwealth-wide defence network would efficiently control the resources the Commonwealth would need to survive such an attack.  

Spreading responsibility for imperial defence would take the burden off Britain, which was still nominally responsible for it, although the Dominions looked after their own localised defence needs. He followed this up a few months later: ‘I note the Dominions are still shy about their status. I think it is time they grew up and dropped the inferiority complex which was natural when they first

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50 *The African World*, 13 April 1940. See also Rupiah, ‘The history of the establishment of internment camps and refugee settlements’.

51 S482/44/39 Contribution of Southern Rhodesia to imperial defence. Huggins to Attlee, 6 June 1947. This letter was also circulated to the other Commonwealth Prime Ministers.
grew up, but with the passage of time and the effect of two world wars on the United Kingdom, it seems to me a federation for very limited purposes could be introduced - foreign affairs and defence only’. He circulated a separate letter to all the other Commonwealth prime ministers suggesting a meeting in one of the Dominion capitals to discuss the matter. Although nothing came of Huggins’ initiative, it is indicative of a growth in confidence that the Rhodesian elite was starting to play a bigger role in imperial and world affairs, but also that Rhodesia would not be protected from world opinion or that other byproduct of war, the rise of African nationalism.

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Chapter 3

Immigration and social composition of the white population 1945-62

As a white settlement colony, Southern Rhodesia relied on a steady inflow of immigrants to provide skills and numbers. This was for two purposes: to fill gaps in the labour force as the economy expanded and diversified, and to boost white numbers so as to at least slow down the rate at which the African population was outstripping the European one. Originally, immigrants to Rhodesia prospected for minerals or farmed, and secondary industry and the service sector developed slowly. After 1945, however, the character and skills of immigrants changed, and with this came a change in the philosophy of the host government concerning immigration. From a policy of tight, selective immigration, the Southern Rhodesian government, and after 1953 the Federal government, cautiously opened the doors a little more to immigrants ‘of the right calibre’. And whereas at first more emphasis was placed on the immigrants’ ‘character’, once the economy started to grow it became more important to attract those with the relevant skills rather than the right mindset.

Despite the existence of a discrete Rhodesian identity which considered itself rooted in Africa, white society was one of migrants and sojourners, one where the number of born Rhodesians never outnumbered those who had been born elsewhere. The turnover of migrants was very substantial, and led Frank Clements to state that Rhodesian society could be compared with white societies in India or West Africa, with their temporary white populations of military and civil service personnel. However, Clements’ opinion was rather hasty. While on paper Rhodesia was indeed a society of transience and impermanence, its identity had a solid foundation as discussed in Chapter 1. Contrary to what could be surmised from Clements’ comparison, the Rhodesian identity which had developed held it to be self-evident that Rhodesians were loyally British, Rhodesians first and foremost, but had no other home.

Discussing the development of race policies in Rhodesia, the lawyer W.R. Whaley, who drew

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1 Clements, Rhodesia, p. 93.
up the RF’s republican constitution in 1969, wrote ‘The Shona, the Ndebele and the Europeans were all migrants, conquerors and settlers and all of them know now no other home ... For these reasons it has been accepted as a fundamental principle that Rhodesia is the permanent and rightful home of people of different origins and backgrounds and does not belong to one race alone’.\(^2\) Although the realities of the situation were that the white Rhodesian population was in a state of flux, the identity which developed was one of firmly settled people. By way of cementing the new arrivals’ relationship with their new homes, organisations like the 1820 Settlers Association and the Sons of England actively participated in welcoming them, and also organising temporary accommodation until the new migrants could find permanent homes.\(^3\) Clearly, the white elite could not make a case for the permanence of the white presence if it also allowed for doubt about the migrants’ loyalty to Rhodesia. In addition, it meant that people could argue that since the whites had accepted that they had to share the country with the Africans, they could not possibly be mistaken for anything other than genuine multiracialists. The purpose of discussing immigration is to establish what criteria the Rhodesians expected of their migrants in the new era of multiracial partnership, and how they envisaged the migrants becoming an integral part of Rhodesia, but also to explain the new migrants’ actions and assumptions. An examination of immigration also helps to explain why Rhodesians felt insecure, and therefore why partnership failed.

Before 1945

While a disproportionate number of Kenya settlers came from the ‘gentleman class’ before 1945, the same did not quite apply to Southern Rhodesia. Both colonies took immigrants who had been in the armed forces, and both claimed that ex-soldiers would make excellent settlers on the land, but Rhodesia received far fewer such migrants.\(^4\) The Rhodesian authorities


\(^3\) F119/IMM/2. ‘Notes of Meeting on 3rd February 1960 at 9.30 am between Mr. Baillie RSA re. assistance afforded by 1820 to new settlers arriving in the Federation’.

\(^4\) Kennedy, Islands of White, pp. 54-58.
stressed settlement on the land. This was not only because mining and prospecting would not provide adequate livelihoods and because industry was extremely under-developed, but also because settlement on the land was intimately tied into the early development of Rhodesian identity - as discussed above, early Rhodesian identity created a pastoral image of hardy pioneers taming a wild land. By extension, therefore, the greater the number of whites taming the land, the quicker it would be pacified, and the stronger the settler claim on the land and the colony would be.

In 1917 the BSAC had declared that it would grant land to ex-servicemen of European descent who possessed cash or capital of £1000. Although rank was supposedly irrelevant, the pecuniary requirements would suggest otherwise. The BSAC earmarked some 250,000 acres for soldier settlement, implying about 150 settlers. By the mid 1920s about a hundred had been accepted for settlement, and only forty-six eventually settled on farms.\(^5\) In addition, in 1919 the financial requirements were increased to £2500. During the slump in migration in the early and mid 1920s, Charles Coghlan’s government in Rhodesia worked to revive white immigration. In 1925 it reduced the financial criterion to £1000 again, rekindled local settlement boards and provided low-interest loans to farmers. The Rhodesian Empire Settlement Scheme was inaugurated in the same year. Under the terms of the Empire Settlement Act of 1922, the British and Rhodesian governments would share the costs of subsidised passage and settlement of selected British immigrants. Now such settlers were required to possess only £500 and no more than £1500, and in return they were given half-cost transport to Rhodesia, tutelage on a farm, offered government land for purchase after one year’s successful apprenticeship, and provided with loans for farm equipment and machinery.\(^6\) The Empire Settlement Scheme was clearly aimed at those people who did not have the financial means to settle on the land independently, and it aimed to create a class of settler which was not composed of professionals or ex-officers. But in the end, the scheme included a greater proportion of ex-forces personnel than had been

\(^5\) ibid, p. 59.

\(^6\) ibid, p. 60-61.
anticipated, with too few of the ‘small farmer’ type who had been the original targets, revealing that the requirements were still too high. The scheme was therefore divided into various categories, the lower two requiring much lower capital and a degree of experience in running farms. Unfortunately, the market for tobacco collapsed in 1928, so the revised scheme could not have come at a worse time. The motivation behind the various migration schemes showed that, unlike Kenya, Rhodesians thought that poor migrants could still ‘make good’, and that an initial financial burden on the state could turn into long-term benefit, something which owed much to the pioneer pride in diverse and often lowly origins.\(^7\) According to A.D.H. Lloyd, pre-war settlers

were usually the younger sons of British families who came out here looking, with a sense of adventure, and a desire to make their way under somewhat pioneering conditions. And there were also immigrants from South Africa who were perturbed by the growing apartheid which was taking place.\(^8\)

These schemes only provided about half the total migration to Rhodesia in the 1920s, the rest of the settlers arriving unassisted. The majority of the unassisted settlers came from South Africa, possessing capital of under £100 and sometimes not even that. This was a reflection of the ‘poor white’ problem in South Africa; many of those who went to Rhodesia from South Africa did so to escape poverty there, and took advantage of the lower qualifications in force after 1926.

Southern Rhodesia also ran its own schemes to attract white settlers. Some of these came under the aegis of the Nomination Scheme of Land Settlement which began in 1928 as ‘the means of introducing into the Colony 48 settlers for employment on the land’, and which averaged about eight settlers a year by 1935.\(^9\) The small number was due to the reluctance of

\(^7\) ibid, p. 64.

\(^8\) ORAL/LL 2, Interview, A.D.H. Lloyd.

Rhodesian farmers ‘of standing’ to play their part under the scheme in the form of room and board, and tutelage, especially given the collapse in tobacco prices. Nonetheless, the scheme had been ‘the means of introducing a good type of land worker into the Colony and its continuation is strongly recommended’, although it did not recover during the depression of the 1930s and was curtailed during the war. Unlike Kenya, in a settlement colony like Southern Rhodesia which ran its own affairs after 1923 it was important to attract settlers who would be tied to the land and the colony to boost white numbers which could not hope to close the gap with Africans through natural increase alone.

In the imperial context, the Dominions and white settlement colonies were considered to be in great need of immigrants from Europe, preferably Britain and Northern Europe. They were to play their part in bolstering the ‘fraternity of the British race’ against the ‘land hunger of other nations.’ In Southern Rhodesia itself, N.H. Wilson, the intellectual motivation behind two pyramids, took up the baton in his pamphlet *Rhodesia - A Nation*. In his opinion, Rhodesia had the resources to become not only a major settlement colony, but a nation in its own right, and as a part of the Empire-wide network of colonies and territories, especially given its position in British Africa, it could only expand with hugely increased white immigration. Increasing the white population was now all the more urgent because, as already discussed, South Africa was becoming more ambivalent about its ‘imperial defence commitments’. Within Southern Rhodesia itself, new settlers would boost the local economy, and in Wilson’s opinion the country could support up to 20 million whites, although that ‘capacity’ need not be reached if a proper ‘balance’ were struck so that the colony could develop into a ‘truly European country’.

However, there was limited scope for mass immigration into Southern Rhodesia, and during the war the government did not contemplate it as a priority. Writing to Huggins to


comment on the work of the Committee on Mass Migration, Ernest Guest said:

The report is ill-considered, and the Committee has neglected to consider the most important factors ... The Committee has omitted to consider what these people are going to do. Migration is bound to be a catastrophe [sic] unless employment can be found for the settlers.

There are no industries in Southern Rhodesia, either in being or in contemplation, that are likely to absorb more than our existing population together with returning soldiers.

The Committee evidently has secondary industries in contemplation, but I know of no secondary industries that could absorb even an infinitesimal number of the settlers it is proposed to introduce ... they should investigate the possibility of industries being established capable of competing with other countries in the export market.

[If the Committee went to England] no good purpose could be served ... In fact if they did go to England nobody would take the slightest notice of them.12

Guest finished the missive with a question over the committee’s very competence:

I’m afraid the Committee is quite incapable of considering so big a problem as this, although they apparently contemplate that they are going to be entrusted with the negotiations, organisation and carrying out of a policy of mass migration. Such important work could not in any circumstances be entrusted to such a committee.

While the dominant culture of white Rhodesia was British and imperial, there were sizeable minorities within white society, lending it a heterogeneity which at first glance might not be apparent.13 The biggest minority was the Afrikaners, who comprised some 15 per cent of the white population. A few rose to prominent positions, such as J.H. Smit who was a Salisbury shopkeeper and small businessman. He was a member of Huggins’ first ministry in 193314 and

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12 S482/7/44 Minister of Internal Affairs (Guest) to Huggins, 10 February 1944.

13 As John Parker commented in the 1950s, ‘we were a polyglot crowd’. John Parker, Rhodesia: Little White Island (London, Pitman, 1972), p. 11.

became leader of the reactionary Liberal Party in the 1940s. Afrikaners had come to Rhodesia in the early days, searching for new lands, and were welcome members of Rhodes’ Pioneer Column.\textsuperscript{15} There were concentrations of Afrikaners in places like Enkeldoorn and Marandellas, both small rural towns which relied on the surrounding agricultural areas for their existence. The English-speaking relationship with Afrikaners was not without its problems. Afrikaner loyalty to the Empire was suspect, to say the least. As already noted, fear of Afrikaner numbers was a factor in the Federal conferences, and Huggins had refused to send a congratulatory message on the opening of the Voortrekker Monument. Low-key Afrikaner attempts to have Afrikaans recognised as an official language were rebuffed and considered ‘an affront to predominantly English-speaking Rhodesians’;\textsuperscript{16} and Afrikaners were generally regarded as a threat in the same way as Africans were. At the very least, many Rhodesians felt they had to maintain their vigilance.\textsuperscript{17} Unsurprisingly, there was no distinct Afrikaner political party, and Afrikaners were virtually non-existent in the political and financial elite of Rhodesia.

The presence of other minorities raised interesting questions about the meaning of the word ‘white’ in Rhodesia. As Frank Clements put it, Greeks could be classified as ‘white’, ‘a Turk almost certainly and a Syrian would probably obtain European status; a Persian might or might not; his kindred neighbours, soon to be called Pakistanis, had almost no chance’. And yet all the above groups could look almost identical.\textsuperscript{18} But the Greeks, many of whom had arrived in the 1890s, and also again after 1945, formed a very visible community, with their own school (the Hellenic School near Borrowdale in Salisbury which still exists today), an Orthodox church and community hall, and they mingled less than other white minorities. Unlike any other

\textsuperscript{15} Gann, \textit{A History of Southern Rhodesia}, p. 121.

\textsuperscript{16} Clements, \textit{Rhodesia}, p. 42.

\textsuperscript{17} ‘The Sons of England became a thorn in my side. They were obsessed with the idea that Afrikanerdom was making a take-over bid, starting by infiltrating the country with Afrikaners much in the same way that Hitler manoeuvered things in Czechoslovakia’. Greenfield, \textit{Testimony of a Rhodesian Federal}, p. 111.

\textsuperscript{18} Clements, \textit{Rhodesia}, p. 71.
ethnically-based Scout troops, the Greek Scout troop was allowed to fly its own national flag.\textsuperscript{19} Unlike the Afrikaners, who were experienced veld farmers, the Greeks did not settle on the land, rather, they were urban based, and started out as small storekeepers or semi-skilled workers. They were in direct competition with the Asians at the bottom of the white pile, and acquired a reputation for extreme racism.

Some Greeks did climb the ladder in this British-dominated society, mostly as merchants and businessmen, as well as doctors. Some became prominent in local government: Demetrius Catsicas was Mayor of Umtali from 1945 to 1948 and George Venturas was Mayor of Que Que from 1949 to 1951. Jewish whites in Rhodesia were also represented in the ranks of local government, as I. Hirschler was the first Mayor of Bulawayo and Joseph van Praagh was Mayor of Salisbury in 1900-1. However, local government was about as far as the non-British whites could hope to go. The national level was effectively reserved, until the 1950s, for those of British stock. But the Southern Rhodesian political scene was small, and when a number of Southern Rhodesian politicians rose to the Federal plane in 1953, the way was open for more people than ever before to seek elected office, and for the first time significant numbers of non-British were evident in the ranks of the elected. Dennis Divaris was an RF MP and Mayor of Salisbury in the 1960s, for example. The first Jewish MPs in Southern Rhodesia did not take their seats until 1954, when Abrahamson, Muriel Rosin and Ben Baron were elected. Like the Greeks, their presence in national politics took some time in coming.

Like the Afrikaners and Greeks, the Jews formed a large white minority in Southern Rhodesia, with their numbers peaking at some 7000 in the 1960s. But they were not as readily identifiable. Of all the non-British white ethnic groups in Rhodesia, the Jews assimilated most readily. Their success ‘depended on the ability to ‘fade in’, that is, to speak English and as much as possible to dress and act in accordance with the rapidly established normative behaviour’.\textsuperscript{20} Like the Greeks, the Jews began at the bottom of the white pile, and insolvencies among many

\textsuperscript{19} McEwan, ‘The Assimilation of European Immigrants’, p. 49.

early Jewish storekeepers were numerous. However, subsequent generations took advantage of the free schooling for whites, and Jewish and Greek names were discernible in the professions.

After 1945

Southern Rhodesia never had a policy of mass immigration. Partly, the privileged lifestyle of the whites could be protected by a tightly selective immigration policy which would limit the creation of a large white working class and avoid any repetition of the South African poor white problem. The greatest threats to Rhodesian society were the indigenous Africans and the Afrikaner nationalists just across the Limpopo, which some people believed could be countered by mass white (and mostly British) immigration. But while such an idea had its adherents, notably Wilson, Hartz’s opinion that a fragment protects its integrity by limiting the entry of new migrants from Europe holds true for Rhodesia. After all, Rhodesians were not keen to import en masse people who might not share their assumptions and potentially weaken the structures which thus far had ensured Rhodesian hegemony. As McEwan wrote, ‘there was a growing fear that externally imposed forces would wreck their lives. The secluded insularity of their old, pioneering way of life was threatened by forces not wholly understood but bitterly resented. To this group of old Rhodesians, immigrants were regarded with ambivalence. On the one hand they represented a subtle intrusion, on the other a necessary reinforcement’. It turned out in any case that Southern Rhodesia was in no shape to accept large numbers of migrants. The Government Statistician, J.R.H. Shaul, wrote to Huggins comparing the relative immigration rates of Southern Rhodesia, Australia and the United States, and concluded

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24 McEwan, The Assimilation of European Immigrants’, p. 179.
that while migrants to the US never had an increase through immigration of more than one per cent per annum, Southern Rhodesia in 1945-46 had increased its white population by some 13 per cent through immigration alone.\textsuperscript{25} As a result, he said, Southern Rhodesia should drastically curtail immigration as the colony could not cope.

The numbers which arrived were large by Rhodesian standards, and by the standards of the infrastructure which had to absorb them. In 1946, Southern Rhodesia had a white population of 84,000. By 1955 it had doubled to 167,000.\textsuperscript{26} In Northern Rhodesia, with the expansion of the copper industry, the white population nearly tripled, from 22,000 to 62,000, in the same period, and peaked at 75,000 in 1959. The period 1946-1955 saw white immigration to Southern Rhodesia average some 10-11,000 people a year, peaking at 15,000 in 1951, with a significant downturn in 1953-4. After 1955, immigration increased again, and in 1956 a record 17,000 whites migrated to Southern Rhodesia, 25,600 to the Federation in total.\textsuperscript{27} By 1958 the white population stood at 215,000, and it peaked at 218,000 in 1959.\textsuperscript{28} Thereafter it began to fall as uncertainty about the future took its toll on white confidence. To these figures should be added the fact that a quarter of new migrants re-migrated within a relatively short time, so during our period it is difficult to conceive of a large-scale settled population.\textsuperscript{29} By the late 1950s, white immigration had subsided due to political uncertainty and the growing prosperity of the metropolis. Added to the simple numbers of migrants is that the white Rhodesian population was a youthful one. This mitigated against a settled society, since it would be easier to re-migrate in one’s relative youth than old age, but it also contributed to a spectacular rate of


\textsuperscript{27} Rhodesia and Nyasaland, \textit{Monthly Digest of Statistics}, March 1957.

\textsuperscript{28} Rhodesia and Nyasaland, \textit{Monthly Digest of Statistics}, March 1960.

natural increase, some 2.1 to 2.3 per cent per annum, one of the highest rates in the world.\(^{30}\)

The number of immigrant adults in Rhodesia heavily outnumbered those born in the colony. In the late 1950s, some 40 per cent of the white population had been born in Rhodesian, but born Rhodesians made up only 15 per cent of the adult population,\(^{31}\) so the great majority of adults, who paid taxes and voted, were immigrants, including those with most to lose from African advancement. The first time the bulk of immigrants had the right to vote was in the 1958 Southern Rhodesia election, which after five years of partnership, nearly toppled the ruling party since a majority of the first-choice votes went to the clearly white supremacist Dominion Party.\(^{32}\) The most immediate difference in the way immigration to Southern Rhodesia was encouraged after 1945 was that now much less emphasis was placed on settling people on the land. Rather, the impetus after the war was to attract people who could bring the kind of skills needed in the burgeoning secondary industry sector. Manufacturing, construction and service industry grew very quickly, and the gaps in the labour force were soon apparent.\(^{33}\) As such, mass white immigration, as desired by Wilson, was not practical or desirable. Why import a white working class when one already had African workers who worked at a fraction of the cost of white workers? As Edgar Whitehead wrote in the margin of a copy of Shaul’s letter to Huggins, ‘I cannot see why the native should be not regarded as a human being. After all, he does most of the work in the Colony. Comparisons with Australia and USA have no meaning on a purely European basis’.\(^{34}\) As a result, the new wave of white immigration resulted in a white population which became essentially middle class in lifestyle, with few of its members doing unskilled or manual work, even if back home they had not been middle class in the first

\(^{30}\) ibid., p. 430.


\(^{32}\) See Chapter 5.

\(^{33}\) As a result of labour shortages for ‘white’ jobs, Rhodesian railwaymen were able to negotiate pay rises of 10 and 15 per cent in 1946 and 1947. Lunn, Capital and Labour, p. 105.

place. The block on mass white immigration was also viewed somewhat altruistically by some
of the white elite, especially the more liberal ones. Tredgold wrote that white immigration could
and should ‘avoid hindrance to the natural and rightful advancement of the African’. 35

The result of the change of emphasis was that new migrants were concentrated almost
exclusively in the towns, especially after the scheme to place ex-servicemen on the land started
accepting civilian applicants in 1947. Between 1945 and 1954 the number of white farms rose
from 3699 to 6255, but only eleven more were added by 1964. 36 This meant that the white
population was acquiring an urban character, mostly concentrated in the suburbs. While in 1936
the largest town, Bulawayo, was home to only 25,000 whites, by 1958 over seventy per cent of
the white population of 215,000 lived in the six largest urban areas. 37 Clements attributed to the
settlement patterns a growing cleavage between town and country, a dilution of the ‘pioneer
spirit’. Despite the emphasis on outdoor sports and pursuits, people living in comfortable
suburbs could not realistically claim to be close to the land.

In addition, there was a high degree of mobility within the towns, caused by marriage or
rapid movement up and down the socio-economic ladder - the average stay in a house was only
1.6 years. 38 Arguably, such a high degree of migration and mobility contributed to the
importance of associational life in the shape of formal or voluntary organisations in the absence
of family, neighbourhood or community relations. 39 But even adopting a quasi-British sense of
associational life, with amateur dramatic groups or philately clubs, Rhodesia still had its own

35 Tredgold, The Rhodesia that was my life, p. 166.
37 The move to the towns actually started before the war, but accelerated after 1939 as agriculture declined and as the governmental sector, industry and commerce increased. Edwards, ‘The response to adversity’, p. 24.
39 ibid.
peculiar quirks: the Freemasons, bastions of the establishment in Britain, were most numerous in blue-collar circles in Rhodesia, especially on the railways. The fact that the white population was characterised by high mobility and privilege, and also a commensurate degree of relative insecurity, helps to explain why of all the components of the Rhodesian mindset and identity, that part which felt so threatened by Africans was so quickly adopted by so many immigrants.

Importantly, many of these new migrants remained predominantly South African in character. After 1945 greater numbers than ever before arrived in Southern Rhodesia directly from Britain, peaking at 7600 in 1957, and outstripping South African immigration by 1200. But until 1957, the majority of immigrants had had South Africa as their last permanent home, and South African migrants were consistently just under half of all total immigration. 40

Housing problems, 1945-52

Understandably, the huge influx of immigrants placed an enormous strain on Southern Rhodesia’s resources. Housing was in very short supply, electricity and telephone lines were at a premium, and ancillary services, like schools and shopping facilities, were inadequate for the sudden increase in numbers. A motion in Parliament in 1947 suggested limiting annual immigration to two thousand people, but The New Rhodesia scoffed at suggestions that the colony was unable to receive many immigrants. It argued rather unrealistically that the year’s drought ‘only affects the natives’, and that people would ‘put up with pole and dagga huts if necessary’ until more housing was available. Like its founder, Wilson, The New Rhodesia thought that the Rhodesian authorities were far too fastidious in selecting immigrants. 41 Intoning the spirit of Rhodes and the pioneers, it also stated that Rhodes himself would have ‘torn the motion to shreds; ridiculed it as pusillanimous; denounced it as defeatist’. 42

40 Mason, Year of Decision, pp. 269-70.
42 The New Rhodesia, 7 March 1947.
Notwithstanding The New Rhodesia’s bombastic tone, there were substantial infrastructural difficulties in accepting large numbers of immigrants, despite the fairly stringent immigration requirements. There was no planned immigration policy in the build-up to Federation, and the skill shortage was most acutely felt in the building industry. This was exacerbated by the reluctance to accept Africans as skilled workers, which meant that despite the shortage, no Africans were allowed to work as skilled labourers within a twenty-mile radius of the central post office in Salisbury. A drive to encourage artisans to migrate to Southern Rhodesia in the late 1940s eventually attracted some three thousand migrants, which went a long way to alleviating the skill shortage.

In addition, there was an acute shortage of building materials, an alarming backlog of work from the war, and wastage of materials on large projects - office blocks, large houses - which had little value in addressing the housing crisis. With this in mind, the Southern Rhodesian government established the National Building and Housing Board in 1946. The NBHB took over where the Director of Manpower left off during the war in regulating the building industry. This continued the spirit of wartime regulation at a time when, paradoxically, many migrants were leaving Britain because of the increase in the nationalisation of industry and services.

From September 1945, the NHBH issued permits fairly freely, placing even more strain on resources, and by the end of 1946 there were more building permits than the colony could cope with. Some of the damage was mitigated by the conversion of the RATG training station at Cranborne into a reception centre for migrants. Interestingly, the Italian POW camp outside the Salisbury African township of Highfield became ‘Beatrice Cottages’, an area reserved for the growing African middle class separate from the usual township conditions. The introduction of pise de terre - ‘compressed earth’ - housing alleviated the material shortage, and was successful.

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44 ibid, pp. 2, 9.
beyond the government’s wildest dreams. They had been intended to last for about ten years, but many are still in use today in the Harare suburb of Queensdale. Although the Salisbury Master Builders’ Association thought that pise de terre houses were potential slums, and the Mayor of Salisbury wanted them built outside the city limits, the NBHB prevailed, and pise de terre was the first housing many new immigrants lived in. They also lent Salisbury a ‘frontier’ feel, since they had the dilapidated air of temporary housing out in the bush, and so it could be argued that they contributed to the new arrivals’ identification with the pioneer side of Rhodesian identity. This is ironic, given that most new arrivals were looking for comfortable middle class suburbs, not the frontier.

However, the inflow of migrants was straining Southern Rhodesian resources to the limit. The port of Beira was overworked, the railways could not cope with the increase in freight, and schools, hospitals and services all needed rapid expansion. As T.H.W. Beadle wrote to Huggins,

> The figures dealing with the building situation are particularly pertinent. In 1946 there were 2,350 families in search of dwellings, and by the end of 1948, despite the very creditably performance of the National Building Board the figure had reached 7,450 ... I am becoming increasingly alarmed at the effect of the increased immigration to the Colony. It is perhaps a little too early to judge, but from all appearances our restrictive regulations are not having the desired effect ... unless more rigid control is exercised on immigration, next year is going to be immeasurably worse.\(^{46}\)

The immigration requirements were raised as a response to the problems outlined above. Now, migrants to Southern Rhodesia needed to possess capital of £1500, or a private income of £500 per annum, or a job offer in Southern Rhodesia for no less than six months. In addition, migrants had to lodge a £200 deposit with the Chief Immigration Officer. The only people who

\(^{45}\) Holderness, *Lost Chance*, p. 132.

could enter the colony to seek work were certified building artisans.\textsuperscript{47}

\textbf{Assimilation}

A.D.H. Lloyd believed that the quality and character of post-war immigrants had palpably changed:

\begin{quote}
It seemed to be the poor type of British immigrant endeavouring to get away from the post-war austere conditions in Britain ... they hadn’t got the more idealistic outlook of the pre-war immigrant. And I think the decline in the paternalistic attitude of the pre-war European became very noticeable after the war when the poor type of white immigrant did a great deal of damage to the European prestige in this country ... it was indicative of the lowering of the standards of white immigrant that came into the country post-war.\textsuperscript{48}
\end{quote}

Ralph Palmer, later a Todd follower in the 1950s, attributed the worsening of race relations to the fact that the new immigrants were ‘unfamiliar with [the concept of] servants’,\textsuperscript{49} something which the journalist John Parker, himself a 1955 migrant, ascribed to ignorance rather than malice:

\begin{quote}
We knew very little of the country which was to become our home for the next eleven years; not much more than a smattering of history overlaid with Kipling-esque romanticism about the ‘immense and brooding spirit’ of Cecil John Rhodes ... We had no knowledge of the real history of the African peoples of Southern Africa, and practically no experience of mixing - or not mixing - with a foreign race of a different colour ... in the mid-1950s, the simple truth was that we had never found ourselves in a situation where race affected us in any way. We didn’t know there was anything to be biased about. To the average member of the nation which had stood so gallantly to the horrors of Nazism, anything which suggested prejudice of a racial, religious or any other brand was unthinkable.\textsuperscript{50}
\end{quote}

\footnotesize
\textsuperscript{47} S482/102/38A/1/48 Immigration Regulation Amendment Bill, 1948.

\textsuperscript{48} ORAL/LL 2, A.D.H. Lloyd interview.

\textsuperscript{49} ORAL/PA 4 Ralph Palmer interview.

\textsuperscript{50} Parker, \textit{Little White Island}, pp. 3-4.
As Lewis Gann wrote, ‘the emigrant on the boat bound for Africa ceased to be a culture-hero; he became for some a money-grubber of plebeian origins’. Gann goes on to quote from a ditty by Reginald Reynolds:

The Pilgrim Poppa grilling manly torso  
Sprawls on the deck in Port Said purchased hat.  
Here, by the floating Serpentine (but more so)  
The Pilgrim Momma chides her Pilgrim brat. 

They talk of wogs and niggers, trash and treasure  
And bargaining. The urgent wail of sex  
And Tin Pan Alley stirs in strident measure  
The unfulfillment of our lower decks.  

Without a doubt, the composition of white Rhodesian society changed, something which was exacerbated by the sheer number of new migrants who moved into an essentially middle class, or aspirant middle class, environment in which real pioneering was impossible and in any case undesirable. New immigrants from the leisured strata of society who sought to continue their comfortable colonial existence arrived in greater numbers than before, something which Southern Rhodesia was not especially known for before the war. The Labour Front, the mouthpiece of the Southern Rhodesia Labour Party, kept an eye out for such gems, reporting that one woman had come to Southern Rhodesia because she could not live under a British government which expected her to do her own housework, and one ex-Indian army officer who complained about the servants because for the first time in forty years he had had to put on his own socks.  

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52 ibid, p. 37.
53 The Labour Front, 4, 6, 1947, p. 10.
54 ibid, 4, 2, 1947, p. 5.
The Labour Front was actually very concerned about the effect the unfamiliar leisured lifestyle of the new immigrants would have on class politics and race relations:

One important factor which will probably influence new votes is that settlers from overseas, finding themselves with a much more expansive and a more easy existence than has been their lot hitherto, may be inclined to alter their outlook to ‘the leisured class’, indeed may be led to look upon themselves as belonging to that somewhat vaguely defined class of mankind and to falter in their allegiance to the Socialist point of view. This is a danger which is only too evident.\(^{55}\)

Certainly, white migrants from India, South Africa and the upper classes in Britain were entering a society whose mores were not unfamiliar, and tended to accept the Rhodesian view of the Africans more readily,\(^{56}\) but they were joined by people for whom such a lifestyle had been impossible before, and who consequently, and understandably, sought to protect their privileges. Significantly, many of the RF’s first intake of MPs and supporters were post-war migrants, from both the upper and lower classes, as well as the military. Andrew Skeen, later Rhodesian High Commissioner to London in 1965, was ex-Indian Army and migrated to Rhodesia specifically for the lifestyle.\(^{57}\) Brigadier Andrew Dunlop migrated in 1949 from the UK, although he had been brought up in India. William Harper, leader of the Dominion Party in the 1950s, had fought in the RAF and migrated in 1946.

Importantly, while the class structure of white society altered, so did the composition of the white elite. A significant number of key players in the debate on partnership were post-war immigrants, as indeed were many of their opponents. While many of the architects of Federation and partnership were born Rhodesians (Welensky) or early immigrants (Huggins), a very high proportion of the influential people who were required to help carry it out arrived after 1945. As

\(^{55}\) ibid, 4, 1, 1947, p. 11.

\(^{56}\) Clements, Rhodesia, p. 88.

\(^{57}\) Brigadier A. Skeen, Prelude to Independence: Skeen’s 115 Days (Cape Town, Nasionale Boekhandel, 1966), p. 2.
the professions and civil service expanded, often recruiting people from abroad, the numbers of people who tended to have more liberal views, from which much of the white elite was drawn, increased.\textsuperscript{58}

However, the majority of new immigrants came from lower down the social scale, especially the skilled working class and lower middle class, and ‘the lower the social class from which the British came, the more arrogant, at times the more embittered, was their attitude towards the African and the more irrational and unstable their behaviour where he was concerned’.\textsuperscript{59} White Rhodesian society was acquiring more people from the classes which would be threatened by African advancement, in addition to which the commonest country of origin was South Africa, with commensurately conservative attitudes towards race relations. Since partnership depended heavily on the willingness of the white electorate to implement it, a large influx of South Africans who were already socially conservative did not bode well. In addition, the primary reason for most migrants for moving to Rhodesia was material gain - a good salary and lifestyle - adding to the sense of insecurity if there was any chance that African advancement would erode white privilege,\textsuperscript{60} an erosion which partnership would encourage if taken to its logical conclusion. The drift within the white electorate to voting for more blatant forms of protection for the whites in therefore not surprising. Greenfield believed that in 1962 the RF finally gave a voice in government to the Labour Party, the party of the white artisan, which stood for the assuaging of white fears through the blocking of African advancement, and whose constituency was now enlarged by many of the new immigrants.\textsuperscript{61}

\textsuperscript{58} Rogers and Frantz, \textit{European Attitudes}, pp. 125-6. Rogers and Frantz found that ‘by far the most liberal’ were the professions, teaching, the legal profession, etc. They expressed surprise that farmers were more liberal than expected, although it should also be remembered that white farmers were cushioned by their access to markets and especially capital, something African farmers could not hope for.

\textsuperscript{59} Clements, \textit{Rhodesia}, p. 89.

\textsuperscript{60} McEwan, ‘The Assimilation of European Immigrants’, p. 214, 277.

\textsuperscript{61} Greenfield, \textit{Testimony of a Rhodesian Federal}, p. 233.
The process of assimilation was also remarkably swift, aided no doubt by the invariably warm welcome many of the new migrants experienced.\textsuperscript{62} Many commentators have noted that new migrants adopted Rhodesian attitudes on race within a short time of their arrival.\textsuperscript{63} New migrants often did not share A.D.H. Lloyd’s paternalism, and their racism was sharper. But whereas Lloyd attributes their racism as running counter to traditional Rhodesian attitudes, and Sanger accuses immigrants of importing intolerance when they might have been a progressive influence,\textsuperscript{64} Clements and McEwan point out that new migrants simply adopted Rhodesian attitudes more quickly, rather than importing new attitudes of their own. While long-time residents and those who came from South Africa or other colonies could simply believe in the innate inferiority of the Africans, the newer arrivals, especially those who came directly from Britain, had not necessarily accepted this premise, so their reactions, during and after a period of ‘awkward adjustment’,\textsuperscript{65} were rationalised more in terms of ‘hygiene’ or blatant self-interest.\textsuperscript{66} They were also displaying the insecurity which beforehand traditional Rhodesian structures had assuaged through legislated segregation.\textsuperscript{67} In the absence of a clear sense of nationhood, a predominantly immigrant community conformed quickly to the assumptions and mores of the host society to avoid ostracism.\textsuperscript{68} Their arrival coincided with partnership, which would inevitably, if carried through, erode their privileged position. Combining the recent arrival of so many of the adult population with matters such as the lack of family, neighbourhood or

\textsuperscript{62} Parker, \textit{Little White Island}, p. 7. The Parkers were struck by the ‘instant friendliness’ of their neighbours which ‘did much to help us settle down with record speed’.


\textsuperscript{64} Sanger, \textit{Central African Emergency}, p. 60.

\textsuperscript{65} Clements, \textit{Rhodesia}, p. 88.

\textsuperscript{66} McEwan, ‘The Assimilation of European Immigrants’, p. 254.

\textsuperscript{67} ibid., pp. 179-80.

\textsuperscript{68} ibid., p. 45.
community ties, and the high degree of mobility, many people could fall back only on their adoption of Rhodesian attitudes as a sign of belonging. Such people, whose position would be threatened by African advancement, at least had as representative in Welensky a man who knew what they felt. Todd remarked that Welensky ‘shares all the worst prejudices of a person ... who has been a workman in a country where his very job and livelihood and standard of living was threatened by the advance of the African people’,

69 a telling comment. In general, the people with most conservative attitudes towards Africans tended to be those born in South Africa, followed by born Rhodesians, followed finally by those born in Britain. The British were the most liberal initially, and even if they became progressively more conservative, they generally ended still being more liberal than born Rhodesians. Although the British tended to adopt changes in attitude quickly, they were still more tolerant of change that those from South Africa or even those born in Rhodesia.

70 After 1945, and especially after 1948, there were those who left South Africa because of the growth of Afrikaner nationalism. Some left out of genuine distaste for South African racial policies, which would indicate a relatively liberal mindset. Others because Rhodesia offered opportunities for English-speakers which could not be taken for granted in South Africa, and so they migrated north to continue their safe, comfortable lifestyle, commensurately retaining their desire to protect their privileges. A small number of South African migrants came to be active in Rhodesian politics very swiftly. For example, Denis Etheredge, later secretary of the UFP in the early 1960s, migrated from South Africa in 1955 to work for Anglo American’s Salisbury office, and quickly became involved on the liberal wing of white politics. Most significantly, John Murray became the Southern Rhodesian Chief Justice in the early 1950s, leaving South Africa specifically to take up the post when Tredgold moved to the Federal scene. Clements attributed the influence of South African migrants to the fact that hitherto Rhodesian party politics had been a rather gentle, non-partisan affair, and party organisation had been somewhat

69 ORAL/TO1 Garfield Todd interview.

70 Roger and Frantz, European Attitudes, pp. 120-22.
threadbare except at election time, not to mention that Rhodesia could ill-afford to turn away qualified people of whom there were many in South Africa. He felt the Rhodesian political scene was galvanised by the influx of South Africans more used to ‘the concept of continuing struggle’. The presence of such migrants also contributed to a hardening of Rhodesian identity as anti-Afrikaner. It encouraged a situation whereby a prominent Rhodesian Afrikaner, J.H. Smit, could have his Rhodesian patriotism questioned in a way in which it was not before. However, such an influx of South Africans across the board also contributed to a hardening of racial attitudes. Many South African migrants were liberal whites, but many were not. Many liberals were migrating north to escape Afrikaner nationalism and its distasteful racial policies. But for illiberal South African whites, Rhodesia was a stronghold of British and imperial sentiment, and for them the implicit threat against English-speakers in South Africa did not seem so different to a possible African threat to their position in Southern Rhodesia.

It was not only South African migrants who quickly became active in politics. Cyril Hatty left Britain in the late 1940s, to take up white-collar employment, and became Southern Rhodesian Treasury Minister in 1954. Frank Owen, who migrated from the UK in 1947 to Northern Rhodesia, became Federal Minister for commerce, industry and posts, and home affairs. Ken Towsey, the Assistant Secretary in the Office of the Prime Minister, had come to Southern Rhodesia only in 1947 following his training in the RATG. Hugh Parry, the Secretary to the Office of the Prime Minister, came to Southern Rhodesia at the same time, from Northern Rhodesia where he had gone to in 1939 from the UK. David Butler, who became a UFP MP in 1962, and leader of the opposition Rhodesia Party in 1965, came to Rhodesia in 1949.

White Rhodesian society was characterised by relative cultural homogeneity and lack of challenge from other white groups, but it was also one of transience and insecurity, as the quick

71 Clements, Rhodesia, p. 87.

72 All the above information comes from Who’s Who of Rhodesia, Mauritius, Central and East Africa 1966.
adoption of Rhodesian racial attitudes showed. But liberal strains, from old Rhodesians, Britain and South Africa, were also augmented, so it is impossible to generalise, except that the white elite in this period began to diverge from the more insecure whites further down the social ladder as the lower classes grew in number. In this sense, the white elite could therefore believe in partnership as a method of protecting white privileges by extending them to outsiders in a way the bulk of white society could not.
Chapter 4

Building partnership? The early days

The debate as to whether amalgamation or federation were suitable for the Rhodesias has been amply catalogued elsewhere, and there is no need to repeat it in any detail here. Nonetheless, a mention of the main reasons why the Rhodesian elite and the British considered some form of closer association in central Africa is helpful. To begin with, a larger British bloc in central Africa had strategic implications, as well as sending a message to Afrikaner-dominated South Africa which was embarking on full-blown apartheid. Throughout the early and mid-1950s, the ruling parties in Southern Rhodesia (the United Party) and in the Federation (the Federal Party), which were allied with one another, reflected this, saying that Federation would ‘build a strong and prosperous state which will remain a Commonwealth bastion in Central Africa, imbued with British traditions of justice, freedom and loyalty to the Crown’.

The amalgamation of a self-governing quasi-Dominion and a territory with an overwhelming African population ruled directly by the Colonial Office had not always been attractive to the Rhodesians, but after 1945 a number of other factors came into the scene. The possibility of eventual union of one sort or another with South Africa had not entirely disappeared in 1923, but the growing ascendancy of Afrikaner nationalism had rendered that prospect distasteful, if not completely anathema, and so by 1948 such a union was, frankly, highly unlikely. The expansion of the Northern Rhodesian copper industry during the war, in turn, had made a union between the two loyally British Rhodesias more feasible, and Southern Rhodesia especially stood to gain much economically from adding the copperbelt to its sphere.

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1 See especially Holland, European Decolonization 1918-1981; Gray, Two Nations; Keatley, The Politics of Partnership; Martin Chanock, Unconsummated Union, Britain, Rhodesia and South Africa 1900-1945 (Manchester, Manchester University Press, 1977).

of influence. The copper wealth and raw materials coming from Northern Rhodesia would complement the growing secondary industry sector in Southern Rhodesia, and so would provide extra resources with which to pay for the white Rhodesian way of life. Added to this was the enormous increase in white immigration into the two territories, and ‘such a flow of white manpower seemingly legitimated the vision of a modern European state being carved out in the Central African bush’.3 After the National Party’s election victory, both Huggins and Roy Welensky, the leader of the unofficials in Northern Rhodesia,4 were endorsed by their respective electorates in 1948, and so they could form a united front to press London to take the initiative in reforming Central Africa.

The aim of both the British and Southern Rhodesian governments was to create a new Dominion, although the Rhodesians were much keener to establish a timetable with minimum fuss. There was a certain awareness, with the coming of decolonisation, that the settlers’ image had changed, from ‘the representative of Imperial power, of middle class values and of the virtues of private enterprise’5 to ‘less of an Imperial asset and more of a moral liability’.6 Lewis Gann believed that the process of viewing African colonies with a certain cynicism began after World War I, and while there is much to commend this analysis, only with the start of decolonisation and majority rule did minority settler rule begin to be seen by the British government as a political, and sometimes moral, inconvenience.

Although the new Federation was based on the promise of partnership, the real impetus driving the Rhodesians forward was not so much any kind of liberal conscience, more a desire to start defining themselves as an entity independent of London, ‘cutting the unnecessary apron strings’.7 In spite of his liberal reputation, the Rhodesian politician Julian Greenfield voiced this

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3 Holland, European Decolonization 1918-1981, p. 139.

4 The unofficials were the white council members who were elected to office by the mostly white electorate, as opposed to the ‘officials’ who were appointed by the governor.


6 ibid, p. 32.

7 Federal Debates, 12 August 1956, col. 945. Comment by Captain Robertson, a Federal MP
opinion of why the Rhodesians wanted Federation, which echoed the kind of rhetoric the RF was employing some twelve years later:

I think that will make it clear that the principal reason for having this Federation at all is to get out of the hands of people far away in London. I think we can go forward with this federation in the firm conviction that we are not likely to get much interference from the Secretary of State ... and in the unlikely event of our getting that interference, then we are powerful enough to make ourselves prevail over him.\(^8\)

The issue of Dominion status in itself presented conceptual problems. The purported Federation did not comply with any model, except very broadly the South African one - and even then, the Federation did not have to take into account the large number of Afrikaner nationalists in the way South Africa did, and nor was it engaged in stripping its non-white citizens of basic rights - quite the contrary, at least in theory. Constitutionally, Southern Rhodesia, the dominant partner, was akin only to Malta, which had responsible government, but unlike Southern Rhodesia did not control its own armed forces.\(^9\) Most frequently, the development of Dominion status has meant constitutional development towards increased autonomy, culminating in independence and the acquisition of most of the symbols of sovereignty. This has been a drive for self-government and ... should not be considered a call for the creation of an ethnically-circumscribed nation. Its aim was not ethnic but political: the erection of an autonomous, self-governing state.\(^10\)

from Northern Rhodesia.

\(^8\) MS 734/2/2. Article by Greenfield in *The Record* (Southern Rhodesia Civil Servants’ Association), December 1952.


Clearly, the Federation could not present itself as an ethnically homogeneous entity, in the way, for example, that Australia could, but it was certainly considered a political model for future multi-ethnic Dominions within the Commonwealth by its architects. Creating a more inclusive Rhodesian nationhood within the framework of a Dominion-in-waiting could satisfy the criteria for a new approach to race relations, even if the Federal project still begged many questions.

The Federation was officially established in 1953 after a series of conferences in Africa and London between the territorial governments and the Colonial Office. The first conference at Victoria Falls in 1950 excluded the British government, and was simply a meeting between the European representatives and elected politicians of Northern and Southern Rhodesia. By 1950, the Labour government was coming appreciably closer to favouring some form of closer association between the Central African territories, and so a conference was called in London for March 1951. Two things had changed for the British. The first was that James Griffiths had replaced Arthur Creech Jones as Colonial Secretary, and he was less sensitive to the issue of African rights than his predecessor had been. Secondly, and more importantly, the Korean War prompted the British to seek to resolve secondary issues and defuse potential flashpoints elsewhere in the world. In addition, the war had pushed up demand for Northern Rhodesian copper, and had brought into stark relief the strategic importance of retaining that amount of mineral wealth in British and Western hands. At this conference, Huggins and Welensky advocated a complete handover of the Colonial office territories to the white government, while Andrew Cohen, the Colonial Office representative at the talks, tried to block any form of closer association which did not have African support. But behind the scenes a deal for federation, not amalgamation, was struck. The need to hinder the spread of South African apartheid and to minimise any possible diversion of British resources while Britain was re-arming against the Soviet Union dominated official thinking, and so agreement with the settler leaders had to be reached.11

Generally, the Federal government was given responsibility for matters affecting whites, such as European education, immigration, and infrastructural matters like transport and railways. Responsibility for African affairs rested with the territories, not the Federal government. To placate African opinion, an African Affairs Board was be established to refer any controversial legislation to Westminster, replacing the Central Africa Council. Since the Board had an advisory capacity only, it was unclear how much influence it could command. The British government published the conference report in June 1951, admitting that African opinion was opposed to federation, but justifying federation on the grounds of greater economic growth which would improve the Africans’ lot, with the assumption that greater economic advancement would be replicated on the political scene.12

A second Victoria Falls conference in September 1951 was inconclusive as in October Clement Attlee called a general election. The new Conservative government was more in tune with white opinion in Central Africa, although the new Colonial Secretary, Oliver Stanley, refused to allow amalgamation rather than federation, or a unified civil service. Furthermore, he insisted that at least some elected Africans be included in the federal legislature. The Southern Rhodesian delegation did score a victory in that the chairman of the African Affairs Board would be a federal cabinet member, which would clearly limit his independence. Joshua Nkomo approved of the package, although he did not go overboard with his praise, and so the final conference in January 1953 at Carlton House Terrace was little more than a rubber-stamping ceremony.

**Drawing the line: South Africa**

As indicated above, one of the most pressing issues in the establishment of the Federation, in both British and Rhodesian eyes, was the emergence of a strong British bloc to act as a counterweight to the spread of Afrikaner nationalism in South Africa. After D.F. Malan’s National Party won the South African election in 1948, South Africa’s loyalty to the

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12 ibid, p. 142.
Commonwealth and Empire came increasingly into question. Clearly, the establishment of the Federation as a solid British bloc committed to a policy of multiracial partnership would draw an obvious line between Southern Rhodesia and the Federation, and South Africa.

Tension between the two members of the Empire increased after the National Party won the 1948 South African general election, embarking on a policy of Afrikaner nationalism which some people feared would spread northwards. Even before that, The New Rhodesia expressed concern about the ‘creeping Afrikanerisation’ which it thought was taking over the Rhodesian government and civil service because foreign words were printed in italics in all languages except Afrikaans - an indication, thought the magazine, that Afrikaans was becoming accepted as a quasi-official language in Rhodesia. In May 1949 Huggins refused to send a message of congratulations on the occasion of the unveiling of the Voortrekker Monument outside Pretoria because he feared that it might be construed as a political act suggesting Southern Rhodesian approval of South Africa’s new direction. A number of the letters of support Huggins received expressed anxiety among Rhodesians regarding South Africa’s possible northward expansion. The Rhodes Lodge of the Sons of England Patriotic and Benevolent Society wrote: ‘We, members of the two Rhodesian Lodges above named [Rhodes and Matopo] express full satisfaction with the very firm and dignified attitude adopted by you, Sir, in officially dissociating yourself with the Voortrekkers Memorial Celebrations in the Union of South Africa’. The New Rhodesia drew the conclusion that if Southern Rhodesia were not to be incorporated into South Africa,

the only course that will save Southern Rhodesia at the present time must be one that will also save fellow-Britons in the territories to the north. It will require of Rhodesians an ability to achieve greatness worthy of the Founder. They will need to resolve that, at one and the same time, civilisation must be preserved

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14 S482/113/4/49 Message for Voortrekker Monument.
15 ibid, Message from the Rhodes Lodge of the Sons of England Patriotic and Benevolent Society, 14 November 1949.
from the subversion that the Colonial Office policy brings, and full justice must be given freely to the African who becomes civilised, irrespective of the colour of his skin’.16

This was a clear reference to the idea that partnership was a middle way between apartheid and African nationalism, and an affirmation of the British presence in Africa. An even clearer allusion comes in Don Taylor’s biography of Welensky:

Over the other side of the Limpopo the trend continues away from British influences and towards Boer republicanism. The new Prime Minister, Johannes Strijdom, announces that it is South Africa’s duty to convince neighbouring territories that apartheid is the right policy for them.

To the North, the evil Mau Mau has eaten deep, and no man can say if this cancer of the African soul can be isolated and cured in Kenya, or whether it will spread throughout the continent.

A burden falls on the man who leads the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland as great as has fallen on any man in the history of Africa since the white man came. The implementation of the policy of partnership demands statesmanship of the highest quality; and as Sir Godfrey Huggins will, at the most, only introduce the first cautious stages of the policy, it is on his successor that the main responsibility will fall.17

The question of an Afrikaner threat to Southern Rhodesia and the Federation had been considered in the preparatory conferences. An internal memo for the information of both the British and Rhodesian delegations at the 1950 Victoria Falls conference discussed this in some detail.18 It stated that ‘the Union have never attempted to disguise their expansionist aims’, referring to the 1923 referendum when Smuts had actively lobbied for the incorporation of Southern Rhodesia into South Africa. What worried the Rhodesians was the existing Afrikaner population outside South Africa itself being bolstered by new Afrikaner immigrants, especially

16 The New Rhodesia, 13 April 1951.
in Northern Rhodesia. This, they feared, could tip the balance in a future election where Afrikaner voters would support Afrikaner candidates and become politically dominant. The memo stated:

the present immigration pattern leads us to believe that this might happen in a very short time. If the Afrikaners become politically predominant in a responsible government in Northern Rhodesia, they would almost certainly manifest the same tendencies as their brethren further south. They would probably take measures to ensure that British immigration was reduced to a minimum; they would almost certainly resist closer association with Southern Rhodesia, and they might even press for incorporation of Northern Rhodesia into the Union of South Africa.19

In this way the Rhodesian delegation hoped to influence the British into speeding up the process of federation between the Rhodesias. Almost as an afterthought, they added that Afrikaner immigration could be ‘used as an argument in favour of the immediate union of the territories, if only to safeguard the interests of the Africans, who would stand to lose most should either Southern Rhodesia or Northern Rhodesia or both eventually be absorbed into the Union of South Africa’.20

In actual fact, the Rhodesians had little to worry about where London was concerned. Malan’s triumph in the election had, of itself, prompted Whitehall to review its regional responsibilities. Concern about South African expansionism had grown during the war years and intensified in its aftermath. Thus, in evaluating British policy which climaxed in the Federation-making of 1953, events must be set in the context of a British strategic tradition, stretching back to the 1870s, concerning the reinforcing of structures to thwart Pretoria’s authority.21

19 ibid.
20 ibid.
A major part of the reinforcement of structures came in the policy of partnership. If a framework whereby both settler ambitions towards increasing self-government and African ambitions towards material and political betterment could be reconciled, then many of the fears of establishing a strong British bloc could be assuaged. If a workable form of partnership could be developed, the threat of Afrikaner expansion could be stopped at the Limpopo, and a model for the political development of East Africa could be tested - a middle road between apartheid and African nationalism.

**Defining partnership**

The preamble of the new Federation’s constitution stated that the constituent territories would ‘conduce to the security, advancement and welfare of all their inhabitants, and in particular would foster partnership and co-operation between their inhabitants and enable the Federation, when those inhabitants so desire, to go forward with confidence towards the attainment of full membership of the Commonwealth’. Clearly, as we have already seen and will examine further, precisely what the policy and concept of partnership would entail was vague, but one thing it did not mean was that Africans would swiftly proceed to a greater share of power, even if ultimately, and problematically for many whites, the statement implied equality. The *Herald* fudged the issue, stating that partnership meant that people would pull together for the common good ‘with a return to each proportionate to the value put into the common enterprise’. L.M.N. Hodson, writing in the early 1950s, made the point that the Rhodesians and the British drew separate conclusions about what ‘partnership’ meant:

> when a Southern Rhodesian talks of “partnership” of races, he means that tutelage will continue for all Africans who are still uncivilised, but that equality in matters political will gradually be extended as civilisation gradually spreads;

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24 *Herald*, 31 August 1953.
the Colonial Office applies a more literal rendering of “partnership”, and sees it as a swift emergence from tutelage into a condition of affairs wherein racial communities co-operate through different forms of political representation in the same country.

When they use “partnership”, they all mean a sharing between races of the country and its resources, and here there is even more variation in the methods to be adopted. One can hardly stress too much the almost infinite variations in degree of economic, political and social opportunity for the races which may be brought under the headings “trusteeship” and “partnership” when used in regard to race relations. Words which have been the centre and core of many fine speeches and writings must seldom have been used with equal vagueness.25

Hodson nevertheless went on to say that the Federation had to deliver quickly on its promises, because despite ‘the Colony’s good record’ they might end up ‘with no right to hold up our system as an example if we do not rapidly follow to its logical conclusion our declared aim of establishing equal rights for all civilised men’.

In any case, by the late 1940s, it looked as if a policy based on segregation was becoming less defensible and more problematic.26 Liberal establishment figures like Garfield Todd, Robert Tredgold and Julian Greenfield were advocating aggressive moves towards the creation of a larger African middle class in order to give Africans in the urban areas more stability and something to aspire to. In 1953 the executive committee of the Rhodesia Federated Chambers of Commerce bluntly proposed that ‘advanced’ Africans have land made available to them in the urban areas ‘so that housing and recreational facilities can be provided ... commensurate with the degree of advancement of this section of the population’.27 By 1951 even Huggins had moved forward, by his standards, in accepting the wisdom of this course.28


26 In such a spirit, Tredgold wrote that by now the Land Apportionment Act was ‘wrong’. Tredgold, The Rhodesia that was my life, p. 14.

27 WP 347/1, f. 7. Rhodesia Federated Chambers of Commerce, ‘Preliminary Agenda for the 31st Annual Congress, Bulawayo’.

Despite the confusion about what partnership meant in practice, there was a certain optimism, not only in liberal white circles, but also among the African middle class, about this new philosophy. Unsurprisingly, many people missed the fact, at least initially, that little actual power would be shared with the Africans. Nathan Shamuyarira wrote:

Before Federation there had never been any idea of such a thing as equality; so that, although the equality likely after Federation was heavily qualified even in theory, nobody paid any attention to the qualifications: they were ready to grab at anything. The preamble to the federal constitution, a non-racial civil service, a common federal voters’ roll, six Africans in the Federal Parliament: these were all wonderful novelties, and it did not enter the heads of many Southern Rhodesian Africans that their two African MPs were there only on white votes.  

Doris Lessing wrote hopefully that although Rhodesia would necessarily have an African government at some future point, ‘a country also belongs to those who feel at home in it’ and that a common love of the country ‘will be strong enough to link people who hate each other now’. 

However, within the Rhodesian political elite itself, there was little thought given to the actual implications of a policy of partnership which in the early 1950s which sounded a lot like the South African United Party’s idea of benevolent and paternalistic white ‘leierskap’ (leadership). Throughout the conferences, more emphasis was placed on the shape the Federation would take than to the political philosophy which was supposedly underpinning it. Julian Greenfield wrote that when Federation was agreed upon at the Victoria Falls Conference

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30 Lessing, Going Home, p. 8.

31 A sort of partnership under white leadership was advanced by the United Party prior to the 1948 election in South Africa. Significantly, the United Party was defeated by the National Party which advocated a rather more blatant protection of whites.
in 1951:

I had never given any thought to partnership as a political concept. Certainly, the term was not in use in the political circles among which I moved. The attitude both of those in power and those I knew who were aspiring to power, was one of paternalism towards the black section of the population. Their political advancement was thought a long-range affair. They would have to try their hand at local government in their residential areas adjacent to the cities, or in their tribal districts, and their participation in the central government seemed so remote that no serious thought was given to it.  

The only definition of partnership Greenfield could come up with was to compare it to a business partnership ‘engaging in a common enterprise with a view to sharing benefits’, adding the caveat that ‘a great political concept like partnership should not be put in a strait jacket of a definition’.  

Indeed, politicians still talked about African advancement and the African ‘threat’ in terms which suggested that they had not quite made the mental leap which genuine partnership would require. The United Party’s discourse on ‘native policy’ followed the traditional Rhodesian rationale: ‘Insistence on CIVILISATION as the test for voting will ensure the weight of barbarous numbers does not overwhelm the system, and yield control to the leaders of a mob’, although, to be fair, the same document admitted that at least in theory Africans would be as ‘civilised’ as Europeans once they could fulfil the requirements. It ended, ‘when we are all truly civilised domination of any section will be unnecessary’. It is also indicative of the lack of thought about partnership that Welensky’s chapter in his memoirs on ‘Building Partnership’ did not contain a single thought as to why the white elite began extending citizenship, who thought of it first, and certainly nothing on notions of a more equalised citizenship. He concentrated

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33 ibid, p. 109.

34 MS 390/2/3. ‘Native Policy, being an extract from the United Party Policy Draft by an Anonymous Author’, n.d. [probably October 1953].
instead on the British government’s supposed desire to stifle the Federal project almost from the start. This confrontational attitude to Britain was later exploited more dramatically by the RF. Unsurprisingly, given the above, there was virtually no discussion of the philosophy or practice of partnership in the Southern Rhodesian legislature until the mid-1950s, when the immediate issue of amending the franchise caused members to reflect on the meaning of partnership. In this sense, there was something reactive, rather than proactive, about the concept of partnership.

Huggins himself only used the term for the first time in 1950, at a meeting of the Rotary Club, where he defined it as ‘partnership in a multi-racial society means the co-operation of all races to the full extent of their capacity in developing a country in the best interests of all its inhabitants’. It was not the first time he had spoken about a certain kind of co-operation between the races. The previous year he had said ‘our ultimate aim must be to carry the African Natives with us as partners, with the ultimate aim of drawing out what is best in both races’, and concluded his speech with a metaphor about how a piano has distinct keys, black and white, but both are needed for harmony.

Huggins elaborated his interpretation of partnership at a joint meeting of the Royal Empire Society and the Royal African Society in January 1952. He said that the new Federation was being created ‘with a view to the building up of a strong, self-reliant State owing allegiance to the Crown; an inland State in Central Africa where British influence can be maintained, and where a multi-racial society can live in peace and friendship’. Partnership, he continued, ‘is exemplified by our sharing our political institutions’ and keeping the common roll without racial qualifications - the comparison with South Africa was obvious. He believed, as did most of the white elite, that it was not the high qualifications which kept Africans off the common

35 Welensky, 4000 Days, pp. 67-85.
38 Huggins, ‘Southern Rhodesia’, p 144.
roll, but apathy, and even a feeling that the Europeans knew better and could be trusted with running the country: ‘they are satisfied to leave it to the Europeans, whom they realise know more about it and with whom they are for the most part on very good terms’. Significantly, Huggins wound up that part of his talk by saying that those Africans who had claimed the vote ‘appreciate the vote and working in this European institution’, so in his mind the co-option of the African elite would not present a problem. It was imperative to him that such a co-option take place because the ‘advanced Africans’ were something of a problem, being as they were in limbo between two societies, neither of which they could quite identify with: ‘these are the people we have to encourage and to create opportunities for them to meet our better people on the level’. He continued that Britain had greater need of the Federation than vice-versa, as the Federation would be a loyal British bloc in a world where Britain had lost so much influence already, and also a ready home for Britain’s ‘surplus population’. He concluded with a plea:

Now you have an opportunity of being a reasonable people, by trusting your kith and kin on the spot, and by staking a claim in South Central Africa where your ideas of the British way of life can prevail ... There is no more loyal part of the world to the King and Crown than Southern Rhodesia ... You can trust us; we have got a fine record. We have no troubles with our African people; they trust us.39

Later in the Federation’s life, Huggins expanded his own interpretation of partnership. Speaking in Umtali to the Institute of Administrators on Non-European Affairs in Southern Africa, he said that government should be in the hands of civilised people, but that civilisation was not the monopoly of of any one race. He argued that ‘you cannot co-operate or enter into partnership, however defined, with people of another race if you regard them or treat them as a potential enemy. The African will only be an enemy if we make him one’.40 In the Federal Assembly in January 1956 he said: ‘If and when the Africans are in a position to contribute

39 ibid, p. 147.

40 Mason, Year of Decision, p. 66.
more to the partnership, so they can have a greater share in it. But they can never become more than equal partners with Europeans’. In a separate speech he went on to clearly state that Africans could ‘have a half-share in partnership, but never more than that’. And with an eye on the timetable towards power-sharing, he said that ‘we have not the slightest intention of letting them control things until they have proved themselves - and perhaps not even then. That will depend on my grandchildren’.  

As we have seen, economic factors, global strategic considerations and the need for a strong British bloc were the main issues behind the establishment of the Federation. Race relations figured in the thinking of the Rhodesian elite as a way of placating the British government, especially after the Bledisloe Report of 1939 had rejected both amalgamation and federation primarily on the grounds of Southern Rhodesia’s policy of segregation. But partnership was also considered a natural culmination of traditional Rhodesian paternalism which held that Africans were not blocked from achieving full citizenship on racial grounds, but on the grounds of ‘culture’ and ‘civilisation’. Nonetheless, the fact that a policy of partnership was now written into the Preamble to the Federal Constitution meant that by implication the Federation would be striving to extend citizenship in all its forms to the majority African population, rather than openly hindering African advancement. In effect, by stating a policy of partnership, however vaguely defined, the Rhodesian elite was raising the level of expectation, especially in comparison with developments in South Africa where the government was working towards very different goals.

**The public face of Federation**

Virtually nothing has been written about the public symbols of Federation, and for good reason. Despite the new political arrangement in Central Africa, and the new idea of

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41 MS 734/2/9. Quotations from the Federal Assembly regarding the Franchise Bill, Jan 1956 - Dec 1957.

partnership, the white elite were not founding a new nation. There had been no revolution to overthrow the symbols of the old order, and no radical departure from the status quo. No grand public buildings were erected to announce the coming of a new political order, unlike, for example, the Union Buildings in Pretoria or Stormont in Northern Ireland.\footnote{Alan Greer, ‘Sir James Craig and the construction of Parliament Buildings at Stormont’, Irish Historical Studies, 31, 123, May 1999, pp. 373-388. In modern Zimbabwe, the national parliament is still housed in the modest colonial building. The greatest architectural symbol of independence is the ZANU-PF party headquarters, erected in the 1980s.} Despite the continuing presence of the Colonial Office in the northern territories, the Federal elite and government were essentially the Southern Rhodesian version writ large. Not until the mid-1950s was there any talk of encouraging a Federal national loyalty. There had been no change in terms of allegiance, no significant break with the past, and so there was no need for any declaration of a new nation or national project. In many ways it was business as usual. The ruling party, the Federal Party, was the Southern Rhodesian United Party transposed onto the Federal scene. The new Prime Minister was Huggins, previously Prime Minister of Southern Rhodesia. Despite the inclusion of Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland, the Federal political scene revolved around the Federal legislature and civil service in Salisbury and so was little different from the Southern Rhodesian one. As a result, there was little emotional appeal to Europeans or Africans. As far as Europeans were concerned, life would go on as normal, if not improve as the economic benefits of Federation became apparent. Africans, despite partnership, were not going to be even equal partners for the foreseeable future. Since the Rhodesian political system had maintained white hegemony for so long without serious challenge, there was no reason, in white minds, which this state of affairs should not continue. So there was no effort to mark the creation of the Federation. It was treated as an improved political arrangement, not the birth of a new nation. As Lewis Gann and Michael Gelfand wrote:

The federal state lacked colour. Victorian Englishmen like Malvern [Huggins], for all their good qualities, or perhaps precisely because of them, lacked the mind which could envisage a brilliant new banner floating from public buildings; few Europeans could in fact have correctly described the Federal flag,
a blue ensign adorned with a heraldic hotch-potch. There was no stage
management, no torchlight processions and no mass rallies; there was no name
on the bread and there were no circuses. The Federal Party, an old-fashioned
type of oligarchic organisation, lacked both the men and the money to set up
branches in the villages, or to conduct popular propaganda; it maintained no
more emotional contact with the people than did the Department of Income
Tax.44

Even Wood’s volume on the Federation mentions the new flag only once, describing an
episode where Todd sarcastically suggested that the right wing politician Gus van Eeden would
replace the Federal flag with the skull and crossbones.45 The flag itself, a dark blue ensign with
a new coat of arms, did not have the visual resonance which flags acquire in other countries.
The Rhodesian flag had traditionally been a variant of the ensigns which colonies adopted or
had foisted on them. The first Rhodesian flag was the BSAC standard, the Union flag with the
BSAC coat of arms in the middle. After 1924, Southern Rhodesia adopted the sky-blue ensign,
with the Union flag in the corner and the Rhodesian coat of arms at bottom right. In 1954, the
Federal flag followed the same pattern, with the Union Jack and the new coat of arms on a navy
blue background. The ‘flag’ which Rhodesians looked to was the Union flag, cementing the
close relationship with the metropole itself. As Frank Clements wrote, ‘the lack of a personal
royal presence created a veneration for the ‘Flag’ not unlike that given to the Stars and Stripes in
the United States of today’.46

The visible signs of Rhodesian nationhood were the public holidays, veneration of the
British flag and the public monuments to Rhodes, none of which were designed to appeal to
Africans. The main streets in Rhodesia were often named after Rhodes, Jameson, Milton, and
various other prominent early Rhodesians. Two of the urban areas, Salisbury and Fort Victoria,
were named after the Prime Minister and Queen at the time of the occupation. The men who

44 Gann and Gelfand, Huggins of Rhodesia, p. 264.


46 Clements, Rhodesia, p. 42.
built the colony in its early days were on the street names. This was the everyday visible sight of what Rhodesia was, and what other countries were not. None of these names and name-changes occurred during Federation.

Nonetheless, the greatest visible symbol of the Federation’s existence was the Kariba dam on the Zambezi straddling Northern and Southern Rhodesia, and it was the only large-scale Federal project which could conceivably have become a unifying totem. Nathan Shamuyarira recalled someone calling the curved sweep of the dam ‘the wedding ring of the Federation’. The inception of the project came from the need to guarantee more power for the copperbelt and the growing industrial sector in the Federation, not to mention the ever-increasing population. Originally, the dam was planned for the Kafue river in Northern Rhodesia, but the Federal government chose Kariba ostensibly because it would provide twice the power of Kafue. It is also possible that the Federal government was guaranteeing Southern Rhodesia’s access to hydroelectric power should the Federation dissolve. Significantly, the control rooms which regulated the flow of water through the turbines were built on the Southern Rhodesian side of the dam, although Gann and Gelfand maintain that this was simply because of the logistics of transporting equipment from Salisbury rather than any attempt to maintain Southern Rhodesian control over the flow of electricity. According to them, ‘the thought of break-up never even entered his [Huggins’] head’. Criticism of the political machinations and intentions over Kariba were supposedly unfair, because ‘had the Soviets built a comparable project, their success would have been splashed all over the world as proof of Communism’s capacity to change man’s environment and of its superiority over the capitalist system’. Kariba was a public relations success for the Rhodesian press and presented a picture of, yet again, European technological superiority taming the African landscape.

Illustrating the dominant role of Southern Rhodesia, the Federal capital was sited in

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Salisbury, although there was a genuine debate about whether or not to place it elsewhere. The debate in the early 1950s about the siting of the Federal capital also served to highlight the importance of Southern Rhodesia in the Federation. In 1953 the Federal government was temporarily placed in Salisbury until the Federal legislature decided where it wanted to be located. Apart from Salisbury, the cities of Lusaka, Bulawayo and Livingstone all had hopes of hosting the Federal capital. While cases were easy to make for Lusaka and Bulawayo - they were administrative and, in the latter case, industrial centres - Livingstone lobbied for the privilege to be made Federal capital on the grounds that it had not undergone the rapid expansion of the other three, and therefore its services and resources had not been overstretched. It was also a town which could be hived off from the surrounding administrative areas, turning it into a central African District of Columbia or Canberra, both of which were administrative units in their own right governed directly by their respective federal governments. In addition, placing the capital in Livingstone would make a gesture towards Africans that their Federal capital was not sited ‘in a locality which has any strong racial bias’, and so ‘here is an opportunity to show in every way that we intend to make this partnership a practical thing’.

Other schemes suggested removing the territorial capital of Southern Rhodesia from Salisbury, leaving the city free to be Federal capital. Nothing came of them, ostensibly for financial reasons, but a separate Federal capital would have been a tangible expression of partnership, a city designated multiracial where Rhodesian-style discrimination was anathema. Manfred Hodson commented, rather late in the day, on the need for a Federal capital if only to

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50 WP 346/1, f.5. As President of the Bulawayo Chamber of Industries, Abe Abrahamson hoped that Bulawayo’s industrial and economic importance would count in its favour in the quest to become the Southern Rhodesian territorial capital.

51 WP 172/6 f.10. Pamphlet by the Municipal Association of Northern Rhodesia, 1953.


53 WP 172/6, f.22.
avoid the inconvenience and embarrassment caused to Africans, especially Federal MPs:

I am disappointed that neither the revised four-year plan nor this Budget makes provision for the move to Warren Hills. I am not interested in large buildings or amenities for members. That is the subject of another enquiry, but the fact is that it is really rather deplorable to come down here, as often as one does, and see the hon. member Mr. Hove or the hon. member Mr. Yamba hanging around the House because his bus to Highfield is not ready to go and there is no place where we can get together really outside the House. That is wrong.\textsuperscript{54}

**Associational life: the National Affairs Association and the Interracial Association**

World War II reinforced the notion among the British majority of being ‘British’, but also Rhodesia had now come to prominence of its own accord, strengthening local patriotism. As Murray put it, ‘it appears that formal associations, whose roots lay in a self-conscious attachment to a foreign place of origin, declined in importance. In their place there emerged associations and societies which served to express a European Rhodesian nationalism’.\textsuperscript{55} The result of playing an important role during the war meant that Rhodesia was no longer isolated from the imperial and world mainstream. John Parker wrote that ‘the mood was expansion. Capital and people were flooding in, bringing with them new outlooks and novel ideas. For ten years Salisbury, once described to me by a Rhodesian as ‘the town where the prevailing disease is an ingrowing mind’ became the cosmopolitan capital of Africa south of the Sahara’.\textsuperscript{56} There was an intensity of ideas and debate about the postwar world, which did not pass Rhodesia by. As Garfield Todd put it, ‘all of a sudden one woke up to find that the place was in ferment’.\textsuperscript{57} Probably the most important association which emerged from the war which expressed a

\textsuperscript{54} Federal Debates, 30 June 1958, col. 91.

\textsuperscript{55} Murray, *The Governmental System in Southern Rhodesia*, p. 15.

\textsuperscript{56} Parker, *Little White Island*, p. 11.

\textsuperscript{57} ORAL/TO1 Garfield Todd interview.
Rhodesian patriotism based on multiracial partnership was the National Affairs Association, which came to prominence as a lecture and discussion group in post-war Rhodesia, and was followed by the Interracial Association of Southern Rhodesia (IASR). The amount of space devoted to them here is primarily because they illustrate the intensity of the discussion and debate on forming a new political relationship with Africans - for the first time, associations were consciously created which did not differentiate on racial grounds, unlike the Welfare Society, Missionary Conference or Rhodesia Labour Party. Their attraction was doubtless augmented by the lack of family or neighbourhood ties among the whites, which increased the appeal of associational life, thus furnishing them with a higher membership and public profile that might be the case in a more settled society. In addition, many of the white elite were to be found in their ranks.

The National Affairs Association (NAA) effectively started aboard the troopship Ruys which was bringing Rhodesian and South African servicemen back from Europe. Two Rhodesian servicemen, Hardwicke Holderness and Pat Lewis organised lectures and debates aboard the Ruys, partly as a way of alleviating boredom, but also because they were keenly aware that the world had changed dramatically, and Rhodesia would no longer be isolated from world trends. The war exerted certain pressures within some circles for change and reform which would recognise the influence of the growing economy, large-scale white immigration, and the greater exposure Rhodesia had to world trends. The cosy arrangement whereby white paternalists ran the show and the Africans accepted this appeared to be over. As The New Rhodesia said, ‘the Native vote and the representation of Natives ... could be defended in the climate of 1927, scarcely in that of 1947’. It seemed to some of the white elite that a deep understanding of the country’s problems and prospects would enable informed debate about the way forward, and would put ex-servicemen in a position to influence policy. As Jack Howman, later the RF’s Minister of Internal Affairs, said:

58 West, ‘African Middle Class Formation’, p. 390. The RLP had created branches for Africans in 1940, but did not integrate them into the mainstream of the party.

we came back [from the war] full of ideas about how we were going to change things, how Rhodesia had to be reconstructed and how we were going to face a brave new world ... you fight to make the world safe for democracy and you know just how it’s to be organised ... There was much debate as to what to do and how to do it and how to build up our country. Fortunately there prevailed the thinking of those who said, “But until we know sufficient of the problems, how are we to propose or to propound answers, or solutions? Surely we’ve got to get involved in the study of the problems”. And that’s how National Affairs came into being. To study the national affairs of the country by inviting prominent speakers, experts in their field, to come and talk at our lunchtime meetings once a week.  

Holderness had been a Rhodes Scholar at Oxford before the war, had travelled to Austria and Czechoslovakia in the late 1930s, and those experiences and the war had shaped his political consciousness to a very high degree. He wrote:

War was intolerable, and even in victory incapable of producing any good - except for the capitalist armaments manufacturers. Capitalism bred inequality and injustice: ‘food without appetites at one end of the town and appetites without food at the other’. People could be played for suckers by appeals to patriotism. So in 1933 the majority vote in the Oxford union debate against fighting for ‘King and Country’ ... was something we could quite understand.

On his return to Rhodesia in 1945, after an absence of eight years, he was unsure what country he would find, but he did know that the cosy arrangement whereby whites ran the show and blacks accepted it would have to be confronted:

We had been away from Rhodesia for a long time and hardly knew what we should expect to find on our return. But one thing seemed certain: that you could not have parliamentary democracy there and, in effect, confine it to the whites. However uninterested in politics the blacks might have appeared to be in the past they could hardly be uninterested now. The world had shrunk, and Southern Rhodesia could no longer be isolated from its trends. For parliamentary

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60 ORAL/238 Jack Howman Interview

61 Holderness, Lost Chance, p. 23.
democracy to prevail it would have to be sold in competition with Russian communism and Fascism, both of which after all claimed to be popular movements. And Rhodesian whites could hardly reject the racialism embodied in the Nazi philosophy while practising racial superiority themselves.  

Holderness himself thought that multi-racial partnership of sorts stood a good chance in Rhodesia:

There was not the Poor White problem in Southern Rhodesia which South Africa had been saddled with, and the history of contact between whites and blacks here had surely been too short to leave deep-seated legacies of hatred. Besides, there was the experience of the world which so many Rhodesians had had in the course of war service, and there were all these immigrants with many skills. Surely these were promising factors.

This sentiment was echoed by Robert Tredgold, who believed that ‘there is no better solvent of artificial barriers between human beings than military service together. I do not believe that any Rhodesian officer, who led Africans in the field, could ever feel again the naked prejudice that so often alienates man from man, where they do not possess the same pigmentation of the skin.’

On the Ruys Holderness had a captive audience, and one which had spent several years on active service and which would be amenable to a series of lectures and debates on the future of Rhodesia. These events were the precursors of the National Affairs Association. Among the speakers on the Ruys was Major Winston Field, later Prime Minister after the RF won the 1962 election, whose expertise in tobacco farming coupled with his interest in white immigration to Rhodesia meant that he took up a government scheme to settle Italian families in Rhodesia.

In many ways the war had passed Rhodesia by. Although some 12,000 men of all races

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62 ibid, p. 26  
63 ibid, p. 42.  
64 Tredgold, The Rhodesia that was my life. p. 134.
served abroad, the home front was extremely quiet, and nothing much changed on the surface, even given the presence of thousands of allied service personnel. Unlike Britain, where the patrician Conservatives were defeated by the radical Labour Party, which initiated wide-ranging reforms, Huggins continued as Prime Minister in Rhodesia. But this was by a narrow squeak. He nearly lost the 1946 election to the reactionary and ill-named Liberal Party, and the United Party continued in power as a minority government, propped up by the Rhodesia Labour Party.

However, despite a surface continuation of the status quo, it would be wrong to assume that the political and discursive scene had not changed. In the spirit which had been fostered by the war, a number of white ex-servicemen launched the Rhodesia Ex-Service Vigilance Association (RESVA) in September 1946, ‘a name which suggested sectional activity or some sort of Ku Klux Klan-ism’, so the name was quickly changed to the Rhodesia National Affairs Association.65 Forty-five ex-servicemen attended a preliminary meeting which agreed to establish the association, and 200 turned up at the first meeting on 8 March 194666 in the Drill Hall in Salisbury, where 95 people joined straight away. The association would be political, but non-party, and was intended to complement MOTH and BESL.67 The manifesto which was soon drawn up read as follows:

1. The main and central object of the Association is to maintain the spirit of interest, enquiry, initiative and service which has been stimulated by experience and travel during the war, and to develop it and make use of it for promoting the progress of the Colony.
2. In pursuing this object it has been found essential to bring home to the individual the vital and important part he exercises in National Affairs, and the essential duty each individual has to himself, his family and his community in understanding to the best of his ability the National Problems with which the


66 National Affairs, 2, 1, April 1951.

67 MOTH (Memorable Order of the Tin Hats) and BESL (British Empire Service League) were the main ex-service organisations in Rhodesia. They were not party political per se, preferring to concentrate on helping individual servicemen with the problems caused by the return to civilian life. For MOTH, see NAZ file S482/57/43.
Colony is faced.
3. By lectures, debates and discussions at which every shade of thought will be presented, to enable the man in the street to understand and form his own opinion upon National Problems.
4. By encouraging constructive effort and ideas to give the man in the street the opportunity of making his own contribution to the solution of both immediate and future National Problems.
5. The Association originally formed as an Ex-Service Organisation soon found the necessity for widening its base to include all members of the public irrespective of their occupation, religious or political views for it was found that only in this way could a truly and unselfish and National movement be launched.  

As a politically involved service organisation, the NAA was not alone in southern Africa. It was semi-consciously modelled on the Springbok Legion in South Africa. Unlike the NAA, which was a post-war creation, the Springbok Legion was set up in December 1941 to cater for the needs of South African servicemen and ex-servicemen. It was chartered as a non-racial organisation, although the hierarchy was white. It was a sort of organisational bridge for radical whites in South Africa between the height of the Communist Party’s popularity and the foundation of the Congress of Democrats. Its radical members tried to marry concern for the plight of servicemen and ex-servicemen with wider political goals. Its friends considered it progressive, its detractors thought it was little more than a communist front. In fact, relatively few of its grassroots members shared its radical vision, and many left. It filled a gap, however: at a time when inter-ethnic contact was increasing, there were precious few organisations whites could join which would encourage such an attitude.

In some ways, the climate seemed right for the Springbok Legion. Jan Smuts had declared that ‘segregation has fallen on evil days’, and the liberalised rhetoric that pervaded allied discourse seemed to give hope to this sort of organisation. The Army Education Service

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AES) lectured on a wide variety of topics, including communism and socialism, to ‘inculcate a liberal, tolerant frame of mind’.\textsuperscript{70} The South African government itself added to this optimistic frame of mind by extending wartime reforms, like feeding schemes, pensions and invalid benefits to black service personnel. The Springbok Legion’s own ‘Soldier’s Manifesto’ made a number of economic demands on behalf of all service personnel, and encouraged its members to pursue a civilian life of ‘unity and cooperation among races’.\textsuperscript{71} Like the NAA, it was open to all races, and what set it apart from other service organisations was its willingness “to take political action in accord with the principles and practices of democracy”\textsuperscript{72}

After the war the Springbok Legion mirrored the NAA in pressing for housing for returning servicemen, and for better demobilisation conditions for non-white servicemen. But here the two organisations diverged. After about 1947, most white servicemen’s demands had been met, and there was little the Springbok Legion could do to alleviate the lot of black servicemen. It therefore directed its non-white members towards their ‘appropriate’ national liberatory organisations. The Nationalists’ victory in 1948 effectively hamstrung the Springbok Legion by actively working towards depriving non-whites of political rights. In addition, the Suppression of Communism Act hastened the departure of those members who did not consciously identify with the far left.

The Springbok Legion was followed in South Africa by the War Veterans’ Action Committee, better known as the Torch Commando. The Torch Commando was established in 1951 specifically to counter the National Party’s efforts to remove Cape Coloureds from the electoral roll,\textsuperscript{73} and continued the practice of politically-conscious service personnel organising in order to challenge and influence political developments. There was certainly an essence of

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\bibitem{70} ibid, p. 55.
\bibitem{71} ibid.
\bibitem{72} ibid.
\bibitem{73} Cape Coloureds had been removed from the common roll in 1936, and instead were allowed to elect white representatives on a communal roll.
\end{thebibliography}
self-interest in the Torch Commando: if the Coloureds could be deprived of the vote, why not the English-speakers? Like the NAA, the Torch Commando did not aspire to be a political party, and rallied around the concept of defence of the constitution, since the National Party’s actions in loading the houses of assembly was clearly unconstitutional. Within a year of its creation, the Torch Commando’s membership exceeded a quarter of a million. The Commando’s first torchlit procession in Cape Town - ironically reminiscent of the sort of Nazi demonstrations its members had fought against in the war - ended in violence after the police intervened.74 However, the National Party’s success in the 1953 election, which strengthened its hand in the House of Assembly, led to the disintegration of the Torch Commando.

There were clear similarities between the Springbok Legion, the NAA and the Torch Commando. As Holderness said, ‘we were aware that many of these South Africans had fought alongside us, and had so many similar ideas about the war as us. They appreciated the tragic irony of fighting for freedom in Europe and coming home to a divided society, as we did’.75 There were, nonetheless clear differences between the three organisations which are worth noting here. The Springbok Legion had been created during the war, not after, and pursued an openly left-wing agenda. The Torch Commando was defending the constitution against a government which was acting unconstitutionally to deprive voters of their rights. The NAA was also a product of the end the war, and tried to remain non-political in party terms - it took its involvement in politics as far as trying to inculcate a certain spirit of citizenship in its members, but did not use its position to follow a directly party-political path. In any case, many of the NAA’s members were civil servants who were prohibited from taking part in any openly political action. The NAA certainly did not campaign against the government as such - rather, it tried to build on what it considered to be a more liberal atmosphere. In this spirit, Holderness wrote to Huggins, suggesting that Huggins was the right man to lead Rhodesia into an era where relations between the races were more equitable, saying that


75 Interview, Hardwicke Holderness.
during the war they [the people] learnt in practice what the progressives had been teaching before - that happiness consisted in common effort for a common ideal, whatever the discomfort ... the most vital job to be performed is for someone to state the objective ... I feel that only you can be the spokesman for many of us - and I believe there are very many, and potentially a majority - who want to believe in the place, as well as live in it.\textsuperscript{76}

The greatest difference, however, between the Sprinbok Legion and the Torch Commando, and the NAA, was that the NAA was not working against a new political elite whose aims were so clearly in conflict with the NAA’s own ethos. On the contrary, it was working within the establishment, and not only without any conflict, but with tacit approval. No NAA meetings were ever broken up by the police, NAA members were often also politically involved within the elite, and the NAA’s goals were not diametrically opposed to the government’s.\textsuperscript{77}

Huggins indirectly gave the NAA a boost, and propagated its message, in a speech he gave at St. George’s College in Salisbury where he exhorted his listeners to read at least one ‘heavy’ book a month and ‘to be a good citizen it is necessary to be well informed’\textsuperscript{78} - exactly what the NAA was pushing for. Typically, though, Huggins slightly ruined his sentiments with another example of his sometimes clumsy prose, referring to Africans as ‘barbarians’.

The two contexts within which the NAA, and Springbok Legion and Torch Commando, were working become apparent. The latter were operating in an increasingly hostile environment whereas the NAA was not. Also, many of the NAA’s members were members of the establishment and elite who had open and direct contacts with government and powerful

\textsuperscript{76} MS 281/1/14 Correspondence October 1947-December 1950. Holderness to Huggins, 6 April 1949. Also in HHP, Box 2, File ‘Quoted Reference/Material for caps. 3-7’.

\textsuperscript{77} Interview, Hardwicke Holderness. ‘I had some sympathy with the Torch Commando. There they were, a large organisation protesting against the Nats and getting squashed, and here we were, a small talking shop with the same views operating freely. In South Africa, we would have been closed down, no doubt about it’.

\textsuperscript{78} MS 281/2/14. RAF Moral Leadership Course: St. George’s College. Talk given on 18 May 1949.
interest groups, something which was not as pronounced in the Springbok Legion or Torch Commando, and the NAA did not aspire to mass action on the streets. In addition, the NAA could truthfully be described as a lecture series with political inclinations rather than as a party political or direct action organisation. Given its deep connections with the Rhodesian elite, and the fact that it was not working against government policy, it did not attract the ire of the authorities as the Springbok Legion and Torch Commando did.

Despite the relatively large membership, the driving force behind the NAA was unmistakably Holderness. Holderness is not a household name, but he was as liberal a Rhodesian as it was possible to have elected to parliament by a white electorate - he was elected to the Southern Rhodesian assembly in 1954. Holderness played down his war record. He was decorated three times, one of Rhodesia’s genuine war heroes, but was reluctant to use his record to attract votes, preferring to rely on the appeal of his political platform:

It was the thing to have a manifesto - in this case quite a brief pamphlet containing a letter to voters on one page and a photograph and brief curriculum vitae on the other. The latter had caused me some heart searching, relating to the war record part of it. During the war three ‘gongs’ (as the Air Force called them) had come my way, but what I felt about them (knowing how much they owed to the grace of God and team work, and how little to fearlessness) was so different to the popular conception, especially amongst people who had been five thousand miles away from the scene of that war, that it was a subject best forgotten for most purposes.  

Despite his misgivings, Holderness allowed his decorations to be included in his manifesto, precisely because he was trying to appeal to voters ‘susceptible to prowess in sport’. But one of the official pillars of the Salisbury North Constituency branch of the United Party, one Major Mundy, caused Holderness some anxiety, which relates exactly to ways in which fighting in the war had changed people’s viewpoints, or not, as the case may be. Mundy

79 Holderness, Lost Chance, pp. 127-128.

80 ibid, p. 128.
was concerned that Holderness did not come out explicitly against social and marital mixing of the races. Holderness comments:

How could it be that within ten years of Hitler and Goebbels still emitting their poison about racial purity, someone like Mundy - who was really a nice man and very kind to me in the end - could bring himself to talk about ‘the maintenance of the purity of the White Race’?  

Holderness was acutely aware of the suffering and sacrifice the war had entailed, and was reluctant to use his own service record to score party political points, although it was a necessary evil to be tolerated for the greater good. The memory of the violence of the war, and the ideals for which it was fought, were powerful, and Holderness did not want a war for the same ideals to be fought in his own country.

The NAA in practice

The first major undertaking of the NAA (still operating as RESVA) was to conduct a survey of the housing problems Southern Rhodesia faced immediately after the war. This was an impressive document which ennumerated the capacity of Southern Rhodesia to support a building industry and produce and import the necessary raw materials and finished products. It also conducted a survey of the available workforce which had skills related to the building trade, and concluded that preference should be given to skilled artisans who could add to its numbers.

The problem of housing was not limited to servicemen. With the wide-scale white immigration into Southern Rhodesia, housing shortages became acute to the point where the Government considered calling a halt to immigration altogether to give the country a chance to build up its infrastructure and catch up with demand. This never happened, but it shows how serious the problem was. The solution to housing was provided directly by RESVA’s survey.

81 ibid, p. 130.

82 HHP, Box 2, ‘Memorandum on Housing and the Building Industry by the Executive of the Rhodesia National Affairs Association’, September 1946.
The survey concluded that wattle and daub housing with concrete frames corrugated steel or tin roofs (mud huts, as its detractors called it) was the quickest and cheapest solution. This housing was known by the more amenable term of pise de terre. This housing was supposed to be temporary until proper Rhodesian bungalows could be built, but like so many British wartime prefabs, it is still in use around Harare.

The housing survey is therefore an example of two things. First, how the NAA acted on its wider remit of discussing problems of national concern. Secondly, rather than being an ineffectual talking shop, the NAA could actually influence government policy. There were other examples of NAA documents of this nature, which concerned debatable points of the day, but none of them assumed the importance of the housing survey. The NAA moved swiftly to becoming the lecture society it considered its greatest duty.

Once the constitution and the NAA’s raison d’etre had been established, the association embarked on a programme of lunchtime lectures on questions of national concern in Salisbury. The audience was almost exclusively white, for the simple reason that very few Africans above the rank of office messenger worked in the centre of Salisbury.83 To rectify this situation, in 1951 the NAA (under the name National Affairs Discussion Group) organised lectures in Highfield, which received a very different, more politically charged response.84 The NAA Chairman’s Report of May 1952 said that

perhaps potentially one of the most important spheres of our activities lies in the National Affairs Discussion Group. This body, inter-racial in character, finds its importance, to my mind, in the fact that it provides an opportunity to all races to get to know each other in the pursuit of a common objective, namely national affairs.

The report cautiously continued:

83 Hardwicke Holderness interview, 20 April 1996.

84 ibid; also Holderness, Lost Chance, pp. 83-4.
it is too early yet to judge the success or otherwise of the Discussion Group. It had unquestionably attracted to itself a number of Africans of outstanding merit. But it must achieve a greater public and this it will only do in time as confidence in its activities grows. It must avoid being inveigled into political activities, it must not become a bandwagon for all those with political ambitions to climb on’.  

The NAA’s influence spread beyond Salisbury. It had a branch in Bulawayo which followed a similar pattern of lectures and debates. In 1946 a debating society was founded in Marandellas which was directly affiliated to the NAA. The NAA’s penetration of the white middle class was not limited to the capital, and its workings captured something of the spirit of partnership. By early 1949, the NAA had held some 200 lunchtime lectures and over twenty debates. It had also started broadcasting potted versions of selected lectures on the radio, then the only mass broadcasting media, and a government monopoly. The NAA’s ease in using the radio was an indication of its close, non-confrontational relationship with the establishment. Although listening figures for the radio lectures do not exist, the fact that the NAA had access to the only reliable mass media in the country suggests that its influence was felt beyond the weekly lectures in Salisbury.

The audience at the Salisbury lunchtime lectures averaged around 200, with over 500 attending some of the more interesting and original talks, a high number considering that the white population of Salisbury at the time was well under 100,000, and that not all whites would be interested in the NAA. The NAA’s remit was, as we have seen, to examine and inform people of issues of national importance, and the topics of the lectures confirms this. The talks ranged widely - there were talks on irrigation methods worldwide, on how to cut down the cost of living (for Europeans), on botany and plant pathology, on minerals and mining, and on the world scout movement. There were also talks on issues more directly concerned with politics,

85 HHP, Box 12, File ‘RNAA 1952-1953 & early 1954’.

86 Hodder-Williams, White Farmers, p. 205. Just to show that discussion groups on NAA lines were not the sole preserve of the large urban areas, Marandellas also saw the creation of a liberal discussion groups, the Dolphin Club, in 1962. ibid., p. 208.
like the franchise, the contribution of whites in southern Africa, ‘traditional’ African society, urban housing for Africans, and ‘native policy’ in both Rhodesia and South Africa.  

Several talks drew the comparison between South African apartheid and Rhodesian ‘liberalism’ - or at least, what was seen as Rhodesian realism - and served to further highlight the growing distance between Rhodesian and South African approaches to the white presence in southern Africa. Ken Kirkwood, professor of history at the University of Natal was a regular speaker, and in one of his talks he stated that under apartheid in South Africa ‘we seem to be doing everything possible to make sure that civilisation will not survive in the Union’.  

He added that he was sure that English-speaking South Africans would be disenfranchised just as Africans, Coloureds and Indians had been, and said ‘it is essential to realise that reason plays little part in South African politics and that emotion is dominant’, especially the emotion among Afrikaners that somehow God had decreed that the National Party had ‘a divine right to undertake political action’. Kirkwood then spoke about Christian National education in South Africa as a way of preserving ‘the integrity of the volk’. Drawing disturbing parallels, he continued, ‘I think you will agree that this is merely an emotional appeal and there is a striking similarity between these sentiments and those of the Nazi leaders in Germany in the 30s’. Kirkwood then propounded his opinion that since the May 1948 election which returned a National Party government, there had been a sea-change in attitude towards the Africans which the Africans themselves had quickly realised, and concluded, ‘this repression is going to prove suidicidal for South Africa’. In a subsequent talk to the NAA’s Executive Committee on the political situation in South Africa, Kirkwood stressed that Southern Rhodesia ‘can give a lesson to the Union, and can be an example, a reverse flow of ideas. You, the Rhodesian National Affairs Association, have a mission to enlighten the public’. Although Kirkwood thought that in the past Africans had compared the two countries and believed they had more rights and

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87 HHP, Box 2. Almost all the lecture transcripts are stored here in chronological order.

opportunities under Smuts in South Africa than in Rhodesia, the fact that those rights were
being withdrawn in South Africa at a time when there was talk of extending them in Rhodesia
was vital, and in this way Rhodesia, with a policy of extending rights and enfranchising
Africans, could provide a liberal counterpoint to South African repression.

One other lecture which deserves to be mentioned was the one delivered by Gideon
Mhlanga, entitled ‘The autobiography of an African’.\textsuperscript{89} Mhlanga was the first African university
graduate in Southern Rhodesia, and his story was the essence of what the Rhodesian elite
looked for in the African middle class. He had left home on his own initiative to earn enough
money to pay for his education. In doing so, he was deliberately making a break with the past,
especially as his own father had been sceptical of his son converting to Christianity. Having
eventually saved up enough money to pay for his education and degree, he returned to Rhodesia,
where he did the only job which was open to people such as him: he taught, albeit at the new
(and only) government secondary school for Africans, Goromonzi. While Mhlanga was mildly
critical of the lack of opportunities for Africans of his status, he was far from revolutionary, and
went out of his way to praise the system, especially the missionaries. He had high hopes for
Rhodesia becoming ‘a democratic country in the true sense of the word’ since the increasing
demand from Africans for education could only increase the numbers qualifying for the
franchise and therefore extend their involvement in public life. Mhlanga’s lecture epitomised
what the NAA was hoping to achieve: barriers between educated Africans and Europeans were
falling, and while the African middle class was expanding, there was no question of them
questioning the essence of the Rhodesian system, and therefore progress would be achieved
through partnership and not confrontation.\textsuperscript{90}

The Interracial Association of Southern Rhodesia

\textsuperscript{89} HHP, Box 4, File ‘Lectures Jan-June 1949’. Gideon Mhlanga, ‘The autobiography of an

\textsuperscript{90} Hardwicke Holderness interview, 16 April 1996.
Where the debate on partnership and inclusivity was concerned outside the immediate confines of political power, the Interracial Association of Southern Rhodesia (IASR) was the logical extension of the NAA in the early 1950s, and it continued the NAA’s practice of white elite-sponsored organisations bringing partnership to the attention of the various governments. The IASR was founded in December 1952, and Holderness was again the driving force behind it. The membership broadened to include people with no service experience, especially white women and African men, although the ratio between white and black was about two-to-one throughout its existence. There were the usual liberal whites, such as Holderness, Harben and Guy Clutton-Brock. Other less radical white members included Jack Howman, later an RF minister, and Geoffrey Ellman-Brown, who led the cabinet revolt against Todd in 1958.91 The approach to African rights mirrored elite Africans: the masses could not expect civil rights for which they were not prepared to fall into their laps, but ‘advanced Africans’ were a different matter. They were ‘civilised’, literate and whites could probably relate to them in a social setting, and so better that they be encouraged to work within the system than to challenge it and perhaps try to destroy it from the outside. The IASR was also an indictment of the weakness of African nationalist movements in that Africans who could otherwise have been nationalist leaders, and indeed later joined the nationalists, were attracted to the IASR. But there was also a perhaps unconscious assertion of Hobsbawm’s idea that empires turn their victims into their supporters: ‘For all the naïveté and idealism, and the self-conscious gaiety of cocktail parties, the cultivation of selected Blacks had a practical and even selfish intention: the protection of a way of life by extending its privileges to potential saboteurs’.92

The IASR was formally launched by Sir Robert Tredgold in 1953 in accordance with the new spirit of partnership and the optimism liberal whites and Africans felt at the elevation of Garfield Todd to the premiership in Southern Rhodesia, which had been vacated when Huggins became Federal Prime Minister. Todd received many letters and telegrams congratulating him

91 See Chapter 7.
92 Hancock, White Liberals, Moderates and Radicals, p. 27.
and expressing optimism. This one is typical:

We feel that it is men of your calibre possessing goodwill and tolerance towards all, having the breadth of vision and foresight, warmth of feeling, understanding and appreciation for others’ viewpoints and difficulties, are needed today to guide S. Rhodesia for the peace and progress of our multiracial country.  

Some people thought that the relative liberalism of partnership inculcated a defiantly new spirit in race relations. One former schoolteacher commented that upon returning to Southern Rhodesia in 1954 after four years in South Africa, an enormous change in attitude had palpably occurred, and Southern Rhodesia now felt like a completely different country from the one she had left. Other observers were less charitable, calling partnership an exercise in collective hypocrisy on the part of the whites. All the same, multi-racial societies among which the IASR was pre-eminent were formed as meeting places where all races could participate in political discussion. Many people, both white and black were attracted by the novelty of meeting on a perhaps superficially equal footing and being able to debate public issues seriously. Although the IASR was really an elite club for idealistic whites and ‘moderate’ Africans, its real value lies in the fact that it attracted so many of the African middle class. It was a manifestation of the way in which many elite Africans had confidence in the spirit of partnership, although one should remember that at this time partnership did not exist in practice, as it was too early to have distinguished any practical measures which would narrow the gap between whites and middle class Africans.

In some ways, the IASR’s membership was similar to the NAA’s, but the IASR tried to

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93 MS 1082/5/2. Prag. R. Vaghmaria (Secretary of the Southern Rhodesian Indian Conference) to Todd, 31 August 1953.

94 Conversation with Diana Mitchell, February 1995, Harare. Mitchell said that for the first time she was able to reprimand pupils for being rude about Africans, something which she had not been able to do in South Africa or pre-1953 Rhodesia.

95 See, for example, Doris Lessing, Going Home (London, Flamingo, 1992). Also Interview, Eileen Haddon, 11 October 1994.
have even wider appeal. Significantly, it attracted a good proportion of the African elite, and it spanned a wide spectrum of the white and black middle classes. On the European side there was even a Native Commissioner, as well as Holderness, Lewis, Harben and other liberal whites.96 Among the African members there were, Jasper Savanhu, Chad Chipunza (later a member of the Central Africa Party and an ‘avowed multiracialist’), past radicals like Charles Mzingeli and future radicals like Leopold Takawira. Significantly, and self-consciously, the IASR sought to maintain a racial balance in its various bodies. Its original executive committee contained 17 whites, 14 blacks, four Asians and three Coloureds, and its publication Concord was published by an editorial committee of four, one from each racial group.97 It was predominantly white - out of 270 members in 1954, 170 were white98 - but even if its membership looks small, it took in a good proportion of the elites of all races in Southern Rhodesia.

The IASR was also much more clearly a place for the races to mix socially and get to know each other. It did not have the lecture-room feel of the NAA, although it certainly had plenty of ideas about how the country should advance, and in that spirit, the IASR produced a report (in the vein of the NAA’s housing survey) on conditions in the African townships. The association is worth examining because the kind of middle class/liberal mixing which took place within its meetings was the ideal towards which the rhetoric of partnership worked. It was also a manifestation of the confidence among some elite Africans of what partnership could ultimately mean - not immediate social and political integration, but a kind of preparatory club for those who felt able to mix with other races. On the surface, the IASR was doing the Southern Rhodesian and Federal administrations a great service by attracting Africans and

96 West asserts that old Rhodesians considered the IASR distasteful and that it attracted mainly postwar migrants. The composition of its white membership does not support this opinion. Of its prominent white members, Holderness and Pat Lewis were born Rhodesians, as was Tredgold, and Harben, Haddon and N.A.F. Williams were both pre-war migrants. It seemed to attract whites with little to fear from African advancement regardless of length of residence in Rhodesia. See West, ‘African Middle Class Formation’, p. 394, fn. 41.


98 ibid.
functioning as a visible example of the possibilities of partnership.

The IASR simultaneously brought out a draft of its constitution and also a declaration on African Affairs. Nothing in either of the two documents would have surprised or concerned liberals and moderates of the time. The constitution of the IASR was reminiscent of the NAA’s. It said that the objects of the association were:

(a) To provide a means whereby people in Southern Rhodesia, irrespective of race, creed or colour, may work together for the purpose of promoting the national welfare;
(b) To examine the problems of the country’s development and to work on solutions based on:
   i. The ultimate aim that fullness of life, both spiritual and material, shall be available to all its inhabitants, and
   ii. The means of utilising fully the capacity of each individual to contribute, irrespective of race, creed or colour;
(c) To define and establish common goals in the development of Southern Rhodesia;
(d) To work for the acceptance of the Association’s principles and findings by peaceful and constructive means;
(e) To work for the evolution ultimately of an integrated society, in which there will be no differentiation between people on grounds of race or colour, with humanity and the good of mankind as the common aim.99

The IASR appears at various points in this thesis. It existed for the whole life of the Federation, but it went into decline when mass nationalism attracted many of its African members, and it lost much of its allure as a multiracial club and talking shop. It had turned into a liberal pressure group more than a social club by 1957 when the Todd franchise100 became law, and to some extent its remit was hijacked by the Federal government’s Cabinet Partnership Implementation Committee (CPIC) in 1958. However, it was an important component of Rhodesian civil society at a time when contact between the races on a quasi-equal basis was difficult, and while its constitution was élitist, naive and not a little utopian, it was not at all badly received.101 It fitted

99 WP 250/3, f. 21.
100 See Chapter 5.
very well into the change of attitude which many people felt Federation and partnership had brought about.

The Capricorn Africa Society

The NAA and IASR had plugged into a sea-change which occurred in much of the western world after the war. They advocated a move towards liberalism, which in many ways was echoed by the Capricorn Africa Society. Capricorn was set up in 1949 by David Stirling of Desert Rat fame in World War II, and was based in London, although Stirling himself moved to Rhodesia. His scheme was to create a huge British Dominion in Capricorn Africa - that part of Africa between the Equator and the Tropic of Capricorn - which would encompass Uganda, Kenya, Tanganyika, Northern and Southern Rhodesia, and Nyasaland. Stirling fed on the cold war justification for a strong Federation considerably more than the NAA did (although the NAA did not ignore the Soviet ‘threat’ and Rhodesia’s role in combatting it), and he wanted to see established a bulwark against communism in which South Africa was an ally, not an embarrassing and potentially hostile neighbour, and as such Capricorn was more imperial in its sentiment and objectives than the more localised NAA and IASR.

Capricorn was not a Rhodesian organisation per se, but it is worth mentioning here because in many ways it epitomised the change in policy and mentality which accompanied Federation, and so gave partnership a wider currency than might otherwise have been the case. Like the NAA and IASR, it was another of the new associations which attracted the African middle class, many of whom saw no conflict in belonging to both white-inspired multiracial associations and nationalist organisations. Leopold Takawira was a paid employee up to 1961. Other members were Aaron Jacha, Lawrence Vambe and Stanlake Samkange. Vambe


103 Jacha was active in the pre-1957 SRANC, was head of the Farmers Union, and later joined the UFP and campaigned for Build a Nation with Edgar Whitehead. AOH/14 Aaron Jacha interview.
himself described Capricorn’s appeal:

Stirling, one of the few far-sighted white settlers in those days, realised that the then existing colonial order in British East and Central African territories was doomed to failure unless the black and white people in this region were prepared to share economic and political power. To this end he formed the CAS and endeavoured to recruit Africans and Europeans of like mind to influence the situation ... we had serious but friendly discussion, centred mainly on the over-riding topic of devising a franchise system capable of being saleable to those then in decision making positions which would give the black people a meaningful share in the government of all these territories.104

Capricorn had a different, yet overlapping, agenda to the IASR or the NAA. It also had a different feel to it. To begin with, it was more ‘imperial’ in outlook, and was based in London. It did not have the air of a home-grown Rhodesian organisation. While the white IASR members were ‘instinctive Fabians rather than misplaced Tories’,105 Capricorn’s supporters tended to be more upper-class, especially in Britain. Capricorn did not seek to become a political party, rather, it preferred to influence events by “‘arousing an irresistible weight of multi-racial public opinion’” which Bob de Quehen, the FISB director, described as ‘a little ominous’.106 Interestingly, Capricorn attracted a larger African membership than the IASR. When Capricorn membership peaked in 1958 at 2566, 65 per cent were black.107 Quite possibly, Capricorn’s emphasis on the British imperial umbrella attracted those Africans who believed in the value of imperial protection against local segregation, in contrast to the NAA and IASR which, for all their good intentions, were local organisations. In addition, more Africans were attracted because Capricorn added Asians to the list of potential enemies, the very people whom Africans

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104 ORAL/233 Lawrence Vambe interview.

105 Hancock, White Liberals, Moderates and Radicals, p. 50.

106 WP 518/8 f. 10. Bob de Quehen to Stewart Parker, 1 August 1955.

would compete with first as they advanced. Yet Sanger believes Capricorn could have attracted more Africans had Stirling dropped his implacable opposition to any form of African nationalism - which is problematic because the apparent success of Capricorn, the NAA and IASR was in part because of the weakness of the nationalist organisations, and not because the African elite necessarily preferred Capricorn having considered all the options. There is also something to be said for Shamuyarira’s view that African membership of these organisations was relatively high because of the sheer novelty. Because of the high visibility the organisation attracted and the number of Africans involved, Capricorn’s failure was felt more keenly.

As we shall see in the final chapter, the UFP ran the Build a Nation campaign as a final effort to save the concept of partnership and block the growing influence of the white right wing and the African nationalists, and one of the main attractions then was the fact that a third of the delegates at the UFP’s 1961 congress were not white. However, the first time delegates of all races got together on an equal footing to discuss policy and politics in such a wide-ranging manner was at Salima in Nyasaland, where Capricorn hosted the Salima Convention. Vambe said that the convention ‘convinced me that this society had something to offer to which I could subscribe and I decided then ... to support it actively’. The Salima Convention was the first time blacks and whites met together on a large scale to discuss questions of multiracial citizenship. To this end, the Convention finished by producing the Capricorn Contract, which included suggestions for a wider franchise, although the system of multiple votes dependent on one’s ‘level of civilisation’ was so fiendishly complicated that it is unlikely that it could ever have worked in practice.

Capricorn ultimately foundered after the Convention. It had intended to wind itself up

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108 ibid., p. 393.
110 See fn. 463.
111 ORAL/233 Lawrence Vambe interview.
anyway, as the Contract was supposed to be the apex of its achievements,112 but it was also in a dreadful financial state, and its imperial approach did not rest easy in Southern Rhodesia and the Federation.

**African reactions to Federation**

Nonetheless, as far as the Southern Rhodesian government was concerned, there was no reason why the African middle class could not be co-opted. African nationalism in Southern Rhodesia was characterised by its emphasis on co-operation with the Native Affairs Department and its quest for greater recognition of ‘advanced’ Africans without any commensurate request for the uplifting of the masses. The membership of the IASR and Capricorn overlapped considerably, as ‘many articulate Africans were seeking to try out the new multi-racial order’.113

In any case, not all nationalists necessarily joined the SRANC. As we have seen, Benjamin Burombo, who founded the activist British African Workers Voice Association and was instrumental in organising the 1948 general strike which took the whites by surprise, was unenthusiastic because he considered the SRANC to be an élitist organisation.114 But Burombo was not typical of African nationalist leaders before 1957. Jasper Savanhu, who was in the delegation to the April 1952 talks in London, said that if the Europeans were sincere about Federation, the Africans ‘would acquiesce, and later wholeheartedly support the concept of Federation’.115 It was a case of enlightened self-interest on the part of the middle class and bourgeoisie. Lawrence Vambe said that the Africans who supported Federation most eagerly were

mainly the middle class, the educated and business community ... the same

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112 Although quite how liberals could lobby for the Contract to be adopted by Rhodesian politicians without an organisation to support it was not made clear.

113 Shamuyarira, *Crisis in Rhodesia*, pp. 16-17.


115 AOH/5 Jasper Savanhu interview.
accommodating Africans conceded that the Federation had economic advantages and mounted a very strong lobby on all the governments in the three territories to confer these benefits on the black population by spending more money on education, housing, etc., let alone abolishing discriminatory practices in this new state. Again and again Africans argued that if these reforms were actually carried out, they would be prepared to look at the Federation more favourably.\textsuperscript{116}

The traditional leaders, the chiefs, were part of that elite which was to be further co-opted into the white Rhodesian system, and their identification with the Empire was clearly a strong point which the Rhodesians could develop. After World War I, a deputation of chiefs from Southern Rhodesia sent a message to George V ‘which expressed their feelings about the experience of the war: “We wish to say that, when the King called upon us for help, we sent our young men, who fought and died beside the English, and we claim that our blood and that of the English are now one”’.\textsuperscript{117} As quoted earlier, Nathan Shamuyarira was not surprised that few people realised how circumscribed the partnership would be in electoral terms. Indeed, as far as the Rhodesians were concerned, there was no reason, given the history of African nationalism and the current willingness of the African elite to give partnership a try, why the carrot should not be accepted.

However, it is clear that Federation was not welcomed with any great enthusiasm by the majority of Africans. The simple assertion of partnership in the Federal constitution’s preamble did not in itself promise an end to white hegemony or the creation of a meritocracy. Quite the opposite, in fact; the suspicion of the northward expansion of Southern Rhodesian discrimination was one clear factor, and one which had been present at least since the Bledisloe Commission of 1939 which had considered the question of amalgamation or closer association between Southern and Northern Rhodesia.\textsuperscript{118} In addition, it was not immediately clear what

\textsuperscript{116} ORAL/233 Lawrence Vambe interview.

\textsuperscript{117} McLaughlin, \textit{Ragtime Soldiers}, p. 79.

\textsuperscript{118} Great Britain, \textit{Rhodesia-Nyasaland Royal Commission Report} [Bledisloe Commission], paras. 485-486.
economic advantages would accrue to the northern territories. This was borne out by the fact that the road between Salisbury and Lusaka was upgraded, while the one between Lusaka and Blantyre was not. More importantly, the hydroelectric project was built on the Zambezi at Kariba - straddling Northern and Southern Rhodesia - rather than more cheaply on the Kafue in Northern Rhodesia.

African opposition to Federation was raised in various quarters. It is true that most of this came from Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland, but their fears were reflected by much of the African elite in Southern Rhodesia a few years later. On the one hand Percy Ibbotson, unelected special member for African interests in Southern Rhodesia, thought that African opposition was down to the fact that very few of them indeed can intelligently assess the advantages and disadvantages of federation ... The overwhelming majority of Africans are still semi-primitive in thought and life, even though they may have the outward veneer of more civilised living ... It is clear ... that African opposition to federation is not the informed, intelligent and reasonable body of opinion which some in the United Kingdom have been misled into thinking. The mass of African opinion is ignorant or indifferent to the federation issue. The African nationalist is still immature and responsible concerning the multi-racial problem.\textsuperscript{119}

On the other hand, the Northern Rhodesia African National Congress (NRANC) stated the fear that Southern Rhodesia would be the dominant partner and that Southern Rhodesian discriminatory laws would spread northwards. In addition, the question of Dominion status worried the NRANC, because ‘if that happened the Colonial Office would be unable to exert any influence over any of the territories ... All the safeguards ... would become worthless. The Report gives no assurance that this will not happen but makes a plea that it should not happen for five years’. Added to this was the concern that no African MPs in the Federal legislature

would be elected by Africans themselves.\textsuperscript{120} Objections by the Nyasaland African Congress included:

We oppose federation because we are a Protectorate. Our country is not a colony for European settlement, as Southern Rhodesia is. That is why we cannot accept the doctrine of partnership with Europeans. Our political goal and the political goal of the European settlers are poles apart. Ours is AFRICAN SELF-GOVERNMENT ... and the establishment of a sovereign State when we have passed through our tutelage.

We elect to remain a protectorate and assert our right to self-determination. We have a right to determine the form of government under which we want to live. This is an inalienable right and the basis of democracy.

We have no faith in any assurances or safeguards as we know full well that these will not help us in practical politics. They have not helped any Africans before ... not on one single occasion have these safeguards helped the Rhodesian Africans against the oppressive laws and treatment made and meted out to them by their white rulers.\textsuperscript{121}

In an open letter to the conference in 1952, the Central Africa Committee in Britain summarised many African fears:

The Africans themselves wish to remain under the direct protection of the British Crown at the same time moving towards internal administrative reform and extending programmes of economic and social development. These aspirations could, we believe, form the basis of a timely programme once the immediate fear occasioned by the present proposals has been removed.\textsuperscript{122}

As we will see later, the issue of protectorate status, and the attendant desire among many Africans in the northern territories to keep the status of British Protected Person, were the cause of controversy when the Federal franchise was being devised. The very real fear of the

\textsuperscript{120} ibid. NRANC, ‘A Case Against Federation’, 4 August 1951.

\textsuperscript{121} ibid. ‘Why We Oppose Federation. Our Aims and Objectives’. Statement from ‘Nyasaland Africans to the British Government, Members of Parliament and People’ presented by the Nyasaland African Congress, 1 January 1952.

\textsuperscript{122} ibid. Central Africa Committee, Open Letter, n.d. [1952].
northward expansion of Southern Rhodesian discrimination was not especially mollified, although there was little concerted opposition outside the federation conferences until the mid-1950s. It is true that elite Africans in Southern Rhodesia were more receptive to the idea of partnership than Africans in the northern territories. As a result within Southern Rhodesia in particular it was easier to envisage the successful implementation of partnership, and the development of a multiracial political compromise which would not adversely affect the white lifestyle. Certainly, commentators from within and outside the Federation were optimistic that a new era in race relations had started. The problem, as we have seen, is that real thought about the implications of partnership was very much secondary to the process of loosening the ties with London as far as the white elite were concerned. The partnership debate, pursued by the NAA and IASR, was a departure in southern African terms, and so there was a certain qualified optimism that a kind of multiracial civil society would develop.

The sea-change which occurred in Rhodesian thought after 1945 was clear, especially in comparison with South Africa which seemed to be moving in the opposite direction. Most of the elite, even Huggins, had begun to question separate development, be it on economic, social or moral grounds, and as such the development of organisations within Rhodesian civil society which challenged separate development and smoothed the way to the concept of partnership was to be expected. The key role Southern Rhodesia played in the war cemented the colony’s place in the mainstream of the Commonwealth, and this also had repercussions for Rhodesian identity, which many people believed could now expand to allow for the growing African middle class. That the NAA exerted influence out of proportion to its size is not surprising. Rhodesia was still an insular country outside the world mainstream, and the white elite was a small, closely-knit group. One or two energetic individuals could therefore apply pressure which would be felt in ever-wider circles. What was essentially a lunch-time lecture group assumed national standing. Its lectures attracted civil servants, politicians, intellectuals, and interested parties. These were people who could make a difference, as Holderness and his colleagues envisaged. The NAA is also important because it was the first organisation which tried to bridge the gap between black and white in a way which, hopefully, would involve Africans in
discussions about Rhodesia’s future. In addition, its ease of operation, deep connections with the white elite and chosen topics of discussion further exemplified the way in which Rhodesia was distancing itself from South Africa. In this way, its existence was of seminal importance in this small pond.
Chapter 5
The Federal and Southern Rhodesian franchises, 1956-57

By 1956 it was becoming apparent that partnership was not delivering as quickly as some people hoped, on which more in the final chapter. The political, social and economic handicaps faced by Africans persisted. A black South African journalist tested Welensky’s claim that there was no discrimination on the railways by attempting to dine on a train and was refused service. In the autumn of 1956 there was passionate debate about the mixed marriage of Patrick Matimba to a Dutch woman, and where they would be legally allowed to live.¹ News from outside the Federation did not bode well for the white elite, with Ghana achieving independence and African nationalism seemingly on the ascendant.

Most importantly, the main developments in seeking a modicum of progress for partnership revolved around the debates concerning the Federal and Southern Rhodesian franchises, and by extension any additional openings which would accrue from opening up the European system to ‘advanced’ Africans, such as the new university college which was inaugurated in 1956. The franchise was technically non-racial, but the racial situation in Southern Rhodesia meant that the qualified franchise ‘did not work to bring gradually an ever-increasing proportion of the population into the political and electoral process’.² But because the franchise was not based openly on race, it also served to divert attention from the disadvantages Africans faced, so reform of a technically colour-blind provision could defuse criticism of partnership without necessarily leading to greater access for Africans. Since Federation had come with the promise of expanded mechanisms to extend rights to Africans, it was obvious that widening access to the franchise would be one of them. Southern Rhodesia had a common

¹ Mason, Year of Decision, p. 59; Holderness, Lost Chance, pp. 184-5.
roll without a technical colour bar. However, the qualifications were too high for the great majority of Africans, and many of those who might have qualified did not bother to register since the body politic seemed reserved for the whites, and so in practice a colour bar prevented most Africans from having any access to and engagement with the colony’s political process. Eric Walker wrote that ‘today we have learned to associate the franchise with liberty and to believe that when the franchise goes, liberty goes also. Indeed, the dictionary states roundly that ‘franchise’ means ‘liberty’, the right to vote for ‘a member of Parliament’. It is precisely the struggle to hold or take away the franchise, this ‘liberty’, that is raging in southern Africa under our very eyes’.

In his opinion, South Africa and Southern Rhodesia had earned ‘unenviable reputations’ because ‘whereas the British are seeking to endow the African majority with self-government step by step in those many parts of Africa where they still rule, the white authorities in southern Africa are either limiting or even taking away such political powers as their non-European majorities have ever had.’ He continued: ‘Southern Rhodesia has gone far to follow Natal, which she resembles in so many respects, in keeping a civilization policy on paper and reducing it to a farce in practice, a course which does not reassure the many opponents of the imminent Central African Federation which she will surely dominate.’

Greater access to the franchise acquired its totemic status as the way to integrate Africans because so many other avenues were closed to them, and it was one issue on which virtually all elite Africans agreed. Land ownership was segregated, as were the urban areas. Access to education was severely limited, and African pay was one-seventh of European wages.

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4 *ibid*, p. 93.

5 *ibid*, p. 112.

6 West, ‘Equal rights for all civilised men: elite Africans and the quest for European liquor in colonial Zimbabwe, 1924-1961’. The issue of African access to European liquor was actually quite divisive within the African élite.
Africans were subject to pass laws and legislation concerning the purchase of liquor and carrying of guns in a way in which whites were not. In fact, so much of Rhodesian legislation concerned segregation that to alter one aspect would place others in stark relief and would in all probability condemn the entire structure of discrimination. But amending the franchise would begin to reverse decades of discrimination in electoral politics, which could be separated from the day-to-day obstructions and ‘pin-pricks’ of segregation. Access to the franchise was actually the last hope elite Africans had of being judged on a par with Europeans, and was considered the ultimate badge of assimilated status, the only sphere in which, as things stood, Africans might gain acceptance into the mainstream of colonial society.

The Southern Rhodesian franchise to 1951

Before 1950 the Rhodesian government had made certain efforts to exclude Africans from the common roll, but their attempts had not been as concerted as in South Africa. Importantly, Rhodesian attempts to close the roll were as much to exclude Afrikaners as Africans, even up until the late 1940s. Nonetheless, at no time was the threat of racial or ethnic exclusion as immediate as it had been in South Africa, not only after 1948, but also in the 1920s when the Hertzog government’s four native bills implicitly jeopardised the common roll. At the time, South African liberals formed the Non Racial Franchise Association to defend the Cape franchise and avoid the danger of political organisation and voting along racial lines. It is significant that no such body for the specific defence of the franchise ever appeared in Rhodesia.

The development of the franchise in Southern Rhodesia until the early 1950s was also a reflection of the two pyramids philosophy. Part of the reasoning for actively dissuading African registration for the vote can be explained by two pyramids - parliamentary democracy was suitable for the European area, less so for the African one. Therefore, Africans would have

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methods of representation more ‘suited’ to their stage of development. The common roll, even with its high threshold, would not do. Debates about and alterations to the franchise mirrored the political atmosphere they evolved in. In the earlier part of the twentieth century, it was received wisdom in political circles that race affairs should be left outside the arena of party politics. Across the European political spectrum there was a broad consensus on racial matters. Because race permeated white Rhodesian society so deeply, agreement on such matters was often simply assumed, so there was no need to discuss it in the open. Whatever the differences among Europeans, they would almost invariably agree on race, so overt thought on racial issues affected the average Rhodesian’s life in a very peripheral way, a situation which was exacerbated by the lack of contact with Africans outside a master-servant relationship. As a result, relations between the races - and their respective access to power - played only a minor role in political matters until the late 1940s, and was not a dominant issue until the late 1950s.

Because African affairs were for so long held to be outside the party political arena, there was very little movement on the franchise until the late 1940s - it was simply not an issue which concerned the white electorate, so white politicians did not have to take a stand on it. In addition, there were too few Africans who qualified for the franchise to seriously worry Europeans. Until more than a handful of Africans qualified for the franchise, and until the dominant political philosophy involved opening up the franchise, there was little need to alter it. So, the franchise qualifications which were introduced in 1898, for the first elections to the Legislative Council, were altered only twice before 1951.

Southern Rhodesian settlers gained elected representation on the Legislative Council in 1898. The new franchise copied the Cape franchise. It was open to men over 21 who were British subjects, could complete the application form unaided, and had an income of £50 per annum, or occupied property worth £75, or owned a mining right. In 1906, the elected

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9 Leys, European Politics, p. 270.
10 ibid, p. 191.
members of the Legislative Council proposed closing the electoral roll to Africans. Because such an openly discriminatory ordinance would not be accepted by the British Government, by way of compromise in 1912 the income qualification was raised to £100 and the property qualification to £150. In 1917 it was officially stated that the qualifications’ aim was to prevent the registration of Africans, despite the fact that the franchise was in theory non-racial. H.U. Moffat, premier from 1927 to 1933, also thought that native councils, which were in the planning stage at the time, would alternative channels to the common roll for more politically-conscious Africans to express their grievances. He also wanted to institute some form of separate representation for Africans in Parliament. This made sense, as the big project of Moffat’s time was the Land Apportionment Act, and closing the franchise to Africans would separate the races politically as well as on the land. The Governor at the time, Sir Cecil Rodwell, did not accept the suggestions, on the grounds that they would cause problems overseas, and would polarise party politics along race lines, but also that there was no demand from Africans for separate representation.

In the immediate aftermath of World War II, Huggins’ United Party’s hold on power was wafer-thin. It held a minority of the seats (13 out of 30) after the 1946 election, and relied on the support of the Rhodesia Labour Party. In 1944 Huggins had proposed to close the common roll to Africans, ostensibly because the Europeans risked being swamped by a mass of ‘uncivilised’ voters, but also because separate political development was the logical result of the two pyramid policy. The ill-named Liberal Party, which had so nearly defeated Huggins, agreed with this sentiment. As a result, the 1946 election was fought with both main parties agreeing in principle to disenfranchise Africans, and the close result is perhaps a reflection of how little


12 Leys, European Politics, p. 191.


In this way, the franchise began to gain prominence in political debate. The proposal to close the common roll to Africans was seriously considered by Huggins, although he was arguably also a pragmatist who could abandon strict segregation in the interests of political expediency. But it was a last-gasp attempt to implement separate development, and suggested replacing African votes with Native Councils. It was not thought that such a separation would be permanent - Huggins originally intended closing the roll for twenty years, and then assessing the situation from there - but he thought that it would take at least a couple of generations before Africans were fit to participate on a par with Europeans. Writing in *The New Rhodesia*, B.J. Mnyanda, the General Secretary of the SRANC, expressed concern about the ‘obstinate determination on the part of our Prime Minister to deprive the African people of the common franchise, whilst at the same time bluffing the outside world by promising the African people a semblance of representation’.

I should feel that the progress of the country had been greatly retarded if the Prime Minister’s proposals were to become an accomplished fact I repeat that if there is one thing of which I am absolutely convinced, it is this: that if African voters are removed from the common voters’ roll, the lot of the African people shall have undergone a great change for the worse. For this reason: the African people will not, and ought not, to accept the said proposal. It is part of the African’s birthright to be a citizen of this Colony, and as such to be on the common voters’ roll, if qualified, and thus secure representation through the 30 M.P.’s, some of whom have already shown us an example of a high sense of responsibility to the African community ... It is part of the African’s birthright to be a citizen of this colony and as such to be on the common voters’ roll, if qualified.

Although Mnyanda advocated raising the qualifications to exclude ‘irresponsible people’ of all

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races, he finished: ‘Won’t this policy compel the African to regard the State as a tyrant and an oppressor?’ And making the point on behalf of ‘advanced’ Africans, he said: ‘The Africans firmly refuse, and shall always refuse, to continue in a state of subjection even when they have qualified for full citizenship’.

Huggins’ attempt to close the roll to Africans did not succeed. Abroad, the tide was turning against such authoritarianism. Just at the time when Huggins was proposing to block the common roll to Africans, the South African government was embarking on racial policies which were far harsher. The National Party’s naked racism did not agree with traditional Rhodesian paternalism, nor with the British tradition of slowly opening the franchise up instead of closing it. In addition, Rhodesian whites were not as secure as their South African counterparts, being fewer in number and subject to British approval for legislation which was potentially discriminatory. A single common roll with qualifications seemed to satisfy Rhodesians’ understanding of Rhodes’ adage of ‘equal rights for all civilised men’. A departure from it, especially one which either clearly discriminated against ‘advanced’ Africans or conversely threatened white hegemony by enfranchising large numbers of Africans, was anathema. In addition, the defeat of fascism in the Second World War, in which both white and black servicemen from Southern Rhodesia had served with such distinction, had placed in stark relief the contradiction between fighting for freedom abroad, and coming home to a deeply divided society which was patently undemocratic.

Huggins’ plan also came under criticism in Britain. In July 1947, a group of Labour MPs wrote to Lord Addison, the Commonwealth Relations Secretary, stating ‘we are at the present time much disturbed by the proposal made by the Prime Minister of Southern Rhodesia to introduce legislation which will prevent the addition of African voters to the common voters’ roll’.\textsuperscript{17} Addison himself had expressed grave reservations about Huggins’ wish to remove the right of Africans to qualify for the common roll. In a message obliquely critical of Huggins, he wrote:

\textsuperscript{17} S482/717/39 Native Franchise in Southern Rhodesia. Letter from a group of Labour MPs to Lord Addison, 8 July 1947.
I should of course welcome action which would tend to associate the natives more effectively with the Government of the Colony. As I told the Governor, the more immediate difficulty I see is the fact that if action of the kind which you suggest is to be coupled with provisions to prevent the addition of Africans to the common roll, the matter is bound to become highly controversial here. Native affairs throughout the Colonies are very closely watched by groups both inside and outside Parliament, and a step which would restrict the native franchise in exchange only for a rather indirect form of representation would require very strong and clear justification if it were to avoid trouble.  

In place of a direct vote, Huggins was proposing to develop the Native Councils which were already in place, and which would have limited powers in African matters, but at least they would be elected by Africans themselves. The main function of the councils was ‘education, to educate the African in the important responsibilities of citizenship by creating an environment in which democratic values, social responsibility, collective self-help and progressive leadership can emerge’. In other words, the councils would act as a form of political education to prove that Africans were ‘fit’ to progress to direct representation. Intimately connected to this, an equally important function was to co-opt the chiefs and the educated African elite, and to tie them firmly to the Rhodesian government, thus diminishing the threat of their involvement in anti-government activity. There was actually a certain amount of optimism, at least among the Rhodesians, about the councils’ prospects. In a lecture to the National Affairs Association in 1947, a Native Commisioner outlined his own optimism. He said,

It is easy to understand how if these Councils develop and spread throughout the country - and I believe they are - they will affect the industry of the country as a

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18 ibid, Addison to Huggins, 8 July 1946.


20 MS 281/1/16 Correspondence April-December 1954. ‘Native Affairs’, January 1946. The document included the statement that the Rhodesians should encourage ‘a sense of responsibility by the institution of 22 Native Councils and Native Courts’.
whole because they are spending considerable sums of money. They have to purchase a great deal of crude oil, replace their machinery, have repairs done and everything else. It is rather wonderful that these people are able to run these things under supervision with a minimum of friction and trouble.

Through these councils I think there is tremendous scope for development because now all these people see they are getting something in return for their money and they are prepared to turn out and work.21

Eventually, though, Huggins relented when it became clear that he would face opposition from Britain and also at home.22 Liberal Europeans and African nationalists were very firmly in favour of a common roll,23 because once a person had satisfied the franchise qualifications, every vote was equal.

Nonetheless, as in 1912, a compromise was reached. The 1951 Electoral Amendment Act more than doubled the income and property qualifications, and the literacy test became more stringent. Huggins portrayed this as a liberal compromise encouraged by the supposedly more liberal aspect of the European electorate: ‘The method adopted as an alternative in the Electoral Amendment Bill has been made possible by an advance in public opinion, which is definitely becoming more liberal but naturally fears an early swamping of the European vote by immature African natives’.24 Huggins defended this to Patrick Gordon Walker, the new Commonwealth Secretary, alluding at the same time to Southern Rhodesia’s impeccable imperial credentials:

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\text{The Bill was non-discriminatory and was, of course, aimed at the worst type of} \]


22 Greenfield, Testimony of a Rhodesian Federal, p. 102. Having fought the 1948 election campaign on a policy of blocking African access to the common roll, by 1950 Huggins advised his United Party that ‘it would be unwise to proceed with the 1948 election manifesto because of the possible adverse effects on the climate of world opinion’.

23 Interview, Hardwicke Holderness; Ranger, Are We Not Also Men?, pp. 102-104.

Afrikaner as well as the illiterate Africans; for obvious reasons it was not possible to mention this in public debate. The education test, the oath of allegiance in the Citizenship Act and the increased monetary qualification should make it easier to keep the worst type of Afrikaner from getting on the roll.25

Indeed many liberal white politicians did support Huggins at the time. Greenfield, who was Minister of Internal Affairs in 1950 when the change in qualifications was mooted, said: ‘It seemed to me that the Africans were nowhere near ready for dominance on the common roll and the qualifications had to be stepped up ... I think it was quite reasonable’.26

The roots of the Rhodesian franchise: Britain and the Cape

No political system exists in a vacuum. Southern Rhodesia was influenced by developments in the two countries with which it had the closest connections: Britain and the Cape. As a loyal white settler colony, Southern Rhodesia considered itself the bearer of the imperial torch in central Africa, especially as Afrikaner nationalism made South Africa’s loyalty suspect. Britain was often referred to as ‘Home’, even by born Rhodesians.27 This strong awareness that Southern Rhodesia was the representative of British civilisation in central Africa manifested itself in the way in which the development of the franchise in Britain was used to justify a gradually inclusive franchise in Southern Rhodesia.28 In 1956 the parliamentary library in Southern Rhodesia prepared a paper on the question of the development of the franchise in the UK for circulation to MPs while the question of the Southern Rhodesian franchise was debated. It noted that progress to full adult suffrage had been slow, and that therefore it would almost certainly be slower in the Federation. In a lot of ways, it was just what the Rhodesian elite wanted to hear. In the margins of his copy, Edgar Whitehead wrote that while a lot of the

25 ibid.

26 ORAL/GR2 Julian Greenfield interview.

27 Tredgold, The Rhodesia that was my life, p. 68.

28 Interview, Hardwicke Holderness; Interview, Sir Cyril Hatty, 15 June 1995, Harare.
conditions described in Britain did not apply to Rhodesia, ‘it does however show how gradual has been the progress in the United Kingdom towards universal adult suffrage and how recent its full implementation. Also of importance is to compare the gradual extension of the franchise with progress in the educational field.’

In Britain, the 1832 Reform Act enfranchised professionals, traders, shopkeepers, and the clergy - the bourgeoisie. The 1867 Second Reform Act greatly increased the electorate by enfranchising some of the urban working class through qualifications based on home ownership and trade. The rationale for this was simple. The growing working class would exert political pressure which would be difficult to overlook. Instead of ignoring it and possibly encouraging the growth of political action along class lines, Benjamin Disraeli’s Conservative Party decided to enfranchise the urban working class, and thus hopefully secure its grateful votes. Co-option into the existing system was preferable to the risk of allowing the growth of an alternative system. But the Second Reform Act did not provide for equal representation for the new urban electorate. In an effort to preserve the dominance of the traditionally Tory rural (‘county’) seats over urban (‘borough’) seats many of the new urban constituencies contained three or four times more voters than the rural seats. This ensured that the unknown quantity of the new urban vote would be packed into fewer seats than its numbers might justify, and that the dangers of a class-orientated vote would be diminished, allowing government to remain in the hands of those who knew how to exercise it best. The parallels between the Second Reform Act and the gradual opening of the franchise in Southern Rhodesia in the 1950s are striking. Replace the words ‘working class’ with ‘Africans’, and the rhetoric is virtually interchangeable. In this way, the qualified franchise in Southern Rhodesia was a remnant, and example, of mid-Victorian liberalism.  


The franchise in Britain developed further in 1884 when the provisions of the Second Reform Act were extended to include industrial villages and the countryside. Women over 30 were given the vote in 1918 and at the same time virtually complete manhood suffrage was introduced by abolishing almost all property and income qualifications. The ages were equalised at 21 in 1928, while it was only in 1948 that the last vestiges of educational and monetary qualifications disappeared when the extra vote for holders of university degrees and occupiers of business premises was abolished.

The policy makers and thinkers in Southern Rhodesia were acutely aware of the British perspective, as befitted a staunchly British colony. It was clear to them that Southern Rhodesia was following the mother country’s example, and Rhodesian efforts to reform the franchise mirrored Britain’s, not South Africa’s. Speaking to the National Affairs Association in July 1956, Professor W.J. MacKenzie of Manchester University clearly set out the parallels:

anyone reading the Rhodesian press now will be reminded of much that was written in the English press between 1840 and 1870, and perhaps there is some similarity in the situations. It was commonplace then that there were two nations in England, the rich and the poor: the gap in education and wealth between the Victorian noblemen and intellectuals on the one hand, Scottish coal miners and Irish immigrants on the other was as great as any that exists in Africa.

A more immediate comparison can be made with the Cape franchise, and it was this franchise which was directly transplanted to Southern Rhodesia in 1898. The Cape Colony acquired an elected assembly and franchise in 1853. Its introduction was the immediate result of opposition in the Cape to the establishment of penal colonies. The Anti-Convict Association

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31 Interview, Hardwicke Holderness; interview, Sir Cyril Hatty.

32 MS 1082/5/3, ‘Lecture delivered by Professor W.J. Mackenzie, Professor of Government at the University of Manchester, to Rhodesia National Affairs Association on the 20th July 1956’.

had been created in 1849, and had quickly attracted a great deal of support - indeed, the level of support the Association commanded was such that a certificate of fitness stating that the holder opposed the government was virtually essential in order to conduct any sort of business in Cape Town. As this came only a year after Europe was swept by revolutionary fervour, British concern is understandable. In setting low qualifications for the franchise - occupation of property worth £25, or income of £50, or income of £25 if lodging was included - the Cape administration was trying ‘to get particular classes of the lower orders into the meaning of the Act’, in other words, advocating participation in politics as a way of undergoing political education, granting responsibility to encourage its growth among those who might be deemed ‘irresponsible’.  

It was also a way of disarming potential opposition by co-opting it into the established system. The Cape Attorney General, William Porter, said ‘I would rather meet the Hottentot at the hustings voting for his representative than meet the Hottentot in the wilds with his gun upon his shoulder’.  

In having a franchise based on the Cape’s, Southern Rhodesia was merely reflecting the dominant philosophy in southern Africa. One caveat, though. Quite soon after introducing the franchise, the Cape limited membership of the legislative assembly to white men, and no Africans ever served in the Cape’s legislature. The other three colonies which later constituted the Union of South Africa - Natal, the Transvaal and the Orange Free State - had far more restrictive franchises, and the extension of the Cape franchise was stoutly resisted. The Cape franchise was progressively eroded, as in 1936, when the common roll was closed to Africans who were instead placed on a roll of their own to elect four to six Europeans to the Senate to represent their interests. In Southern Rhodesia, despite the obvious faults, this was never the case. There was never any legislation enacted stopping Africans standing for parliament, and attempts to actually deny Africans the right to vote were ultimately quashed. Once Federation was established, there was a limited, but real effort to draw more Africans into the body politic.

35 ibid, p. 53.
In this way, the application of Southern Rhodesian and South African theories of representation diverged in a significant way.

Until the early 1950s, there were few problems concerning a qualified franchise with its high threshold. But by the mid-1950s the echoes of World War II and the rise of nationalism across Africa very quickly placed the settlers in an historical time-warp. Paternalism and trusteeship were out of vogue, and even liberal Rhodesians found themselves advocating a process for which there was suddenly little support in the world at large. At the same time, South Africa was actively barring non-white participation in national politics. So, Southern Rhodesia and the Federation sought a middle way, one unique to the Federation’s own ‘unique’ situation.

Thus, Rhodesians considered Southern Rhodesia a special case. If it had taken Britain over a hundred years to move from the first Reform Act of 1832 to full adult suffrage, how long would it take Southern Rhodesia with its large African majority which had had only short exposure to Western ‘civilisation’? In 1956, the year of the Southern Rhodesian and Federal franchise reviews, it was clear that Britain was retreating from the empire, and that colonised peoples would have the opportunity to govern themselves. But this was a very recent development, and even in 1956 there was no obvious threat to white dominance in Southern Rhodesia. Little wonder that many people thought that it would take generations for Africans to fully participate in the political process.

**Background to the franchise debates, 1956-57**

Both the Federal and Southern Rhodesian governments had to expand the franchise in order to defuse criticism from abroad, and from white liberals and middle class Africans, that their franchises were too restrictive. Garfield Todd wrote in 1955:

> There is no doubt that one of the major problems before us is to determine what is a reasonable standard for the franchise in Central Africa ... The United Kingdom cannot refuse to grant full self-government to Central Africa ... on the day when there are enough civilised people in the territory to carry that responsibility, if, at the same time, adequate opportunity is given to all the
people to climb the ladder of civilisation.\textsuperscript{36}

Simultaneously, the new franchises created mechanisms whereby ‘civilised’ voters would not be ‘swamped’ by Africans. The importance of the franchise debates and the shape of the franchises which followed was that for the first time Rhodesian discourse was aimed at expanding the number of Africans who would qualify to vote - albeit under tightly constrained circumstances - instead of trying to shut the system off to them. For the first time also, the Rhodesian elite talked of a franchise as a symbol of a new citizenship which would encourage a new ‘loyalty’ to the Federation. Such moves were important because the Rhodesian elite envisaged a viable framework whereby Africans would be co-opted into the Rhodesian system without wholesale reform of the system itself, while also claiming a measure of continuity with British franchise reform and practical implementation of ‘equal rights for all civilised men’. It would also hopefully satisfying desires by elite Africans to have their status recognised. In essence, the Rhodesians were following an elite tradition around the world of ““making the revolution before the people did””; that is, outrunning and thereby hopefully controlling and dictating popular demands.\textsuperscript{37}

As we have seen, the assumption in Rhodesian thought was that as Africans advanced economically and educationally, they would join the existing system. When Rhodesians spoke of the Africans rising in the scale of civilisation in order to play their part in society, they clearly meant that Africans would have to acquire the trappings of European ‘civilisation’, that they would have to rise to the threshold beyond which they would be able to become part of the European structure of society.\textsuperscript{38} But it was a system whose very existence was based on


\textsuperscript{37} Alan Knight, ‘Historical and Theoretical considerations’ in Mattei Dogan and John Higley (eds.), \textit{Elites, Crises and the Origins of States} (Lanham MD, Rowman & Littlefield, 1998), p. 42. The quote is from Adhemar de Barros speaking about the rationale behind Brazilian populism, but it fits our case. Knight’s other chapter in this book discusses the shifts and compromises the Mexican political élite made in order to maintain power.

\textsuperscript{38} See Leys, \textit{European Politics}, pp. 241-289.
discrimination and exclusion. It could neither cope with the projected number of Africans who would eventually join it, nor would it welcome them, and Huggins allayed white fears by stating that Africans would never achieve more than an equal share of partnership.39

In general, white Rhodesia had to a large extent transcended the class differences which so divided Britain, and immigrants entered a society where the predominant ethos as we have seen was that a person was judged by achievement, not birth. It was also a society which was acutely aware of the cultural and racial gap between itself and the bulk of the population. The very essence of white society was based on such a gap, and in this way, its institutions developed in a way which would protect it from encroachment by the African majority.

From relatively early on, the Rhodesian government was aware that it was the inheritor of the British and Cape traditions of a qualified franchise, and of the sense of trusteeship over indigenous peoples who were ‘unfit’ to exercise power in an essentially alien political system. In this way, although African participation in electoral politics was extremely limited, there was always a perception, in rhetoric if not in tangible reality, of responsibility on the part of the government to provide for the gradual increase of African participation in the body politic - the effort to reach the franchise qualifications would also be an exercise in political education. For those Africans who did not qualify to vote, there would be structures to ensure that their ‘reasonable’ wishes were represented.

However, the concept of trusteeship is problematic. Rhodesian rhetoric on the subject should be treated with a certain amount of caution, because all too often in the notion that whites should aid the political development of Africans, it was taken for granted that Africans would remain junior partners for as long as possible. While the future remained hazy, there was little to trouble white minds with that. But as soon as the possibility of what were actually quite small numbers of Africans joining the electoral roll appeared, a certain sense of urgency overtook the white government in struggling to keep the number of African voters down. In these situations, the ideal of trusteeship was overtaken by new definitions of ‘responsibility’

39 Herald, 13 March 1956.
when too many Africans were satisfying the old ones. This was the case across the admittedly limited European political spectrum in Southern Rhodesian politics, so even a liberal like Garfield Todd could say in 1947: ‘In Southern Rhodesia ... we are faced with the grave danger of finding large numbers of people, barely literate, just setting out on the road to civilisation, and yet able to claim full franchise rights’.  

He also stated that although he was not very keen when the qualifications went up in 1951, ‘it wasn’t too bad still. Africans of quality and calibre could get in and I never cared at any time for a universal franchise, although I would hope that it would come eventually when enough people had reached the quite reasonable qualifications’.  

W.A. Godlonton, writing in 1949, suggested a solution:

>[S]uffrage is an art and a duty rather than a right. And what sensible person wittingly assigns duties to those who do not know how to perform them!

Our government has the supremely difficult task of establishing and maintaining this civilisation among a mass of people who, emerging from an age-old darkness, are dazzled by the brilliance and bewildered by the intricacy of our way of life. Here in huge droves are easy dupes for the mischief maker, the charlatan or the crank. Education is the only permanent cure - education which has for its prime object the right formation of their character.

This excerpt should be kept in mind when we see how the supposed raison d’etre of the franchise qualifications - to ensure an electorate that knew what parliamentary politics entailed - was ignored by the Rhodesians whenever it looked as though too many Africans for comfort would qualify. This was one of the major problems with Rhodesian theories of democracy: if, despite the high qualifications and the tiny number of African voters, white politicians were still worried about being swamped by a mass of uncivilised voters, then the qualifications were clearly inadequate by Rhodesian standards. Given that there were so few African voters, the

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41 ORAL/TO1 Garfield Todd interview.

42 S482/122/1/49, W.A. Godlonton, ‘Education as condition to Franchise’. 

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inevitable conclusion is that the franchise was not there to ensure a ‘responsible’ non-racial electorate, but to ensure that the electorate stayed overwhelmingly white. It makes L.M.N. Hodson’s assertion that ‘it was not in the minds of those who raised them [the qualifications] that they would be raised again and again, so that the African electorate would be led on and never reach the goal, like the donkey and the carrot’ seem rather naive or disingenuous. It is interesting to note that at the time when Todd and Godlonton were writing, African voters in Southern Rhodesia numbered around 300 out of a total electorate of some 45,000.

But in many ways, the development of the franchise in Southern Rhodesia was not dissimilar to elsewhere. The main difference was the timescale - ideas which had been perfectly acceptable in the recent past were now out of date. Such democracy as existed was subject to a heavily qualified franchise whose high threshold of income/property and education qualifications effectively disenfranchised the vast majority of Africans. In theory the qualified franchise was non-racial, and had a long line of precedents, not least in the United Kingdom itself, where full universal adult suffrage had only been achieved in 1948 when extra votes for graduates of certain universities were abolished.

Since the term ‘democracy’ as understood today in relation to Rhodesian official thought and parlance is perhaps misleading, it would be better to replace it with ‘representation’. This would give a clearer picture of what successive Rhodesian governments thought important - not full representative democracy as such, certainly not for Africans - but methods of representing African opinions and aspirations which did not threaten white supremacy in Southern Rhodesia, while at the same time placating the United Kingdom and the growing African middle class whose political, economic and social ambitions could not be ignored. Those Africans who did not qualify for the vote would be represented either through special members of Parliament - appointed by the Prime Minister or elected by the common roll voters - or through other

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mechanisms, such as Native Councils and their traditional leaders, the chiefs.

During this time, it is also important to remember that representation based on universal adult suffrage was a relatively new development in the West itself. The idea that ‘the people’ are entitled to a say in choosing their government is relatively young, and it is not an option in most countries. So, given such a short, localised history, it is unsurprising that many Rhodesians throughout our period thought that full representative democracy based on universal adult suffrage was an imperfect system of government. Many liberal whites in Southern Rhodesia, who would have baulked at being described as racists, were doubtful of the merits of universal adult suffrage, and even if they agreed with the theory, they assumed that Southern Rhodesia had a long way to develop before the bulk of the population could be entrusted with the vote.

In tracing the development of Rhodesian ideas of democracy, two things need to be kept in mind. The first is that the development of the franchise was a process of exclusion, not inclusion. With every step taken the primary aim was to keep out those deemed unfit to exercise a vote, not necessarily to include people who might now pass the test of ‘civilisation’. The second is that despite its non-racial theory, the practice was quite definitely based on race. As we have seen, there were several attempts to exclude Africans as Africans from the electoral roll. The qualified franchise was deliberately used to exclude Africans and undesirable whites, such as Afrikaners, from the political process, thus keeping Southern Rhodesia not just white, but British as well. Consequently, the franchise was an example of how Rhodesians used the word ‘civilisation’ to mean ‘British’ or ‘white’, and of how discrimination was frequently justified by alluding to differences in class and culture. The problem which now faced the Rhodesian elite was how to turn a system which was intrinsically exclusive into one which extended opportunities to vote to people who would not have had the chance before. The franchise issue was not only the most significant constitutional development under partnership, it also fundamentally redefined the political arrangement in central Africa. It did not enfranchise

the majority of Africans, but it did recognise the existence of the black middle class. It opened a Pandora’s box, however, by appearing to promise greater political influence for Africans, until they examined the details which left much to be desired.

**The Federal franchise**

When Federation was established in 1953 promising the new approach to race relations under ‘partnership’, it necessarily required that steps be taken to open up the franchise in such a way as to preserve ‘standards’, while allowing those Africans who might qualify to have a voice in the political process. The Federal government needed to establish its own Federation-wide franchise - the first Federal elections in 1954 were conducted using each territory’s own franchise, an imperfect solution as each territory had different franchise qualifications, and since a person qualified to vote in one territory might not be able to do so in another.

In this way, the franchise debates developed, looking for both a Federal and a Southern Rhodesian franchise which would agree with the spirit of partnership. There was no question at this point of full adult suffrage, but of amending the qualifications to do justice to Africans (and a very few poor whites) who could be considered ‘responsible’ enough to vote but who did not earn enough money under the existing qualifications to do so. In addition, because the franchise had developed so slowly in Britain and the Cape, it is easy to see why Rhodesians thought their own system could buck the trend after World War II and develop as slowly as the British one did.

This attitude was not unusual or illiberal in the Rhodesian context. Take, for instance, the example of Sir Thomas Chegwidden. Contributing to the debate on the proposed Federal franchise in 1956, he wrote:

> Thoughtful observers of the political scene in the Western Democracies are inclined more and more to the view that adult suffrage is showing itself to be fundamentally unsound. If you have a low or no income qualifications [sic] and give the vote to every adult, the result in an election is the counting of heads most of which are empty of thought and intelligence, but full of desires and
emotions.46

But where Chegwidden differed from Huggins was in his assertion that the franchise should not be used to exclude Africans simply for being Africans from the electoral process: ‘Too many people approach the electoral system here as if the problem were to devise some ingenious system for keeping decisive political power out of the hands of the African.’47 In addition, while agreeing that ‘civilised standards’ equalled ‘European standards’, Chegwidden did not think that preserving power in white hands in perpetuity was necessarily a good thing, more a ‘temporary bye-product’, although how ‘temporary’ it would be was obviously open to question. Even Garfield Todd’s ‘ultra-liberal’ Central Africa Party, which opposed the United Federal Party between 1959 and 1962, could criticise ‘doctrinaire democrats’ who demanded immediate universal adult suffrage without a hint of irony.48

The first Federal elections were held in 1954 with Southern Rhodesia, Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland each using their own franchises. The Federal House comprised 35 seats, 26 elected by the common roll. The remaining nine MPs for African interests were divided equally between the three territories. Those for Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland were all elected by the common roll, but in Southern Rhodesia only two were elected, and one was appointed. This system was clearly inadequate, as the franchises differed, and a person qualifying in one territory might not in another. A uniform Federal franchise was necessary. In addition, the Federal Constitution’s preamble referred to the spirit of partnership whereby the Federal Government was theoretically beholden to the creation of a system which fairly reflected the wishes of a ‘majority’ of the ‘people’.

The debate around the Federal franchise was first raised in 1955 and continued until


47 ibid.

1957 when the new franchise became law.\textsuperscript{49} There were several problems. The first was that in Southern Rhodesia, holders of the franchise had to be Southern Rhodesian citizens, and hence British subjects. In the crown colonies Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland, the majority of people had the status of British protected persons, which meant that they were not British subjects - a subtle, but nonetheless vital, distinction. This never affected Africans in Southern Rhodesia, since they were all Rhodesian citizens and British subjects by birth. But it was clearly unacceptable to deny a person born in Northern Rhodesia or Nyasaland the right to vote in the Federal elections because he or she had not been born a British subject.\textsuperscript{50}

The thornier issue for the Federal government to come to terms with concerned the need to be seen to be opening up the franchise to Africans. The higher wages Africans were earning in the post-war economic boom, the expansion of African education, and the steps in other parts of the world to cast off the colonial yoke, all put pressure on the Federal Government to act. Huggins argued that the new franchise should separate people along party political, not racial, lines, and that it should be seen as a promise to Africans of a greater share of power as their numbers on the electoral roll increased.\textsuperscript{51} He tentatively suggested two voters’ rolls, of which the first would have high qualifications and the second lower ones.\textsuperscript{52} Various people and associations also contributed to the debate, from individuals with an interest in current affairs, to associations like the IASR and NAA, the Sons of England, commercial and industrial enterprises, and also those people who did not wish to see the Africans being given any more rights than they had already. Welensky himself was inundated with unsolicited suggestions, almost all from whites, about the new franchise. A majority of the correspondence deals with the problem of too many Africans being accepted onto the voters’ rolls too quickly. Some went

\textsuperscript{49} For an almost day-by-day account of the negotiations with the British and many of the minutiae of the Federal franchise debates, see Woods, \textit{The Welensky Papers}, pp. 466-501.

\textsuperscript{50} For the issue of Federal citizenship, see NAZ file F119/F3/2; also WP files 200/1-5.

\textsuperscript{51} Mason, \textit{Year of Decision}, pp. 73-4.

\textsuperscript{52} ibid., p. 70.
further, writing to Welensky that ‘we must submit a franchise plan to the British Government, which on the surface, looks like equality, but which in practice ensures that the continuity of power remains in the hands of the European. There must be one roll, and income and academic qualifications must not be apparent’. The writer continued that once Dominion status had been granted, the Federation could adopt a franchise independent of Britain, one which registered Africans in the townships on a separate roll; and also two houses of parliament, the lower house being multiracial, and the upper house being purely European with power of veto.\(^5^3\)

Not all reasoning followed that outlined above. One plan for multiple voting (additional votes depending on standard of ‘civilisation’) put it thus: ‘Spokesmen for a gradually increasing proportion of the Bantu maintain that there should be adult suffrage with low cultural and educational qualifications. Such a form of suffrage must be avoided in the interests of our aspirations to nationhood’.\(^5^4\) But the same writer also thought that the liberal Moffat Resolutions suggesting the slow removal of the colour bar, and passed by the Northern Rhodesian Legislative Council in July 1954, should apply to the whole Federation. Adding a sense to urgency to the task, he thought that ‘democracy has gradually developed for peoples with civilised standards’, whereas the in the Federation ‘the large proportion of the lawful inhabitants ... have not reached such standards, are unlikely to do so in our lifetime and have not got a clue as to what democracy really means’.\(^5^5\) Going back to Rhodesian-style democracy as a throwback to mid-Victorian liberalism, the writer thought J.S. Mill was the best illustrator of the system of multiple voting, a sentiment echoed by A.E. Scrace, a successful farmer who continued by saying that ‘the principle of government by consent is not likely to operate for long in any society where there is a serious and seemingly permanent inequality of economic and political conditions’.\(^5^6\) By having a system of multiple voting, Federal citizens would have an

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\(^5^3\) WP 226/2 ff. 49-50. Stella Hurst to Welensky, 14 October 1956.


\(^5^5\) ibid.

incentive to better themselves, and ‘only the most ignorant and lazy citizens would omit to register as voters’. Both the above writers thought that one of the Federal government’s greatest priorities, therefore, was to pursue partnership seriously so that those who could not reach the franchise qualifications would at least have a chance to do so through greater economic and social opportunities. Scrace’s paper in particular was well received and was circulated to the members of the Citizenship and Franchise Committee.\textsuperscript{57}

The system which eventually won the day departed from the cherished common roll.\textsuperscript{58} It involved two rolls, the A and B rolls. The A roll was known as the ‘ordinary’ or ‘common’ roll, and the qualifications largely mirrored those for the Southern Rhodesia franchise. The B roll had significantly lower qualifications, the idea being that in this way Africans who would not qualify for the A roll would still have a vote. The Federal House was to comprise 59 seats, 44 elected by the A roll, 9 by the B roll (three from each territory, although one of the three Southern Rhodesia MPs was an appointed European), and six appointed especially for African interests, two from each territory, to represent those who did not qualify for either roll. There was provision for cross-voting, in that an A roll voters could vote for a B roll candidate, and vice versa. But the influence of the A roll on B roll seats, and the B roll on A roll seats, was severely circumscribed by making A roll votes in a B roll seat worth no more than a quarter of the B roll votes in a B roll seat, and vice versa. In this way, A roll voters could have no more than a 25 per cent say in the election of a B roll candidate, and, more importantly, B roll voters would not be able to influence A roll elections by any more than 25 per cent.

The beauty of this system for white politicians was that they could enfranchise many more Africans, while limiting their real power at the polls, thus ensuring that the more ‘responsible’ European electorate (which comprised the vast majority of the A roll) would still be dominant. However, it was clear that this system was full of problems. It was technically

\textsuperscript{57} ibid, f. 58. Parker to Secretary, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet Office, 4 October 1955.

\textsuperscript{58} See WP files 200/1-5, for the debate around the Federal franchise. See also NAZ files F121/2/1, F121/F2/23, F128/HAF 40/1, F128/HAF 40/1/3.
non-racial, and a handful of whites who did not qualify for the A roll ended up on the B roll. The great majority of African voters were likewise on the B roll, and there were concerns that not enough had been done to attract the African middle class, and so unsurprisingly, there were voices of dissent against the new federal franchise. L.M.N. Hodson wrote to Welensky that ‘The Africans in S. Rhodesia, who have behaved themselves very well, will see in this just another attempt to raise the qualifications against them ... Africans in general (no matter how often you tell them this is a temporary arrangement) will see “colour bar” written all over it’. In addition, those Europeans who would not qualify for the A roll were precisely ‘those who are most hostile to the Africans, and they will be highly offended at being classed with the majority of Africans and having to vote for African candidates’. Finally, the British government ‘must reject it as being an oddity having nothing truly democratic in it’. In December 1957 Orton Chirwa, a Federal MP from Nyasaland, commented scathingly:

Prior to the Central African Federation, the African placed some faith in the British Government. That faith has withered away now more particularly since the passing of the Constitution [Amendment] Bill by a majority of Members of the House of Commons.

Africans have come to the conclusion [that] they can neither look to Britain nor to the Europeans in Central Africa for justice and they must look to their own means to get that justice.

People who are oppressed come to a stage where they say ‘We cannot no longer [sic] trust anybody, only ourselves’ and no amount of military force behind the Government can stop that spirit of the people from expressing itself ... Until it is quite clear that the Government is trying to force Africans to resort to means which are unconstitutional so that they can get their rights. Because under this Government they cannot get their rights.

I think this Bill will result in keeping out the people on whom the Africans might rely. It will bring into Parliament people whom the Africans consider stooges to people who licked the boots of the Federal Government. You may get satisfaction from that but the underground movement behind the scenes will be quite uncontrollable because the member who will be here will have no contact with those forces outside the House.60

59 WP 226/2 ff. 36-40. Hodson to Welensky, 16 September 1956.

60 MS 734/2/9 Quotations from the Federal Assembly regarding the Franchise Bill, Jan 1956 - Dec 1957.
Another MP remarked: ‘I think that Government in considering that Africans are not very well versed in political issues and political procedure are making a great mistake’. Garfield Todd warned Greenfield ‘you know, where the mistake is, is that Africans are not going to accept second-class citizenship, and you are really doing them a disservice’. Todd was also worried that having a two-roll system would enshrine racial representation, and dismissed Welensky’s claim that Africans would be doubly represented by MPs they voted for and also the special members for African interests, stating that Europeans alone selected the Special Representative in Southern Rhodesia for African interests.

The question of Federal citizenship

Importantly, the Federal franchise debate was also the first time in Rhodesian political discourse that the notion of speeding up the removal of certain barriers to Africans was seriously discussed. To be sure, there would still be qualifications - there was no question of abolishing the qualified franchise, or of abandoning the notion that citizenship was an earned privilege, not a right. In addition, for the first time white politicians were earnestly addressing the issue of a common loyalty to the Federation first, and therefore to the Rhodesian identity, and Britain second, a move towards perhaps loosening the ties of the former to the latter. This was part of the calculations to ensure a favourable review conference in 1960. If the Rhodesians could present to Britain a picture of a unified nation with a common loyalty - or at least a nation in the process of unifying - then many reasons for delaying Dominion status would vanish. Additionally, it was becoming clear that the strength of African nationalism would continue to increase unless the Federal and territorial governments confronted it by offering a viable alternative.

61 ibid.

62 ORAL/TO1 Garfield Todd interview.

63 MS 1082/5/3. Todd to F.L. Hadfield, 6 August 1957.
One indication of Southern Rhodesia’s growing importance in the Empire was the introduction of Rhodesian citizenship in 1949. Until India became independent in 1947 and introduced its own citizenship, there had been no differentiation in British nationality - all colonial subjects were automatically British citizens. Now, both the UK and the Dominions had to redefine their own citizenship as well. Since Southern Rhodesia was a self-governing colony, and not a crown colony or a protectorate, was allowed by the British government to pass a citizenship act. This came about in 1949, creating a distinct Rhodesian citizenship which was recognised throughout the Empire. Rhodesian citizens remained British subjects, and all Southern Rhodesian Africans automatically qualified for Rhodesian citizenship by virtue of birth.

Frank Owen, Federal Minister of Home Affairs, wrote a memorandum sketching out the problem now facing the Federation:

The Federal State has now reached a period in its history when it must commit itself ... in choosing the means whereby it will ensure the creation of the common bonds of citizenship and nationhood so that all its peoples will know and feel themselves united by a common loyalty. It is vital that this unity and common loyalty shall not be racial in character ... all citizens of the Federation should be encouraged to enter into a common and equal citizenship where colour and race are without special significance.

The most potent factor in averting the danger [of racial politics] and in opening the way to the future is, in the view of the Federal Government, the creation of a national, and not nationalist, loyalty to the country in which we live and to the British Crown ... A common national loyalty creates a live sense of collective responsibility ... The status of a common citizenship in the Federal state is the most powerful single means of establishing a bond between all peoples of the Federation.

Owen continued that in order to make Federal citizenship equally accessible for all who qualified, it should be easily attainable and should carry equal weight with other


Commonwealth citizenships. As two thirds of the Federation’s population were British protected persons, and thus not British subjects, Owen proposed waiving the fee and language requirements\(^{66}\) to allow British protected persons in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland to become Federal citizens - and therefore British subjects. Owen thought it important that British protected persons should be given the choice whether or not they wanted to become Federal citizens: ‘they ought not to have British subject status imposed upon them, but encouragement is given to them to join in a common nationhood by a simple process of registration’, whereby Federal citizenship would be automatic, not discretionary.

The Chief Secretary in Zomba wrote to Welensky and the Federal Cabinet:

As this Government [the Nyasaland government] has come to see it, the Federal Government’s argument would appear to be that the Federation will not achieve the unity which is desired unless there is a common loyalty to the Federal State among the people of the three territories and that the existence of such a common loyalty can best be established beyond doubt by giving the people the opportunity of electing to become Federal citizens and of making a formal subscription by way of an oath of their loyalty to that state. If this is the argument then it would seem only logical and right that all persons who are or become citizens ... should take the oath. If this requirement were made it would remove the present discriminatory aspect of the provision for an oath and this Government’s objections would fall away.\(^{67}\)

The oath of allegiance to the Crown, which was taken when a person acquired British nationality, was originally intended only for British protected persons, the assumption being that British subjects or Commonwealth citizens would either be born into their respective subjectionhood or citizenship, or would have already taken that oath. Since the vast majority of Africans in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland were not British subjects but British protected

\(^{66}\) To obtain the status of a British subject in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland after the Federation was created, one had to pay a £5 fee and be literate in English.

\(^{67}\) F119/F3/2 Federal Citizenship Law and Amendment to British Nationality Act, 1955-1963. Chief Secretary, the Secretariat, Zomba, to Secretary, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet Office, 9 March 1956.
persons, this difference in status was adjudged to be discriminatory by the British. By way of contrast, Africans in Southern Rhodesia were Rhodesian citizens and British subjects by birth, and so the issue did not arise there, making the different types of status for Africans in the Federation all the more glaring. This was also an issue because, as already discussed, only Rhodesian citizens and British subjects could vote in Southern Rhodesia, not British protected persons. Also, as already mentioned, some people wanted the Federal franchise to be open to British protected persons as well as British citizens. If this had ever become the case regarding the Federal franchise, the Federation would have been faced with the absurd situation of an African from the northern territories who was a British protected person being able to vote (assuming he or she fulfilled the other qualifications) in the Federal elections but not in the territorial ones.

There were problems regarding the acquisition of Federal citizenship by Africans in the northern territories. A letter from the Northern Rhodesia government to the Federal Prime Minister’s office described the situation thus:

the reason Africans in this Territory will be unwilling to take the oath in its present form is not because they are not persons of goodwill but because they will fear that taking the oath ... will imply before their fellows that they support Federation. It is believed that many in fact do so, but in present circumstances it may be not only unfair but indeed disadvantageous to our object to expect or coerce then into parading the fact. Furthermore, the great majority of other citizens will become citizens by birth or descent without swearing any oath at all. The indigenous peoples of the northern Territories have no smaller right than any other inhabitants of the Federation to be citizens of the Federation to which they belong. This Bill would already appear to discriminate against them by compelling them as the price of citizenship to give up the a status to which they attach great importance, namely that of a British Protected Person. 68

The problem where many of the Rhodesian elite were concerned was whether or not to allow British protected persons to qualify for the Federal franchise without being British

68 F119/F3/2. Acting Chief Secretary to the Government of Northern Rhodesia to The Secretary, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet Office, 29 January 1957.
subjects. At first, such thoughts were not entertained, on the grounds that Southern Rhodesia already had its own citizenship, which was one of the qualifications for its franchise. Some, like Julian Greenfield, believed that it was difficult to argue that to qualify for the franchise in Southern Rhodesia one had to be a Southern Rhodesian citizen while trying to assert that a citizenship qualification should not be needed to qualify for the Federal franchise, the status of British protected person sufficing. The problem Greenfield foresaw was that if Federal citizenship replaced Southern Rhodesian citizenship without an amendment to Southern Rhodesian electoral law, ‘the public would think that there is something “phoney” about Federal citizenship if it is not required for the Federal franchise but is required for the Southern Rhodesian franchise’.

Greenfield also unwittingly got it right by saying that Africans in the northern territories feared the northward expansion of Southern Rhodesian racial policies and that they believed that the status of British protected person ‘will protect them from the big bad wolf in Southern Rhodesia! They possibly think, if they think at all, that as British protected persons living in a protectorate there is the possibility of their country ultimately attaining self government’.

At the beginning, Welensky resisted pressure from Britain to allow people who were not British subjects to qualify for the Federal franchise. He argued that this was as much to prevent Afrikaners in Northern Rhodesia who were still South African citizens from voting in Federal elections as well as encouraging British protected persons in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland to acquire Federal citizenship by using the franchise as an inducement. He did not think that anyone unwilling to take out Federal citizenship, and by implication rejecting a common Federal nationhood, should be allowed to vote. In addition, he argued that by retaining the

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71 WP 200/2 ff. 31-35. ‘Draft note of a meeting held in the Commonwealth Relations Office on Tuesday 13 March 1956’.

72 Welensky glossed over this in his memoirs, claiming that he had never objected to British protected persons claiming the vote if they simply took an oath of allegiance to the Queen. See
status of British protected person, Africans were being encouraged to look to London for protection rather than Salisbury. In the same meeting, Lennox-Boyd said that British protected persons were reluctant to give up their status as it conferred a certain ‘mystique’, and in any case the guarantee that the Federal government would not interfere with that status was written into the Federal Constitution’s preamble.\(^73\) Also, he continued, Africans in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland had not become reconciled to Federation, and preventing them from qualifying for the franchise on the basis of their status as British protected persons was no way to win them over. In another meeting a few days later, Alec Douglas Home suggested to Welensky that British protected persons should be afforded all the rights and duties of full citizenship without giving up their protected status, taking the oath of allegiance or having to satisfy language requirements.\(^74\)

Ultimately, Douglas Home’s suggestion was taken on board. This left Welensky embittered. He wrote that the negotiations with the British about the franchise and citizenship became ‘a fight for individuals’ rights to their own way of life, to their standards of education and technical and administrative skill, to law and order, to the industries they have built out of the bush and the bare veld’.\(^75\) He finished with a flourish, which was echoed later by the RF: ‘Our opponents in Britain wanted, at six thousand miles’ distance, to create a Parliamentary democracy like their own: we fought to maintain the civilisation we had made’.\(^76\)

\(\text{Welensky, 4000 Days, p. 77-78.}\)

\(^73\) Again, Welensky recounted this differently in his memoirs where he blamed the British for insisting on the retention of British protected person status, thereby encouraging the feeling among Africans in the northern territories that ‘they were foreigners to the Federation, compelled into it against their will, and therefore owing it no loyalty’. Welensky, 4000 Days, p. 75.

\(^74\) WP 200/2 ff. 41-45. ‘Note of a Meeting held in the Commonwealth Relations Office in Friday 16 March 1956’.

\(^75\) Welensky, 4000 Days, p. 82.

\(^76\) ibid.
The 1957 Southern Rhodesia franchise

Concurrent with the debates around a Federal franchise, the Southern Rhodesian government under Garfield Todd was also busy seeking ways of altering its own franchise, ‘the greatest issue that this Parliament has ever been called upon to consider’. Todd appointed a Franchise Commission chaired by the Federal Chief Justice Sir Robert Tredgold to ‘consider and report on a system for the just representation of the people of the Colony’, and come up with the most suitable franchise for Southern Rhodesia. The rest of the Commission was composed of Sir Charles Cumings, the former Chief Justice of the Sudan, and also the Southern Rhodesia Chief Justice, John Murray. Such an emphasis on the legal profession taking important positions in the sphere of constitution-making was in keeping with Rhodesian precedent.

The Tredgold Commission felt that ‘just representation’ was at this juncture more important than ‘civilised hands’:

The first requirement is more fundamental and more important even than the second. No system that leaves any substantial section of the people labouring under a justifiable grievance can, in the end, prevail. It must result in a sense of cleavage, which means that the consent of the governed, upon which all government must ultimately rest, is withheld. Unless the principle is accepted that all sections of a people have their highest interests in common, that people will perish. A house divided against itself cannot stand.

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77 SR Debates, 39, 30 April 1957, col. 1207.


79 Herald, 20 April 1956.

80 Mason, Year of Decision, p. 70; Holderness, Lost Chance, p. 177. Holderness described Murray as a ‘wholly lovable and civilised man’.

81 Palley, The Constitutional History and Law of Southern Rhodesia, p. 550. Palley however raised the problem of Chief Justices being involved in problems and issues which could become politically highly controversial.

82 Tredgold Commission Report, p. 2.
The concept of a house divided against itself is interesting for two reasons. First, Tredgold himself personally believed this so deeply that he discussed it at length in his memoirs, blaming Todd’s government more than the Africans for the eventual failure of partnership: ‘the Government of the day, somewhat clumsily, tried to force the pace beyond what white public opinion was prepared to accept’. Secondly, it also betrays something of liberal elite attitudes at the time, that the white and black sectors of the Rhodesian population constituted ‘one house’, indivisible. This was a substantial mental leap from separate development and two pyramids, which was based much more on the concept of ‘two houses’ with their own distinct populations. In essence, the Tredgold Commission was alluding to greater inclusivity with a common threshold of ‘civilisation’ and a helping hand for those who fell just short of the qualifications.

The Commission rejected universal adult suffrage on the grounds that it only worked ‘in a homogeneous electorate with a fairly high standard of civilisation and divided by political divisions’, as opposed to race. Nonetheless, the fact that a Rhodesian commission of enquiry openly commented on universal adult suffrage shows a growing openness in the debate on methods of representation which would best suit the colony and its various vested interest groups.

The Commission’s eventual recommendation differed in one important respect from the Federal franchise. It tried to stay faithful to the principle of the common roll, without increasing the number of members of parliament, and so there were not two rolls, but one. The franchise which was decided upon differed little from the existing Southern Rhodesian franchise, as established in 1951, except that the threshold for the common roll was raised yet again.

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83 Tredgold, The Rhodesia that was my life, p. 152.

84 Tredgold Commission Report, p. 2.

85 Tredgold Commission Report, pp. 12-13. The qualifications upon which the 1957 franchise was based were:
1. £60 per month or occupation of property worth £1500, and literacy.
2. £40 per month or occupation of property worth £1000, and education up to Standard VI.
3. £25 per month or occupation of property worth £500 and education up to Form IV.
However, the most important new development was that a special ‘door’ was created. This ‘door’ had lower qualifications, and all those who qualified for the vote through it would have an equal vote - there was no vote devaluation like in the complicated Federal franchise. But again the fear of ‘swamping’ by ‘immature’ African voters won the day, and the special door would be permanently shut once the number of people let through it came to one-sixth of the total number on the electoral roll, although it is unlikely that any African who earned £180 a year would not have educational or professional qualifications of some sort. Importantly, the Tredgold Commission also proposed that a person who slipped below the threshold, having once qualified for it, would not lose the right to vote. However illiberal such a complicated franchise might appear, had the Tredgold franchise been fully implemented it would have created an immediate increase in the number of African voters and given Africans a considerable say in the election of the legislature, since it avoided the two-roll, differentiated constituency system. In the Rhodesian context, such a move was enlightened and represented a change from the previous approach of simply raising the franchise qualifications.

The new franchise became law in October 1957. It is salutary to note that when the rolls closed for the 1958 election, in January 1958, a mere 1063 new voters had been added through the special ‘door’. The new franchise also introduced the preferential vote, whereby a voter could also mark his/her second choice. If a contest in any given constituency produced no clear winner with over 50 per cent of the vote, then the second-choice votes would be counted, and added to the first-choice votes. This mechanism was to ensure that the ‘moderate’ centre could not be out-voted by the ‘extremes’ of either white supremacy or African nationalism. This helped the UFP win the 1958 Southern Rhodesian election. The right-wing Dominion Party actually polled more first-choice votes country-wide, and even had a greater number of votes

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86 ibid. The special ‘door’ provided for people who could satisfy the following qualifications: £180 p.a. (i.e. £15 per month) and simple literacy.

87 Garfield Todd later described as ‘insane’ the provision of shutting the ‘door’ once one sixth of the electorate had been admitted through it. Interview, 25 September 1996, Bulawayo.

88 Leys, European Politics, p. 307.
once the second preferences had been counted. But in a crucial handful of constituencies, the preferential vote saved the UFP. Had the election been fought without the preferential vote, the Dominion Party would have won.\(^{89}\) The Dominion Party’s near-win in the election is the most powerful indicator that even in 1958, the pace of partnership was moving too fast for the average white voter. As we have already noted, the people who benefited most from the Rhodesian system were also the most reluctant to open it up, and in 1958 they voted accordingly.\(^{90}\)

After the Tredgold proposals became law, Todd wrote ‘this is the first irrevocable step which I believe we have taken in Southern Rhodesia under the heading of Partnership’.\(^{91}\) The most important distinction between the Federal and Southern Rhodesian franchises was that the latter tried to keep the common roll - a single electoral roll on which every vote was equal. Tredgold and others\(^{92}\) feared that a two-roll franchise would open the door to politics divided along racial, rather than party political, lines. The \textit{African Home News}, on the other hand, thought that whilst a genuine effort is being made by the Prime Minister to bring on the voter’s roll some appreciable thousands of African voters who are new, the fact, however, cannot be lost sight of that even in this effort Mr. Todd has seen to it that white voters are so protected that it will be possible for them in all constituencies to return to Parliament a European at all general elections and by-elections ... the franchise proposals are most unsatisfactory for they serve to perpetuate, without change, a rule by one privileged section of the community at the expense of another.\(^{93}\)

\(^{89}\) ibid, pp. 306-312.

\(^{90}\) For studies on the white electorate, see Hodder-Williams, \textit{White Farmers in Rhodesia} and \textit{‘Party Allegiance among Europeans in Rural Rhodesia - a research note’}, \textit{Journal of Modern African Studies}, 10, 1, 1977, pp. 130-139. Also Leys, \textit{European Politics}.

\(^{91}\) MS 1082/5/3Todd to Frances P. Bolton (US House of Representatives), 28 August 1957.

\(^{92}\) AC 3/1/1. Ashton to Greenfield, 8 November 1956.

Cyril Dunn amusingly summed up the frustratingly confusing formula:

like so many other structures compounded of liberal thought in Africa, it was nobly proportioned at the foundations and then appeared, as they might say locally, a bit shack built. If above the base of its mighty pillars David’s Temple had been finished off as a garden-party marquee, the effect would not have been dissimilar.94

African elite reactions

As we have already seen, there was ample precedent for a qualified franchise. The argument that Southern Rhodesia would have to wait a long time for universal adult suffrage could be sturdily defended by reference to Britain and the Cape Colony. But there was also another dimension which helped the cause of the qualified franchise, and that was the lack of any effective domestic opposition to it until the late 1950s.

The African nationalist position has already been discussed, and there was no widespread opposition to a qualified franchise as yet. But there were real problems in getting people who qualified to actually register as voters. Hove took up the cudgels, writing to Huggins that the Federal A and B roll system would give racial representation ‘a new impetus’ and would blur the differences between South Africa and the Federation. He continued:

The Africans at present cannot be said to be enthusiastic about getting their names on the Common Voters’ Roll. You may be interested to know that some years ago I made it my business in co-operation with several other Africans, to get qualified Africans to register as voters. We came across hundreds of them; but I should be lying if I said I got more than half a dozen who were interested. The result was that all of us keen people gave up the attempt as really hopeless. So why give the ignorant electorate the wrong impression that civilised people or Europeans in this country were in danger of being swamped by hordes of ignorant and uncivilised voters?95


95 WP 226/2 ff. 4-5. Hove to Huggins, 20 May 1956.
Hove ended with the words, ‘You will personally undo the untold good work which it has taken you such a long time to build up and achieve’. Given the obstacles in the way of the average African to getting onto the electoral roll, this is hardly surprising. Although the AVL and Congress both supported working within the existing system, at least until 1957, it was becoming clear in the 1950s, and especially after the Federal and Southern Rhodesia franchise alterations, that gaining a meaningful share of power through the electoral system was an ‘Alice in Wonderland point of view, for, from time to time, the government would change the qualifications for the vote. Eventually, the lesson sank into our minds that we would not get very far with this kind of constitutional approach. In the circumstances the African Voters’ League died a natural death’.96 Bernard Chidzero also commented on the new franchises, stating that as long as whites feared growing black enfranchisement, ‘the existing electorate could force the governing party to raise the qualifications or modify them in some manner to make it more difficult for Africans to swell the electorate’, thus retaining effective power in white hands and directly fuelling discontent among the very Africans the whites wanted to co-opt.97

In altering the franchise qualifications to bring more Africans onto the voters’ roll while still maintaining a basic high threshold for the common roll, both the Federal and Southern Rhodesian governments were trying to twist in two ways at once. They were trying to placate hostile European opinion by maintaining ‘standards’ - but also trying to disarm the opposition by encouraging its entry into the mainstream of politics, and so harking back to the Second Reform Act and the Cape philosophy of 1853. Nonetheless, the fact that the franchises in Southern Rhodesia and the Federation were altered to allow more Africans to vote was significant in the context of the time, as only a few years previously Huggins was still trying to deny Africans the vote altogether. Despite the obvious shortcomings, the debates around the

96 ORAL/233 Lawrence Vambe interview.
franchises are indicative of how far elite Rhodesian thought progressed under the policy of partnership in the mid-1950s.
Chapter 6

Media and Partnership: fissures in the white elite

Quotes from a variety of newspapers and publications inform various parts of this thesis. This chapter does not deal with the overt reporting of partnership - in essence, the quotes speak for themselves and the mainstream newspapers’ opinions are clear. Stalwarts such as the Rhodesia Herald were owned by the Rhodesian Press and Printing Company (RP&P), a subsidiary of the South African Argus Group, and could be trusted to report without deviating too much from the establishment line, and with the exception of the Examiner, and later the Catholic magazine Moto, there were precious few widely-read critical publications for whites. Some of this is down to the lack of significant internal division in white society, and of course the small size of white society which made diverse media interests uneconomic.\textsuperscript{1} But none of these factors should disguise the fact that RP&P ran a virtual monopoly.

However, Welensky was suspicious of any new ventures in the media world, especially newspapers and magazines. Broadcasting was a government monopoly, with the Federal Broadcasting Corporation (FBC) a reliable mouthpiece for the elite and also a hesitant critic. Most newspapers aimed at the white population were generally supportive of the governing elite, and even those which were critical, such as the right-wing The Citizen, did not question white hegemony - quite the opposite - even if they disagreed with the federal project. However, by the 1950s a whole new aspect of publishing could be discerned. Africans in Southern Rhodesia and the Federation were increasingly urbanised and literate, and there was clearly a niche in the market for large-scale newspaper ventures which were aimed at them. Importantly, the businessmen behind these ventures were white, undoubtedly demonstrating access to capital - but for the first time, African editors were reaching a large, educated readership of Africans.

Instead of undertaking a content analysis of the Rhodesian press, this chapter examines aspects of the politics of the media - the backroom dealings - and to illustrate the importance the

\textsuperscript{1} Sanger, Central African Emergency, p. 328.
Federal government placed on the media it focuses on two episodes which encapsulate the seminal importance the white elite placed on the domestic media. The first episode is the abortive take-over by the British company Westminster Press of Kachalola Ltd., a company which controlled much of the African press, and was owned by the Paver brothers. The second is the foundation of the Central African Examiner, a publication created by the mining giant RST and aimed at the white intelligentsia, and business and commercial elite. Most of the print media was aimed at Europeans, and generally followed the establishment line. Overt and direct criticism of the white establishment was rare. But if partnership broke the mould of Rhodesian political thought, then developments in the media world reflected this. The 1950s saw more publications aimed at Africans, some of which, like the Daily News, which was launched in 1956, were bankrolled and owned by whites.

The two aspects of the media and partnership discussed in this chapter demonstrate important aspects of the state of the partnership debate. The first is the connection between white elites and African middle class - the South African Paver brothers, B.G. and Cedric, were the largest publishers of African newspapers in the Federation, and they directly aided the development of the African middle class by employing people like Savanhu, Hove, Shamuyarira, Vambe and Willy Musarurwa. They also gave a direct voice to the moderate African middle class by printing the Daily News. The Pavers could certainly have made more money publishing newspapers for a European readership but theirs was a ‘mission’. As Reg Reynolds wrote, ‘At the moment he [Cedric Paver, editor-in-chief of the Daily News] felt his monopoly to be the chief bulwark against African ‘irresponsibility’. While he dominated the African Press there would be no chance for vernacular papers such as those which (some said) had fomented Mau Mau in Kenya.’ The Examiner was the best-known example of a magazine being founded purely to further the practical implementation of partnership, and it is doubly important as an indicator of the direction in which some of the interests traditionally associated


3 Reynolds, Beware of Africans, p. 247.
with the maintenance of white hegemony were moving. Both Kachalola and the Examiner were owned and financed by members of the white elite: the Pavers owned the former and were bankrolled by a consortium of white-owned commercial enterprises, and the latter was founded with money from RST. They risked breaking from the consensus within white circles of avoiding open debate on racial matters, but in so doing demonstrated how important discussion of racial issues was becoming in the Federation, something which was a change from the old days of unquestioned paternalist rule. As a result, these episodes raise questions about the role of the press in a state which was undergoing significant changes, and especially the suspicion of the ruling elite towards publications which were outside its direct control or influence. The lengths to which Welensky went to ensure that Kachalola was not taken over and that the Examiner could be influenced by the Federal government - thus limiting its independence - are both explored in this chapter.

The second is that both episodes illustrate clear fissures within the white elite. Specifically, they represent the way in which RST, as one of the largest contributors to the Federal exchequer, moved away from a close relationship with the political elite and started creating its own impetus for the progression of partnership, something which was confirmed when RST withdrew financial support from the UFP in 1959\(^4\) and started courting UNIP instead. In addition, both the Pavers and RST represented outside interests. The Pavers were South African, and while in itself this did not necessarily point to an enlightened corporate culture - Anglo American was also South African, after all - it demonstrated that people and organisations which were not primarily rooted in Rhodesia could, and often did, acquire different viewpoints to purely domestic businesses. RST was American-owned, and primarily answerable to American and British shareholders, something which would certainly have

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\(^4\) Examiner, 5 December 1959. The same issue included a six-page ‘Statement’ in which Prain directly criticised the Federal government for being too slow in implementing partnership. He cited as proof that there had been no violence or emergency in Northern Rhodesia where was least colour bar, more opportunities for Africans, and greater African involvement in the political process. He also criticised the widespread flouting of regulations lowering the colour bar by white café owner, cinemas, etc.
fuelled traditional Rhodesian suspicion of international capital, a hangover from the BSAC days, and intensified the Rhodesians’ own notion that their affairs were somehow unique and could not possibly be adequately understood by outsiders. It was also the only large-scale corporation which clearly represented international capital, and so differed from Anglo American and the BSAC which were more deeply associated with the local southern African settler culture.

**Kachalola**

In 1952 B.G. and Cedric Paver, who already owned and ran a number of newspapers in southern Africa, saw an opportunity in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland to develop newspapers aimed at the African market. Four large companies - RST, Anglo American, Imperial Tobacco and the BSAC - each contributed £10,000 to form Kachalola Ltd.⁵

Kachalola subsequently purchased the newspaper Mutende from the Northern Rhodesian government, along with the government-owned Cossar Press and stocks of newsprint, as well as an African paper in Nyasaland and the Blantyre Printing and Publishing Company. In addition, Kachalola bought fifty per cent of the shares in Astonian Press, which printed the white-oriented Central African Post. Welensky’s informant wrote ‘our information is that Mr. Paver’s activities in this field are “unfriendly”’, suggesting that Welensky was extremely distrustful of media he could not directly influence. Kachalola proceeded with negotiations with the Northern Rhodesia government,⁶ and proposed shutting down Mutende and replacing it with two new papers, one in the vernacular catering to the rural areas, and one in English for ‘the more educated African’. In addition, the Northern Rhodesian government would provide an annual subsidy to Kachalola equal to the losses being incurred on Mutende, which ran at about £6000 per year.

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⁵ WP 277/13 ff.1-2. ‘Newspaper purchases in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland by Mr. Paver’, confidential document sent to Welensky by Northern News Ltd.

The sources for this section come from a handful of files in the Welensky Papers.

Rhys Meier of the South African Press Association wrote to Welensky informing him that Paver had asked him if he wished to run Kachalola.\footnote{ibid. Meier to Welensky, 26 November 1952.} He mentioned that Paver was backed by ‘some very powerful interests and what amounts to subsidies from your Government and the Government of Nyasaland’. Welensky replied that as far as he was concerned, it was a good development, as ‘I have been condemning the fact that the Government owned a newspaper for the last 10 years’.\footnote{ibid, f.8. Welensky to Meier, 4 December 1952.}

At the same time, the Astonian Press questioned Welensky’s involvement in the Kachalola deal. Paver’s decision, apparently after a meeting with Welensky, to relocate the only large-scale printer in Northern Rhodesia, Cossar Press, to Salisbury would leave the Central African Post without a suitable printer in Northern Rhodesia. This move would end up benefitting the Northern News, edited by David Cole and in which Welensky himself had a number of shares. The Astonian, publishers of the Central African Post, obviously stood to lose out if their press were taken to Salisbury. Alexander Scott of the Astonian quoted a conversation he had had in which Cole was reported as stating that he had ‘put a bloody spoke in the wheel of the CAP [Central African Post] over the Cossar’. He added that he had been informed that Paver was moving the Cossar Press to Salisbury ‘for political reasons’. Scott bluntly put his worries to Welensky:

When you spoke to me about the Cossar at lunch some time ago, I had the impression that you could not have cared less whether it was used by the Central African Post or not. And I still believe that was your attitude then, but after a visit from Cole, who seems determined to do everything possible to make things difficult for us, you may have changed your mind. I should hate to think that any business consideration would affect your impartiality in such a matter as this.\footnote{ibid ff. 9-10. Alexander Scott to Welensky, 13 December 1952.}
anything other than business considerations, claiming that Scott’s ‘political reasons’ were actually ‘policy reasons’¹⁰ - although this still does not explain Cole’s gleeful reaction to the Cossar’s relocation. Nonetheless, it looked at the time as though Welensky welcomed African newspapers which were not in government hands, so long as they remained under the control of the white elite.

This changed by 1954, with Welensky now in the Federal government. In a letter to Julian Greenfield, the Southern Rhodesia Home Affairs minister, he wrote:

> my grape-vine tells me that we are likely to see the appearance of an African newspaper in the not very distant future here in Central Africa. This brings to my mind that thought that we might do something to control this. I don’t suppose it is possible for us to go as far as they have gone in some parts of the world, but I wonder whether we could have a registration of newspapers as a first step."¹¹

Welensky thought it ‘peculiar that anyone can start a newspaper and poison people’s minds as they see fit with no interference from the State’ when banks, bookmakers and bottlestore keepers all had to undergo some form of registration and regulation. Greenfield believed that the only thing the government could do would be to demand a security ‘in the interests of persons who might be defamed’ which might act as a slight deterrent, otherwise the government risked openly compromising press freedom.¹²

The Pavers were in a very strong position by 1954. B.G. Paver was chairman of Kachalola, Astonian, African Newspapers, and the Blantyre Printing and Publishing Company. However, in 1956 they proposed selling a controlling interest in Kachalola - and thus a controlling interest also in the members of the Kachalola group (except Astonian), and hence the black-oriented African Newspapers - to Westminster Press in London¹³ because the four

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¹² ibid, f.2. Greenfield to Welensky, 6 August 1954.

¹³ See also Sanger, Central African Emergency, pp. 331-2.
main corporate shareholders mentioned above wanted a more businesslike management of the company, but also because Ronald Prain wanted a more robust opposition to the establishment press.\textsuperscript{14} As a confidential memorandum put it, the Pavers ‘have developed an effective technique for the production and distribution of African newspapers in which Africans have confidence, and have inspired devotion in the African personnel they have trained’,\textsuperscript{15} but they were somewhat limited by their reliance only on the two brothers themselves.

The possibility of control of African Newspapers passing to a British company, with a new managing director, worried Welensky and the Federal government, as well as the Southern Rhodesians, although it could also have been an opportunity to exert a favourable influence on Fleet Street, especially as the owners of Westminster Press, the Cowdray family, had connections with central Africa.\textsuperscript{16} Black’s memorandum to Huggins stated that Westminster Press would be more interested in profit rather than ‘any ideal of providing sound and sane news for a volatile people easily swayed by extremists’.\textsuperscript{17} Black also mentioned that out of the four corporate sponsors of Kachalola, RST and Prain were by far the most active in seeking a new direction in the press. Keith Acutt of Anglo American was reluctant to oppose Prain in public, Charles Cumings of the BSAC was too ‘new’, and although Imperial Tobacco opposed RST, ‘whether ITC would be prepared to fight RST is in doubt’.\textsuperscript{18} Black warned Huggins:

> the editorials have maintained a high standard of reasoned thought, whether praising or criticising Governments, and any change in the present policy of moderation could only worsen inter-racial relations ... [But] the fact remains that everything possible has been done to keep secret the arrival of Mr. Davidson and the interest of Westminster Press in African Newspapers Ltd. The story is bound to come out, however, and I forecast a “splash” item when “The Citizen” picks it

\textsuperscript{14} ibid, ff.10-12. Confidential memorandum, Colin Black to Huggins [Lord Malvern], 12 October 1956.

\textsuperscript{15} ibid, f. 5. ‘Memorandum: Kachalola Limited’, n.d.

\textsuperscript{16} ibid, f. 17, ‘Note on Westminster Provincial Press’, n.d.

\textsuperscript{17} ibid, ff.10-12. Black to Huggins, 12 October 1956.

\textsuperscript{18} ibid
up. The use which Opposition political parties are likely to make of the fact that the Federation’s newspapers for Africans are now being controlled from London need hardly be described’. 19

Welensky suggested to Huggins that he might have a meeting with Prain. Huggins agreed that Welensky should see Prain but without disclosing how much they knew about Westminster Press’ buy-out. Huggins worried that:

if the Native papers are to be vulgarised, whatever their effect on race relations etc., to make money ... it is a very bad show ... Sir Ronald has proved to be a wise man in many ways outside his immediate business. I do not believe he would be party to anything that conduced to undermining the moral fibre, flimsy though it is, of the Natives and, incidentally, increasing our racial problems’. 20

Welensky and Huggins need not have worried. It is not clear what Welensky said to Prain, but his view prevailed and by December 1956 Westminster Press’ interest in acquiring a controlling interest in Kachalola was over. Ellis Robins of the BSAC wrote to Welensky:

The shareholding companies have carefully considered this view in relation to the discussions they have been having with Westminster Press Limited of London for a transfer to that company of a controlling interest in Kachalola. We concluded that we cannot take the responsibility of pursuing a course which runs counter to the view you have expressed ... we have felt it necessary for the protection of our own reputation and interests to let Westminster Press know that this decision was taken in deference to your view. 21

Four months later, in April 1957, the Observer in London ran a story stating that the Federal government had blocked the deal. 22 Two weeks before that, David Cole, editor of the

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19 ibid.

20 ibid, f. 14, Huggins to Welensky, 16 October 1956.

21 ibid, f. 15, Robins to Welensky, 4 December 1956.

22 ibid, f. 23, Transmission report, ‘UK Press criticises blocking of newspaper deal’, 1 April
Northern News and press advisor to Prain, wrote a letter setting out possible ramifications of the episode, the most likely of which would be that Welensky himself would bear the brunt of press attacks for interfering with press freedom and for being a hypocrite: ‘it is conceivable that we might jointly be subject to at least the implication that, while professing liberal interests in relation to Africans, we have acquired and maintained control of African newspaper in the Federation for other than liberal purposes’. He also thought that although the Observer correspondent, Cyril Dunn, was uncovering much of the story, he was still ignorant of the actual ownership of and interests in Kachalola.

Nonetheless, the episode of Westminster Press’ abortive takeover of Kachalola caused a stink. The Commonwealth Press Union in London expressed concern that the Federal government had intervened to block the sale of Kachalola to Westminster Press, and instructed the Press Freedom Committee to investigate. A few days later in London, Welensky met with the Press Freedom Committee, and expressed his view that it was unwise for a newspaper group with ‘no direct knowledge of conditions in Central Africa’ to assume control of papers aimed at Africans.

The question of Kachalola’s activities appeared again in 1960. Ellis Robins wrote to Welensky expressing concern that unnamed newspaper groups producing papers in other parts of Africa were trying to start up in the Federation. Since some of these were of an ‘undesirable type’, Robins thought that ‘an experienced and technically qualified newspaper group with the right background’ might be brought in to strengthen Africa Newspapers. Since 1957, African Newspapers had dispensed with B.G. Paver’s services, with Nathan Shamuyarira now as editor-

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23 ibid, ff. 18-22, Cole to H.R. Finn, 17 March 1957.

24 ibid, ff. 26-27, Lord Astor to Welensky, 10 April 1957.

25 ibid, f. 29, Minute sheet, 29 April 1957.

26 ibid, ff. 30-31, Robins to Welensky, 27 September 1960.
in-chief. A secret memorandum in January 1961 made it clear that Paver’s resignation was possibly instigated by Prain because of Paver’s somewhat conservative attitude to African political aspirations. As a result, Shamuyarira was now ‘off the leash’ and was free to ‘woo the support of the responsible leaders of African opinion’ for which he would lean more towards African nationalist parties. More importantly, ‘Shamuyarira is now wide open to the influences of such people as the Chairman of RST of whom it is believed he sees quite a good deal’.

At the same time, though, RST was seeking to distance itself from Kachalola, possibly as part of rapprochement with the nationalists in Northern Rhodesia where, of course, RST had its mining concern. Welensky himself was in the middle of dealing with the riots in Southern Rhodesia and the fallout from the Monckton Commission’s acceptance of the principle of secession, and so was extremely worried about the direction the press was taking. He bluntly asked Robins:

> whether it is not possible to get RST out of the holding group, and if Anglo-American, yourself [BSAC] and the others concerned couldn’t take over their shareholding. If that is not possible, I believe I could make arrangements to find the £60,000 necessary and one would, of course, have to use nominees on behalf of the Government to act, but I am so gravely concerned about the ownership and the direction of this press that I would go as far as doing that if nothing else were possible.

It is not clear where the £60,000 would come from.

As it happened, BSAC, Anglo American and Imperial Tobacco were reluctant to acquire RST’s holding in Kachalola or invite an outside group to do so until the 1960 Constitutional

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28 ibid.

29 ibid, ff. 35-37, Robins to Welensky, 18 October 1960.

30 ibid, ff. 31-32, Welensky to Robins, 13 October 1960.
Conference was over. But by 1961, with less Federal support and advertising in African Newspapers, the situation was becoming critical. Keith Acutt wrote to Robins suggesting that Roy Thomson might step in, something which Welensky confirmed Thomson would do ‘on the slightest hint’. That hint was duly taken up, and in October 1961, all the sponsors of Kachalola agreed to sell to the Thomson Group.

The Westminster episode is important because it shows how two companies with ostensibly similar interests in the Federation, RST and Anglo American, diverged. It also demonstrated the fissures within the white economic elite on the Federal level, and in many ways the divisions between international and domestic capital in the Federation. It is also an indicator of the importance the Federal government placed on ownership and influence on the media. While it did not matter as much who controlled the white-oriented press, it was much more important that the press aimed at Africans be in reliable hands.

**The Central African Examiner**

RST’s interest in influencing the media in the Federation to take a more pro-partnership line did not stop with Kachalola. As we saw above, Kachalola had been bankrolled by four major white commercial and industrial interests. During the 1950s the mining conglomerates on the Copperbelt, and specifically RST, were beginning to question the speed with which partnership was being implemented, and by extension the integrity of the Federal and Southern Rhodesian governments. Prain, as RST’s chairman, was a keen advocate of African

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31 ibid, ff. 41-42, Robins to Welensky, 7 November 1960.

32 ibid ff. 60-61, Acutt to Robins, 5 April 1961.

33 ibid, f.62, Welensky to Acutt, 5 April 1961.


advancement, partly for humanitarian and philanthropic reasons, but also because a better-paid, happier African population would provide more consumers to drive the Federal economy, and a properly trained African workforce would necessarily increase the pool of skilled workers RST could draw on. One way to help create an atmosphere conducive to partnership and political progress was to create a political and economic magazine which would sit on the liberal side of the fence.\(^{36}\)

There had been a surprising lack of proactive involvement on the part of the political elite in media matters. While people like Welensky engaged in spoiling tactics, as discussed above, there was little to fill the gap and there was no government-sponsored publication which would faithfully follow the government line. It took three years for the Federal Party to even produce a newsletter with limited circulation.\(^{37}\) As a result, there was a gap in the market for a publication which would actively support partnership.

In order to generate an atmosphere sympathetic to partnership, RST provided the funding for a liberal current affairs magazine, the Central African Examiner, which was launched in June 1957. Moving from direct financial contributions to the ruling UFP to subsidising a critical publication was an important step in Rhodesian politics which many writers have missed, and signified a re-ordering of the lines of influence. RST’s leverage would now be directed away from openly supporting the government line towards influencing the political scene more indirectly.\(^{38}\) The Examiner was not supposed to be a prominent thorn in the governments’ side, more a gentle reminder of the way in which the white elite should be encouraging the development and consolidation of partnership. The Examiner’s value lies in its position as the only wide-circulation publication which was founded with the explicit aim of promoting partnership. It was unlike the IASR’s Concord, for example, as its readership was not

\(^{36}\) Interview, Eileen Haddon, 11 October 1994.

\(^{37}\) WP 584/3, f. 42. Welensky to Abrahamson, 6 June 1956. David Cole was to edit the newsletter, but his job was unofficial and was not made public.

\(^{38}\) RST and Anglo American both distanced themselves from the UFP by cutting all direct donations, which in 1959 had come to £5000 from each company. Examiner, 15 August 1959.
limited by subscription to members of a certain group or party - it tried to have a wider appeal than that. It aimed for a circulation of 2500 per issue, which it largely achieved mostly through subscription, but it was also on sale in bookshops in the Federation and a few in London.

The Examiner was deliberately aimed at business and the intelligentsia - the policymakers and others who were in a position to influence current affairs, and its cover price of two shillings certainly made it prohibitive for most Africans. It was also aimed at a similar constituency in Britain, since it was supposed to be a sort of African Economist. RST ‘thought that through an appeal to the business section of white Rhodesians, they might persuade them [whites as a whole] to open up to blacks’. The Examiner’s Board of Directors reflected this. Sir Geoffrey Crowther, former editor of the Economist, was Chairman. The connection with the Economist was to enhance the Examiner’s standing among the business community, establish its competence as a serious journal in both the Federation and Britain, and also provide a source for overseas news. One African, Herbert Chitepo, the first African to practise in Rhodesia as an Advocate, was also on the Board. There were also three Trustees whose brief was to safeguard the editor’s independence from pressure groups, political parties and accusations that RST was influencing editorial policy: Sir Robert Tredgold, later Federal Chief Justice; Walter Adams, Principal of the University College of Rhodesia and Nyasaland; and Oliver Greene-Wilkinson, the Archbishop of Central Africa, together comprising ‘the most eminent board of trustees imaginable’. The first editor, Francis Baughan (who had spent ten years with The Times in Britain), was sent over from the UK by the Economist, and so the link was forged. The Federal news service called the new magazine “an experiment in journalism in a new and growing country”, and added:

its declared aim is “to provide a comprehensive background to the news of the


40 Interview, Eileen Haddon, 11 October 1994.

day for thoughtful people in the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland and to help create an informed and critical approach to current problems”.

Clyde Sanger was more cynical, calling the Examiner, with the benefit of hindsight ‘another ... misadventure in progressive journalism’.

It was stressed that Crowther had advised RST to provide the financial support for the Examiner ‘while agreeing to safeguard the integrity of the journal and the complete independence of the editor’. RST was sometimes accused of influencing editorial policy and that ‘the impression had grown in the minds of a section of the public that the Trustees were responsible for policies followed by The Examiner and for the opinions expressed from time to time in the journal’. Welensky himself was concerned enough to mention this to Prain, who wrote him a hand-written reply saying ‘I think one must distinguish between criticism and opposition’. Prain slightly disingenously added ‘I try to keep out of politics here [the Federation]’.

And the Examiner was keen to stress that it had total editorial independence:

As it has also been indicated that other sections of the public have assumed that because of the financial support for the journal afforded by the Rhodesian Selection Trust Group, as stated when The Examiner was established, the views of the journal are necessarily those of the R.S.T. Group, the Central African Examiner Limited wishes to take this opportunity to state that The Examiner has always been published as a journal of independent editorial opinion and will continue to be published as such.

42 MS 1082/1/7 [Todd Papers], Rhodesia and Nyasaland Federation, ‘Publication of the Central African Examiner’, 14-21 September 1957.


44 ibid.

45 Examiner, 20 June 1959, p. 7.

46 WP 657/5 ff. 29-32. Prain to Welensky, 16 October 1957.

RST’s ‘hands off’ stance helps to explain how the Examiner came to be influenced by the Federal Government.

The optimism with which the Examiner was established soon ran into serious problems. Baughan was editor for under a year, from June 1957 to April 1958, and resigned just before the Southern Rhodesia general election in protest against the continuing encroachment on his editorial freedom by the Managing Director, David Cole. Clyde Sanger, who was Baughan’s assistant, wrote that during that time ‘I ... did more than my fair share of writing while Francis argued with David, defending his editorial integrity’.\(^{48}\) Cole was to prove a problematic figure for much of the Examiner’s early life. Unlike the ‘establishment liberals’ who figured so prominently in the Examiner’s set-up, he was a post-war working class immigrant from Britain, and whereas the ‘establishment liberals had serious elements of principle ... Cole had none’.\(^{49}\)

He had been ‘a lively editor’\(^{50}\) of the Northern News in Lusaka, and by 1957 was running a public relations firm in Salisbury. His presence on the Examiner’s board came through Prain, and was a way of liaising directly with the government. He has been described as ‘deferential to the political and social establishment’,\(^{51}\) ‘a Welensky man first and last’,\(^{52}\) ‘an eminence grise behind Welensky’ who advised him to get rid of Garfield Todd in 1958,\(^{53}\) and, more unkindly, ‘Welensky’s doormat’.\(^{54}\) To complicate matters further, Cole also knew Prain, from his days as editor of the Northern News, as part of an abortive idea to launch a pro-Federation newspaper in

\(^{48}\) Clyde Sanger to Eileen Haddon, 11 December 1987. I am grateful to Eileen Haddon for letting me have a copy of this letter.

\(^{49}\) Conversation with Theo Bull, 19 January 1996.

\(^{50}\) Sanger, Central African Emergency, p. 328.


\(^{52}\) Sanger to Haddon, 11 December 1987.

\(^{53}\) ibid.

\(^{54}\) Interview, Eileen Haddon, 11 October 1994.
the mid-1950s,\textsuperscript{55} and as editor of \textit{Federal Outlook} which RST gave money to.\textsuperscript{56}

There is little doubt that Cole’s relationship with Welensky was a close one, possibly a shared affinity because of their similarly lowly origins, and that through Cole the Federal Government was able to exert covert political pressure on the \textit{Examiner}’s editorial policy.\textsuperscript{57}

Cole’s PR firm handled the account for ‘Voice and Vision’, the Federal Government’s propaganda machine. Cole often consulted Welensky on matters of policy regarding the \textit{Examiner}, such as the time when Cole was going to resign from the board after the magazine was bought by Theo Bull. After Baughan’s resignation, Sanger, who had moved to \textit{Drum} some months previously, was offered the editor’s job by Cole ‘while saying he [Cole] would take an overseer’s role’.\textsuperscript{58} It was clear that the job would entail a certain amount of ‘constraints’,\textsuperscript{59} but Sanger accepted it anyway. Between Baughan’s departure and Sanger’s arrival, Cole had appointed Ian Hess assistant editor. Sanger wrote ‘Ian was a sad figure. I always reckoned David had some hold over him, and I always believed Ian was working for David, not for me’.\textsuperscript{60}

Sanger resigned in March 1959 ‘when David didn’t want me to go to Nyasaland [to cover the Emergency] and said one could assess the situation better from Salisbury!’\textsuperscript{61} Sanger’s analysis of the political pressure on the \textit{Examiner} is borne out by evidence of the Federal Government’s covert manoeuvring regarding advertising in the \textit{Examiner}, and by Welensky’s moves to deny the \textit{Examiner} income when he disagreed with its stance.

Welensky was stung into action when Prain wrote to him asking to clarify the growing

\textsuperscript{55} WP 657/4 ff. 22-23. Prain to Welensky, 7 July 1954.

\textsuperscript{56} WP 657/5 f. 35. Prain to Welensky, 19 December 1957.

\textsuperscript{57} For extensive correspondence between Cole and Welensky, see WP 599/8-600/5, including confidential letters concerning Cole’s thoughts on the \textit{Examiner}’s relationship with RST.

\textsuperscript{58} Sanger to Haddon, 11 December 1987.

\textsuperscript{59} ibid.

\textsuperscript{60} ibid.

\textsuperscript{61} ibid.
uncertainty over the Federation’s political situation, and he responded by essentially blaming the mining companies, and especially RST, for not supporting Federation as fully as he had wanted. Welensky had felt embattled for some time by then, after pushing the Federal franchise through against strong opposition from the electorate, feeling under siege from the strong Dominion Party and the rising strength of African nationalist parties, and beginning to doubt Britain’s willingness to allow the Federation to continue. He complained to Prain that RST should have helped found a pro-Federation newspaper in 1954, the cost of which would have been a ‘flea-bite’ compared to RST’s profits, and now he could not count on the support of a single newspaper in the country. Whether that was true or not is beside the point; what it suggests is that Welensky’s hostility to the Examiner was not occasioned by serious opposition on the Examiner’s part, but by a certain bitterness towards Prain and a fear that criticism would turn into antagonism and perhaps show how badly the political authorities compared with RST’s in the practical implementation of partnership. This fear of Welensky’s was not new, as we have seen over his concerns regarding the Paver brothers’ moves to buy and establish newspapers in the Federation. By then, Prain had begun to doubt the viability of Federation, as he noted at a speech to the New York Society of Security Analysts in April 1960 where he said that while Federation was a ‘unique concept’, nonetheless after seven years political and economic power was still in the hands of the whites, and this was already causing problems with the Africans who were unwilling to wait much longer. The African Mail had reported two days previously that RST was courting Kaunda and was moving its offices from Salisbury to Lusaka.

No magazine survives without advertising or a heavy subsidy, and Welensky was able to use his position to persuade many would-be advertisers to withhold their custom if he did not agree with the magazine’s tone. Baughan’s insistence on editorial independence had not endeared the Examiner to the Federal or Territorial governments, and advertising was initially

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63 Herald, 28 April 1960.
64 WP 657/5 f. 81. African Mail, 26 April 1960.
hard to attract, although a brief look at the editorial tone suggests that the magazine was hardly radical - more on this later.

Once Baughan and later Sanger had left, Cole took over as editor. The Examiner was considered to be in more reliable hands, there was a marked change in the attitude of Welensky and the Federal Government. More advertising from the Federal and Territorial governments began to appear. The rationale behind this was expressed by Donald Macintyre, the Federal Finance Minister, when he wrote to Welensky:

To my mind we have a definite interest in seeing the Examiner continue, provided it remains the type of paper it has been in the past ... the significant fact ... is that a paper of this type is an indicator to people overseas of a degree of economic, social and - dare I say it - mental development. The Examiner has therefore a definite prestige value.

Macintyre thus summarised one of the political elite’s prime concerns, and one of partnership’s main purposes: the need to present a good face to the world. Bad publicity was a constant source of worry for the Federal and Territorial governments, and what better proof of growing liberalism and widening horizons than a magazine of critical enquiry? But Macintyre was also keenly aware that the Examiner had to remain nominally independent: ‘It is quite obvious that a subsidy would kill the paper for the simple reason that nobody would then believe it had independent views.’ He concluded by saying that ‘I, for one, would be prepared to see Government advertising in the Examiner’. The Federal Government’s role in supporting the Examiner was greatly appreciated by Cole and Hess. Hess wrote to Stewart Parker, Welensky’s Private Secretary, thanking him ‘for your offer to help us attain more advertising’.

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65 Interview, Eileen Haddon, 11 October 1994.

66 WP 279/4 f.9 Macintyre to Welensky, 5 August 1959.

67 ibid.

68 ibid, ff. 1-3 Hess to Parker, 30 July 1959.
More advertising began to appear, both from the governments themselves and from firms which had been reluctant to advertise in a magazine critical of the government, but which now got a semi-official nod that it would not prejudice their standing with the governments if they decided to advertise in the *Examiner* after all. It is indicative of the close relationship between Cole and Welensky that Cole felt able to complain in August 1959 that the Standard Bank had refused to advertise in the *Examiner* because ‘they did not agree with its policy (this was in the heyday of the Baughan/Sanger period),’ with the implicit suggestion that Welensky might be able to do something about it now that there had been ‘a change in policy’. Welensky was now willing to actively lobby for advertising on the *Examiner*’s behalf. In a letter to Keith Acutt of Anglo American, he said:

I believe that given half a chance with Cole and Hess in command, the thing could be put on an economic footing. Can you help? You may have noticed that they have begun to give some Federal Government advertisements, and you may be able to do something in that direction ... I think you may have noticed that there has been quite a change in policy in this paper recently, and it is now more balanced.

Acutt replied ‘I will certainly arrange for the Examiner to have our support if we have not already done something’.

What sort of advertising would the *Examiner* carry? It had to be in keeping with its status as a serious magazine of political and economic commentary. In selling the idea of advertising in the *Examiner*, Ian Hess said that the magazine was the best medium in the Federation for ‘prestige advertising’, adding that:

When it is considered ... that The Examiner genuinely goes to the “top people” in Government, commerce, industry, and all other spheres of activity, we can

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69 ibid, f. 13 Cole to Welensky, 31 August 1959.

70 ibid, f. 14 Welensky to Acutt, 7 September 1959.

71 ibid, f. 15 Acutt to Welensky, 9 September 1959,
claim to be just about the best selling medium there is here ... for capital goods such as mining machinery, the more expensive types of car, tractors and the like.  

Hess continued, saying that while it may be inappropriate for breweries ‘to advertise Castle Beer or Lion Lager, as such, with us, there is no better place for them to say what a fine organisation they are, what they are doing for their African employees, and so on’.  

In short, the Examiner was the sort of magazine that major companies, RST included, would want to advertise in. There was a profusion of advertising from companies which carried out work for the Federal and Territorial governments. One such company was Costain, the building firm, which was often employed by the various governments, especially the Federal Government. The Examiner carried double-page spreads from Costain in most issues in 1959 and 1960. The tone of Costain’s advertisements is interesting as well. They stressed the service the company was providing to the country in the shape of building for the governments - a reliable government is housed in buildings built by a reliable builder. Even the types of building were important. Costain built police buildings, and those advertisements showed an African constable on patrol. So Costain was supporting partnership and greater opportunities for Africans by building for the British South Africa Police which prided itself in its supposed good relations with Africans and in its policy of recruiting Africans and Europeans on the same criteria.  

Towards the middle of 1960, when it was apparent that the Southern Rhodesian Government was preparing to embark on a series of reforms, and the spirit of ‘nation-building’ was spreading in liberal circles, Costain added the sentence ‘Building a Nation’ to its advertisements. Other firms, such as the British South Africa Company, advertised their long association with Southern Rhodesia and the Federation.

72 ibid, ff. 1-3 Hess to Parker, 30 July 1959.
73 ibid.
74 It was not mentioned that Africans could not rise as high as Europeans in the BSAP.
75 See, for example, Costain’s advertisement in the Examiner on 23 April 1960.
This follows a certain tone in advertising spreading through the Rhodesian press. Elsewhere, theCourtesy Campaign was running advertisements picturing people of all races, proclaiming ‘IT TAKES ALL SORTS TO BUILD A NATION’ and ‘Rhodesians and proud of it’. This dovetailed later with the UFP’s ‘Build a Nation’ campaign, which is discussed in the next chapter. The political elite was trying to build a momentum of public support in all spheres to bolster its programme of liberalisation. So, papers like the Daily News which was aimed at the ‘thinking’ African public, the Rhodesia Herald at the European public, and the Examiner at the intelligentsia and the business and political elite of the country in general, all carried similar advertisements from various companies and pressure groups, all of whom supported government attempts to foster a Rhodesian ‘nationhood’. Therefore, the Examiner’s advertising fitted into a loose campaign of the various governments’ to encourage people to think of the Federation as a single ‘nation’. This, perhaps more than anything else, is indicative of how ‘responsible’ the political establishment in 1959 and 1960 considered the Examiner to be.

Under Baughan, the Examiner’s editorial tone was not hostile, despite the fact that Welensky and the Federal and Territorial governments thought it unreliable, and it was Baughan’s insistence on editorial independence more than anything else which turned Welensky against it. As often as not though, the Examiner glossed over, or gave the benefit of the doubt, to failures to implement ‘partnership’, and as such could have been little more than an irritant to Welensky rather than a threat. It highlighted examples of how partnership was creating opportunities for Africans, and one of its occasional contributors was Jasper Savanhu, the first African minister in the Federal Government. It ran articles from prominent African

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76 The Courtesy Campaign was run by predominantly white women, and its purpose was to encourage people of all races to be considerate of each other. Although it claimed 50,000 members, this is an unlikely figure, and it slipped into oblivion after the Rhodesian Front’s election victory in December 1962. It is interesting that the Courtesy Campaign advertised in the African press about every two days, at least as much as it did in the European press. For a typical advertisement, see African Daily News. 2 September 1961.

77 See a piece by Savanhu entitled ‘What my appointment really means’ in the Examiner. 25 April 1959. See also Savanhu, ‘An African Middle Class’.
intellectuals like Enoch Dumbutshena and Stanlake Samkange who supported partnership and regularly warned of the appeal the burgeoning Southern Rhodesia African National Congress had among the Africans.  

The Examiner also ran articles which confirmed some settler prejudices, such as the idea that Africans generally welcomed the Land Apportionment Act, and disagreed perhaps only with its actual implementation. A piece by Leopold Takawira, at the time an employee of Capricorn, said that ‘no African quarrels with the LAA as such, the principle is sensible and fair’. It even ran the kind of articles which epitomised Rhodesian paternalism: ‘certainly few of them [Africans] are “ready” to take their place as equals of Europeans in a complicated modern state. Many, if not most, Africans are by our standards ignorant and superstitious, and, although they are remarkably good-natured people, brutality lies pretty near the surface’. Between 1957 and 1960, the Examiner followed the classic Rhodesian liberal line that while discrimination had been necessary in the past, times had changed, so barriers could be judiciously lowered, and although universal adult suffrage was still not ‘practical’, it should be the ultimate goal. In addition, the insensitive use of the colour bar against ‘advanced’ Africans was both crude and losing the Federation friends abroad.

The editorial tone did not change dramatically when Baughan left in 1958. However, in Cole the government now had a figure in control of the Examiner on whom they could rely to support them in difficult times, even though Sanger was formally editor. Such a time was the Emergency in 1959. In February, a plot to cause widespread violence in Nyasaland was

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78 Examiner, 20 July 1957. Dumbutshena was encouraging established political parties of all hues to set up African branches and actively court African support because ‘African opinion has been excited by the SRANC’.

For more on Samkange, see Ranger, Are We Not Also Men?


80 ibid, 21 December 1957.

81 For an example of this, see the Examiner’s editorial of 15 March 1958.
supposedly unmasked, and an emergency was proclaimed there. In March, Southern Rhodesia
followed suit, banning the Southern Rhodesia African National Congress. The Examiner’s
editorial of 14 March 1959 compared Sir Edgar Whitehead, the Southern Rhodesian Prime
Minister, to Abraham Lincoln, in that they had both acted firmly against secession and sedition.
A profile of Whitehead in the same issue defended the Emergency on the grounds that
Whitehead had little relish personally for the detention of five hundred people, and had acted
‘only because he is utterly dedicated to building a genuinely multi-racial state in Southern
Rhodesia’ which those five hundred were ‘determined to frustrate’. 82

Because of Sanger’s presence, editorial opinion was not as fully under Cole’s control as
he or Welensky might have wished. During this time, white liberal and ‘moderate’ African
opinion was split between the UFP and Todd’s reformed United Rhodesia Party, which in July
1958 became the Central Africa Party. The two parties represented different strands of
liberalism: the UFP was more gradualist, the CAP more radical. Cole and Sanger exemplified
this split on the Examiner; Cole voicing the official UFP line, Sanger leaning more towards
Todd’s ‘radical’ liberalism. Sanger made sure that the Examiner continued to reflect - in part at
least - the CAP’s brand of liberalism, and despite the political pressure exerted by the Federal
and Territorial governments, Todd and his supporters felt that with Sanger on board the
Examiner was on their side: ‘We have the intelligentsia on our side. The C.A. Examiner under
Sanger ... can be relied upon ... to assist our cause or at least do it no harm.’ 83 The conflicting
stances of Cole and Sanger at the helm were reflected in the often contradictory opinions the
Examiner’s editorials voiced from one issue to the next. The best example came during the
campaign within the United Federal Party in late 1957 and early 1958 to oust Garfield Todd as
Prime Minister of Southern Rhodesia. 84 Over the course of three months or so, it became

82 Sanger, who had just left the Examiner, thought this profile ‘the most embarrassing


84 Eileen Haddon cites an article in the 4 January 1958 issue entitled ‘Is This the Beginning of
the End for Todd’ as the start of this Cole-inspired campaign. Interview, Eileen Haddon, 11
October 1994.
common to find one editorial calling for Todd’s removal, and the next praising him. This was because Cole and Sanger shared the responsibility for writing editorials, and took advantage of one another’s absence to run pieces from their own particular standpoints. This discrepancy was also apparent just a few weeks after the 14 March 1959 issue, which praised the Southern Rhodesian Government’s handling of the Emergency, when an editorial lauding the appearance of Dissent was printed. Dissent was a broadsheet of irregular frequency whose speciality was articulate and persistent exposures of and strident attacks on the government. It was put together by a Methodist minister, Whitfield Foy, and two UCRN lecturers, Terence Ranger and John Reed, none of whom were remotely supportive of either the Federal or Territorial governments, and therefore no friends of Cole’s or Welensky’s.

The first three years of the Examiner’s life, up to 1960, were complicated by behind-the-scenes politicking. In general, the Examiner reflected the way the white political elite wanted to be seen - a champion of multi-racial progress. It incorporated the opinions of the political elite for its first three years and generally followed the government line, despite RST’s wish that it be leading rather than being led. It was an accurate indicator of the direction in which the Federal and Territorial governments wanted to be seen to be moving, and its existence was an example of how the large business concerns were trying to push them along. In one sense, the conflict between Cole and Sanger was a reflection of the wider conflict of RST trying to prod the government into implementing partnership meaningfully. The Examiner also revealed the way in which the political elite thought the Federation could progress towards a more inclusive nationhood by stressing the advantages partnership brought Africans, and occasionally criticising its lapses. Despite Eileen Haddon’s opinion that the Examiner before 1960 was a

85 Interview, Eileen Haddon, 11 October 1994.

86 Examiner, 11 April 1959. The piece was written by Clyde Sanger, although he had resigned by the time it was printed.

87 For example, the Examiner criticised the Civil Service Club’s refusal to go multi-racial at a time when the Federal Government was encouraging the civil service, business and commerce in Salisbury to cater for non-Europeans as well. See the Examiner, 27 February 1960.
medium for reaction, and despite the influence the political establishment exercised over it between 1957 and 1960, it was still a relatively liberal magazine in a country where the concept of partnership was a bone of contention between the governments, the mining and business concerns, and public opinion of all colours. And although the Federal Government was exerting undue pressure on the Examiner, the editorial tone remained liberal with occasional shows of independence. Since RST was a ‘hands off’ proprietor, and since the Examiner was reflecting the policies for which it had been established, there was little need for RST to intervene directly.

The Federal government’s influence over the Examiner came to an end in June 1960 when the Examiner was taken over by Theo Bull. Bull had been a postgraduate student at UCRN, where he had started a student paper, the Unicorn, and where he had been a ‘close associate’ of the Principal (and Examiner Trustee), Walter Adams, and of Terence Ranger. In the eyes of the political establishment, such contacts made Bull a subversive. In addition, Bull believes that his otherwise impeccable establishment credentials marked him out as a traitor as well as a radical in the political establishment’s eyes. The official reason behind RST’s withdrawal of funding was that the Examiner was now a mature magazine able to stand on its own two feet. In Eileen Haddon’s opinion, RST had seen by late 1959 that partnership was being implemented far too reluctantly, and that Federation would not survive the ructions caused by the 1959 Emergency and the resurgence of African nationalism. In addition, the removal of Garfield Todd from power in 1958 had effectively put paid to any prospect of African opinion trusting a European Prime Minister. Added to this, the Examiner had become

88 Interview, Eileen Haddon, 11 October 1994.

89 Gelfand, A Non-Racial Island of Learning, p. 223.


91 ‘‘Establishments’ are always more bitter at radicals from within the establishment (whom they see as traitors) than at those from the outside. I was on visiting terms with the Governor-General through my uncle and aunt Beit, and indeed my Beit origins should have wrapped me into the establishment’. Conversation with Theo Bull, 19 January 1996.

92 Interview, Eileen Haddon, 11 October 1994.
an embarrassment, since Cole’s editorship had ended any pretense of editorial independence. As a result, the three Trustees resigned in June 1959 when Cole became effective editor - their function was to stop the Managing Director encroaching on the editor, a function which was now redundant since the Managing Director and editor were the same person.93

As part of the deal whereby Bull took over the Examiner, RST left £12,000 in reserve to cover running costs for the first twelve to eighteen months, and that money lasted until the end of 1961.94 Even if there was little hope left for partnership and Federation, it was important to Prain that a liberal magazine should stand a chance of survival to fight the corner for reforms. There was a certain amount of continuity with the new board. Crowther stayed, as did Chitepo. Additional members came from Bull’s acquaintances among the ‘establishment liberals’, such as Sir Stewart Gore-Browne and Sir Stephen Courtauld. Another new board member was Anthony Marshall, an American, who had founded African Research and Development Company based in New York. Cole believed that Marshall’s share of the money was provided by American Metal Climax, RST’s parent company.95 Cole also believed that RST had sold all its one hundred shares to Crowther for £1 each, and then given Crowther £20,000 to keep the Examiner going. When Crowther put up £8,000 as his share towards buying the magazine from RST, Cole believed that it was the change from the original £20,000.96 So, if this was the case, RST and American Metal Climax provided much of the money which bought out their own interests in the Examiner. Since the £12,000 RST left for Bull and Crowther’s £8,000 come to the £20,000 Cole thought RST had given Crowther, this is probably true.

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93 This is alluded to in the 20 June 1959 issue. While stressing the Examiner’s editorial independence, the Trustees ‘suggested that the arrangement under which they were appointed should be brought to an end’ - a veiled reference to their powerless position.

94 Conversation with Theo Bull, 19 January 1996; also, Interview, Eileen Haddon, 11 October 1994. Haddon believed that RST left money in reserve for Bull to run the Examiner after the umbilical cord had officially been cut: ‘Halpern was on a good salary, we kept the offices in Manica Road, the money had to be coming from somewhere’.

95 WP 279/4 f. 66, Cole to Stewart Parker, 11 June 1960.

96 ibid.
The change in the *Examiner*’s editorial stance was immediately apparent under Bull and his new team. The *Examiner* became more intellectual in content, and as the Federation began to collapse, it concentrated more on Southern Rhodesia. Bull drastically cut staff to economise and employed a new editor from South Africa, Jack Halpern. Halpern was ‘of a different mould from most of those who got involved with the *Examiner*’\(^97\), in that he was not an establishment liberal. He had been a childhood refugee from Nazi Germany, and was ‘a rather theoretical, but quite genuine, ‘leftist’’.\(^98\) Halpern was also suspect in the governments’ eyes, having worked for the Institute of Race Relations in South Africa, and the Federal government seriously considered refusing him permission to enter the country.

Halpern was joined by Eileen Haddon as editorial assistant. Haddon was a vociferous liberal who had been active on the liberal wing of Southern Rhodesian politics since the early 1950s. New contributors included Terence Ranger and John Reed, both active supporters of the African nationalist National Democratic Party, and both of whom were later forced to leave the country because of their political activities. Patrick Keatley of *The Observer* wrote the reports from Westminster ‘for virtually nothing’. The main difference, thought Eileen Haddon, was that now people contributed ‘because they believed in what we were trying to do’;\(^99\) a refreshing change from the underhand politics which had characterised David Cole’s involvement with the *Examiner*, she believed.

A look at Welensky’s correspondence shows how little he approved of the new regime. He wrote to Robins that ‘the “Central African Examiner” has now turned completely round and is going to be a very anti paper. I personally intend to deal with it as such and I hope my friends will do the same’.\(^100\) Welensky’s friends followed his advice. Advertising from most prestige firms dried up virtually overnight, and despite Bull’s sizeable inheritance and the vestiges of

\(^97\) Conversation with Theo Bull, 19 January 1996.

\(^98\) ibid.

\(^99\) Interview, Eileen Haddon, 11 October 1994.

\(^100\) WP 662/5 f. 38, Welensky to Robins, 21 June 1960.
RST funding, the *Examiner* was run on an almost impossible shoestring. Halpern left at the end of 1961, Bull being unable to meet his salary,\(^{101}\) and staff were reduced to Bull as editor, Haddon as assistant editor,\(^{102}\) Liz Clements,\(^{103}\) and a despatch man. Haddon worked out a budget for the magazine of £5,000 a year, which was never enough.\(^{104}\) In an attempt to raise more money, Bull went to the United States in early 1962 to see the Hochschild brothers, owners of American Metal Climax (and thereby bypassing RST), but the trip proved largely fruitless.\(^{105}\)

Welensky’s reaction to the new owner and staff illustrates how fundamental the shift in the *Examiner*’s politics was, and how concerned he was about a hostile press. The *Examiner*’s new line was that Southern Rhodesia and the Federation did not have ‘good government, in terms of enlightened self-interest and the realities of Africa in the 1960s’, and that no progress would be made unless ‘the underprivileged cease to be underprivileged and unless those who rightfully demand their share in government obtain it’.\(^{106}\) Within weeks of changing hands, the *Examiner* was having to defend itself in its own leader column against charges that it was advocating the ‘surrender’ and ‘betrayal’ of European interests.\(^{107}\) The new editorial policy, free from interference from Welensky and Cole, was clearly one of independent, informed criticism of the government. The *Examiner*’s audience was changing too. In 1961, it began to be sold on

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\(^{101}\) *Examiner*, December 1961, p. 4. The same issue illustrates how little advertising the *Examiner* now attracted: there was only a single page, from Bookers whose Chairman, Sir Jock Campbell, was another ‘establishment liberal’.

\(^{102}\) When Bull left for Lusaka in November 1963, Haddon took over as Editor, a post she held until the *Examiner*’s closure.

\(^{103}\) Liz Clements was another ‘establishment liberal’, and wife of Frank Clements, who had been mayor of Salisbury and a contributor to the *Examiner*.

\(^{104}\) Interview, Eileen Haddon, 11 October 1994.

\(^{105}\) Conversation with Theo Bull, 19 January 1996.

\(^{106}\) *Examiner*, 30 July 1960.

\(^{107}\) ibid.
street corners to a predominantly African readership, a clear shift away from the white establishment, and an illustration of how its content now appealed to a different audience.\textsuperscript{108} Although subscription sales dropped, street-corner sales made up the shortfall, and the \textit{Examiner} continued to sell reasonably well. The hostile reaction of the political elite shows how the discourse of partnership, although progressing, had not advanced as quickly as either the mining and commercial interests had wanted, nor as fast as the European intelligentsia and African middle class opinion had advocated. The \textit{Examiner} battled on until December 1965, in an increasingly hostile political atmosphere which culminated with UDI. It was forced to close by Ian Smith’s post-UDI censorship.

\textsuperscript{108} Conversation with Theo Bull, 19 January 1996.
Chapter 7

Last Gasp: The Cabinet Partnership Implementation Committee and the Build a Nation campaign 1959-62

A shift in sympathy

Within Britain, official and public opinion was rapidly accommodating developments in Africa and the wider world by the end of the 1950s. Clearly, the retreat from empire was in full flow, and this had to be communicated to the settler colonies. Macmillan’s famous ‘winds of change’ speech to the South African Parliament on 3 February 1960 encapsulated this. Within Southern Rhodesia, this change of mood was noticed in certain circles, especially among the more progressive intelligentsia. Patrick Keatley, then a journalist with the Observer in London and contributor of sketches from Westminster for the Central African Examiner, wrote to Jack Halpern, the Examiner’s editor:

the sting is in the tail. The last bit where I describe the shift in [British] public opinion since Sharpeville - as it applies to Central Africa - is I think not exaggerated and of real importance. I doubt if your political bods in Rhodesia realise the extent of the shift in sympathy here’.

Within Southern Rhodesia and the Federation, it was also abundantly clear that partnership was not progressing fast enough, and that most of its inhabitants were not acquiring any meaningful sense of inclusive citizenship. Cyril Hatty, Treasury Minister under Todd in Southern Rhodesia in the 1950s, cites two examples where the spirit of partnership was breached which made a deep impression on him. One occurred in 1957 and concerned a multiracial theatre group from Bulawayo which was going to tour Northern Rhodesia. One of the black actors was stopped at the border and refused permission to cross over into the north. No reason was given, and the man was not arrested - he was simply denied permission to cross what was ostensibly an open border, although clearly the openness of the border only operated

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1 Papers of Theo Bull, file marked ‘Correspondence’. Keatley to Halpern, 10 June 1960.
for whites. It contravened the spirit of partnership, and sent the signal that Africans remained second-class citizens.²

The second episode came in 1960, when Mike Hove was appointed the Federation’s High Commissioner to Nigeria, the first African to hold a diplomatic post in the Federation. The Daily News trumpeted the appointment as ‘a milestone in the history of our country ... it is an important sign of partnership at work’.³ Hove himself described his new job as ‘a practical application of the policy of partnership’.⁴ Hatty met Hove by chance at the airport, and was astonished to discover that not a single member of the Federal Cabinet had come to see him off. In fact, Hove had been left to his own devices. Hatty commented, ‘considering the great publicity which the Federal government could have milked by sending a black man to represent the country abroad, I was amazed that Mike was left to leave on his own ... it was clear to me that his appointment was not taken seriously’.⁵ The only other African with similar responsibilities abroad was Lawrence Vambe, who in 1959 became press attaché at Rhodesia House in London.⁶ It was obviously more palatable to have a black man espousing the virtues of partnership and Federation to a British audience, and certainly Vambe carried more weight than a white press attaché would have done, considering the effect the Sharpeville massacre had had on British opinion.

The episodes Hatty described above were evidence of a deeper malaise in the operation and implementation of partnership. The suspicion which many Africans felt for the Federal government compared with the Todd administration in Southern Rhodesia was crystallised

² Interview, Cyril Hatty, 12 June 1996. See also The New Rhodesia of 3 September 1954, some four years before this incident, which wrote prophetically: ‘prohibiting any lawful resident of the Federation to move freely about the Federation will be a sacrifice of the principle that will exact revenge in time’.


⁴ ibid.

⁵ Interview, Cyril Hatty, 12 June 1995.

⁶ ORAL/233 Lawrence Vambe interview.
when the URP and Federal Party fused to form the UFP, to the extent that two chairmen of African branches of the URP resigned.\textsuperscript{7} African elite opinion also became more suspicious of partnership when Todd was removed as Prime Minister of Rhodesia in early 1958, just three months after the new Southern Rhodesia franchise became law.\textsuperscript{8} Todd himself believes that he was removed because he was anxious to include as many Africans as possible in the body politic to stop them turning to African nationalism. Although he acknowledged that some whites thought he was moving too fast, ‘I myself believe that there was so little time and that we lost the opportunity that we did have’.\textsuperscript{9} The detailed machinations of the URP need not concern us here, as the account has already been written.\textsuperscript{10} In brief, Todd was forced into resigning for moving too fast in bringing down the colour bar, although the immediate reason given was that he was raising the minimum wage too sharply. Todd himself believed that the Southern Rhodesian cabinet rebelled over the new franchise: ‘the significant thing that I did say, and I said at a place that was not popular, the Interracial Association meeting, that unless my party was prepared to extend the franchise to a wider circle of Africans, I would not be prepared to continue in the leadership’.\textsuperscript{11} It was indicative of the misgivings the white electorate, and some of Todd’s own cabinet, regarding the actual practical implementation of partnership. Todd himself correctly surmised that

my removal from office at this moment would be widely interpreted to indicate a rejection of Southern Rhodesia’s moderately liberal stand, or at least a step backward from it. I also know that to the great African section of our population this is how the position would appear … The position today is disturbing and serious. On the race relations side it cannot be denied that my leadership of this party represents to the African almost his sole symbol of hope that Partnership is

\textsuperscript{7} Hancock, \textit{White Liberal, Moderates and Radicals}, p. 68.

\textsuperscript{8} Shamuyarira, \textit{Crisis in Rhodesia}, p. 40.

\textsuperscript{9} Interview, Garfield Todd, 25 September 1996. ORAL/TO1 Garfield Todd interview.


\textsuperscript{11} ORAL/TO1 Garfield Todd interview.
not an empty word but a genuine and honest policy.\textsuperscript{12}

Todd reported that Ndabaningi Sithole said ‘the noise of my falling, as I was thrown out, awakened the nationalist cause. For if they would do this to a man whom the nationalists reckoned was a paternalist, and not at all aggressive enough, then there was no hope for the liberal policies in Rhodesia’.\textsuperscript{13} Still, Todd got it wrong when he added that the opinion that partnership was feasible was ‘held by a majority of Europeans in this country’.\textsuperscript{14}

Todd was replaced as Prime Minister by Sir Edgar Whitehead, who had been the Federation’s representative in Washington, D.C. The short-sighted, near-deaf Whitehead was the opposite of the charismatic Todd, although ‘he was a man of obvious ability; he stood head and shoulders above the average politician in Rhodesia, and Rhodesia has always suffered from a lack of people in the leadership class’.\textsuperscript{15} As we shall see further down, Whitehead turned out to be even more radical than Todd in implementing a fast pace for the reforms, which was ironic considering he was thought of as a safe pair of hands by the new UFP. But the fact that Whitehead moved even faster than Todd is more an indication of how quickly events overtook the Rhodesian elite than of any inherent liberalism on Whitehead or Welensky’s part.

However, even before Todd’s departure, the IASR sought a meeting with Welensky to bring to his attention its concern about the slow progress partnership was making, and to stress that the Federal government should be taking a lead to encourage the development of a more liberal atmosphere. The IASR group included two Africans, Samkange and Mzingeli, and an Asian, Patel. In the minutes of the meeting, it is clear that the IASR’s attitude, while not openly hostile, was very critical of the way in which partnership was developing.\textsuperscript{16} Eileen Haddon

\textsuperscript{12} Holderness, \textit{Lost Chance}, p. 220.

\textsuperscript{13} ORAL/TO1 Garfield Todd interview.

\textsuperscript{14} Holderness, \textit{Lost Chance}, p. 220.

\textsuperscript{15} ORAL/GR2 Julian Greenfield interview.

\textsuperscript{16} WP 251/1, ff. 56-61. Record of a Meeting between the Federal Prime Minister and Representatives of the Executive of the Inter-racial Association, 1 February 1957.
pointed out that there existed a ‘division between Europeans and non-Europeans, with the non-
Europeans feeling that they were on the “wrong side”’, and that only the Federal Government
‘could give a lead which would make all groups feel that they were being brought into affairs in
the Federation’. Samkange developed this theme by citing the example of the arrangements for
dining cars in trains. Although there was technically no colour bar, Africans could only use the
dining car if they held first or second class tickets which were only confirmed on the day of
travel. In most instances, Samkange continued, Africans were told the train was full and could
not travel first or second class. It seemed to him that Africans were only allowed to travel first
or second class if Europeans did not fill the train. Patel brought up the case of the Inter-
territorial Movement of Persons (Control) Act of 1954 which was hindering the movement of
non-whites within the Federation’s supposedly open borders. This was especially problematic
for Indian men wishing to travel to Southern Rhodesia or South Africa, often in search of a
bride. Welensky, who had been expecting a more low-key meeting about a recent speech of his
at the Rotary Club, replied that the problem was that African affairs were territorial
responsibilities - the Federal government did not deal with Africans except with regard to
hospitals and post offices. Welensky did say that he himself had had experience of
discrimination, being half-Jewish, but the major problems were economic, not political or even
necessarily social. He made promises to look into certain of the grievances, especially regarding
the trains and post office.

The main comment to make about the meeting outlined above is how far the discourse
of partnership had opened up relations with the politicians. It would be hard to imagine a
multiracial association sending a multiracial group to meet with Johannes Strijdom, the South
African Prime Minister of the time. Whether he was entirely sincere or not, Welensky made all
the right noises, promising to look into matters, mentioning instances when the colour bar was
being eroded, and even sympathising with the Africans’ irritation at having to present
identification at the post office to receive a letter or parcel when Europeans did not have to.

To be fair, Welensky did pursue the issue of discrimination at the post office, and
received this reply from the Postmaster General: ‘It is the practice throughout Southern
Rhodesia for separate counter facilities to be provided for Africans and Europeans in public offices, and until a change in this attitude is generally acceptable, I consider it would be unwise to make an exception in the case of Post Offices’. ¹⁷ In any case, he continued, ‘counter accommodation is at the present arranged to provide for dispersal of the public into two groups, and the combining of the groups in one counter hall would result in serious congestion and not provide better service’. Nonetheless, he was investigating the issue of identification ‘to see to what extent the requirement can be relaxed’. Mzingeli’s suggestion that counters could at some point be provided for service in different languages was ignored. When Stewart Parker wrote back to the Minister of Posts requesting a reply, he got a curt answer claiming that funds were not available to entertain the idea. ¹⁸ Welensky annotated that reply by hand, writing almost impatiently ‘the suggestion was for the future and should not be lightly dismissed’. The correspondence ceased after this.

Even the ‘change in attitude’ which many people hoped would occur in the average European seemed to be late in coming. In November 1959 Jasper Savanhu, who by then had been a Federal MP for some six years and a minister for one, was involved in a car accident. The white policeman who attended the scene was rude to him while remaining courteous to the white driver involved. When Savanhu informed him of his status, the policeman said ‘you think of yourself more highly than you ought to think’. He refused to give Savanhu his name and number. It is not clear whether the policeman was reprimanded for his action, but this incident was reported to Barrow as Minister of Home Affairs, and to Welensky, who promised to take it up with the Southern Rhodesian government. ¹⁹ At the same time, Cedric Paver wrote an article in the Herald, in which he said that it was imperative that the lot of the elite African be

¹⁷ ibid, f. 66. Postmaster General to Welensky, 28 February 1957.

¹⁸ WP 251/1 f. 69. Private Secretary to the Minister of Posts to Principal Private Secretary to the Prime Minister, 7 March 1957.

¹⁹ WP 666/7 ff.41-42. Savanhu to Barrow, 30 November 1959. During that same year Savanhu was denied accommodation in the white Salisbury suburb of Mount Pleasant, and was instead built an £8000 house in Highfield. Examiner, 15 August 1959.
improved. After all, he mused, how could middle class Africans be ambassadors for partnership and ‘European standards’ if they themselves were discriminated against?\textsuperscript{20}

\textbf{{The Race Affairs Office and the Cabinet Partnership Implementation Committee}}

Unsurprisingly, not everyone agreed that partnership was failing. South of the border some people looked to partnership as a panacea for South Africa’s mounting problems. The \textit{Rand Daily Mail} ran an optimistic piece about partnership, although it also thought that no-one was welcoming partnership more than the average white Rhodesian. It wrote:

\begin{quote}
Amid all the doubts and fears that dominate the South African scene, there is one truly encouraging sound to be heard. This is the dull thud of descending colour bars that resounds with increasing frequency across the border from the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland.

After a very slow start and some serious setbacks, partnership is at last bowling along at a merry pace and nobody is more pleasantly surprised than the average White Rhodesian. Like a man who has hesitated on the river bank, flinching as he put his toe into the cold water, he finds it vastly invigorating now that he has at last plunged in ...

If Rhodesians, who are mostly South African in origin or in outlook, can accept partnership cheerfully and can make it work successfully, then the Union and all who live in it have been set a powerful example in shaping their own affairs ... The alternative to Bantustans is partnership - and it is on our doorstep, thriving.\textsuperscript{21}
\end{quote}

However, by mid-1958 it was clear to the Federal Government as well as industry and commerce that the implementation of partnership in the public arena was lagging behind its own expectations. In a speech delivered on 17 September 1959, Welensky said: ‘If we go on treating an African who is educated and who has achieved a standard of culture akin to our own as an inferior being for all time, then I believe we are making a clash on racial issues inevitable’.\textsuperscript{22}

\textsuperscript{20} \textit{Herald}, 19 November 1959.

\textsuperscript{21} F120/L271 Partnership Policy. \textit{Rand Daily Mail}, 10 June 1959.

\textsuperscript{22} Papers of Theo Bull, File marked ‘Publicity’. Gilbert Dold to ‘The Editor’ [Ian Hess], 19 October 1959. Dold was quoting a report from \textit{The Times}, 18 September 1959.
Importantly, the expectations of those Africans who had anticipated their own advancement under a more liberal regime were being disappointed, and there were problems with the industrialists and businessmen as well. This was echoed by the *Daily News* on 7 February 1959:

> So far as we are concerned it would be a pity for the Prime Minister to merely give lip-service to the racial co-operation of the African. Something positive and progressive must be done quickly to encourage racial co-operation on the part of the African people and demonstrate to them in practical terms that this road holds out a better promise.\(^{23}\)

It continued that if discriminatory practices were not abolished quickly, ‘they are capable of driving all Africans into the camp of desperation and extremism ... Moderation and co-operation cannot grow out of a desolate social, economic and political system, where the privileged race which is white is not prepared to make sacrifices to satisfy the legitimate aspirations of the African people’. In an editorial only a few days previously, the *Daily News* had warned that the independence of Ghana had been noted by Rhodesian Africans, and although the immediate causes of the violence in Algeria and the Congo were ‘internal’, they were influenced by ‘the ferment of black nationalism that is in evidence throughout Africa’.\(^{24}\) Basically, this was a warning to the white politicians that the Federation could not isolate itself from continental trends and ‘keep their African uncontaminated’. It was true, nonetheless, that certain measures to remove discrimination had taken place: Africans could now buy lottery tickets, bet on horses, buy beer and wine (but not spirits), post offices were technically free of discrimination, as were the railways. The *Daily News* wrote that while these were worthwhile achievements, ‘it is regrettable that this liberal trend in legislation did not come earlier ... had it come before Federation probably African thinking and outlook would not be as negative as it is today’.\(^{25}\)

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\(^{23}\) *Daily News*, 7 February 1959.


Chronicle joined in the worry about the state of partnership, pointing out that the Rhodesians themselves were primarily to blame:

If we consider the cinemas alone, is it not remarkable, after seven years of Federation, ostensibly dedicated to racial partnership, that even an African MP, solicitor or doctor is denied admission? We provide our critics with sticks to beat us by perpetuating such nonsense ... such multi-racial cinemas should come sooner rather than later, if only to dispose of the insulting anomaly of the intelligent, prosperous, educated and hygienic African being treated like a pariah in his own land.26

With this in mind, Welensky himself established the Cabinet Partnership Implementation Committee (CPIC) in January 1959.27 It was an advisory committee, without power of legislation, which reported directly to the Federal Prime Minister, thus bypassing the Southern Rhodesian government which was often the main impediment towards moves to lower barriers. The targets for such a committee were the more egregious public forms of discrimination in Southern Rhodesia and on the Copperbelt, the two areas of the Federation with thick concentrations of Europeans. The CPIC was an offshoot of the Office of Race Affairs which had been established in August 1958. The Office’s raison d’être was that there had been no coherent policy of partnership, and that matters of discrimination had been dealt with on an ad hoc basis. As G.C.D. Hodgson, the Federal government’s Adviser on Race Affairs said: ‘In my opinion it is the absence of such a planned programme which is attracting criticisms of the Federation and hardening opposition to the Federation. It is also a prerequisite to the 1960


27 The CPIC’s membership consisted of Sir Malcolm Barrow (Minister of Home Affairs), J.Z. Savanhu (Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Home Affairs), J.B. Ross (Chairman of the Federal Public Service Commission), E.G.G. Marsh (Acting Secretary for Home Affairs), M.J. Lamb (Under-Secretary, Office of the Prime Minister and External Affairs), J.D. Kennan (Secretary of the CPIC and Acting Adviser on Race Affairs), and J. Foot (Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Home Affairs). The biggest coup the CPIC achieved early on was the appointment of Savanhu, who as Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Home Affairs had special responsibility for race relations. Savanhu began his work optimistically. ‘What my appointment really means’, Examiner, 25 April 1959.
Hodgson noted further that the timetable had been shortened considerably since ‘the Accra Pan-African Conference, the offer of financial assistance to the African Congress, and the emotional appeal of the lead given by the fanatical and egotistical Dr. Banda’. Since the Office of Race Affairs and the CPIC had no legislative powers, the best that could be hoped for was that they would be a think-tank and advisory platform for the federal and territorial governments, collating examples of discrimination and suggesting remedies. In this capacity, the Office of Race Affairs and the CPIC would work closely with the territorial secretaries for African affairs, the FISB and the Ministry of External Affairs. Welensky was warned about the possibility of the CPIC looking like an inadequate substitute for tangible action in the quest to combat discrimination.

The Office of Race Affairs was initially established on the basis of a long memorandum circulated by Hodgson in January 1958. It was also circulated in summary more widely within the government and civil service. Its essential reasoning was ‘there is an immediate need for further action’ concerning partnership, especially because the survival of the federation depended on its inhabitants’ acceptance of it as a multiracial entity, and this had to be inculcated before the Federal review conference in 1960. In particular, ‘African opposition to Federation can only be broken down by positive action’. Such goodwill as might be forthcoming from the Africans meant that the Federation had to avoid ‘any alignment with South Africa’.

There were those among the more liberal whites who thought that the Office of Race Relations and the CPIC would not in themselves do the trick, and they would have to be merely a means towards significant reform. E.H. Ashton, Director of African Administration in

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Bulawayo and a member of the liberal Action Group,\textsuperscript{31} wrote to Welensky:

Your proposal is warmly and widely welcomed ... [But] it is highly likely that propaganda will replace policy and the real and fundamental issues will become obscured, especially to the party and the government. Putting it bluntly, there is a danger that people will be lulled into thinking that African support will be won simply by telling them how much is being done for them rather than facing and solving the real fundamental issues ... this publicity - or race relations - office merely becomes the plaster which obscures the weakness of an imperfect wall ... Actions speak louder than words and it will be the practical effects of government policy rather than the publicity about such policy that will win the day. Ultimately, Lincoln’s approach is sounder than Goebbels'.\textsuperscript{32}

The Copperbelt was an interesting case in itself, and the subject of a study by a team of social anthropologists at the Institute for Social Research at the University of Natal.\textsuperscript{33} The issue of lowering the colour bar became all the starker when moves started in Northern Rhodesia in 1960 to legislate against it, going against the Rhodesian assumption that one should not legislate against custom, however discriminatory. In a way, the lowering of the colour bar in Northern Rhodesia was a dry run for similar legislation in Southern Rhodesia, although the job would be more difficult in the latter, with its history of internal self-government and a more discriminatory system. As one Rhodesian newspaper put it, ‘The different attitudes of Government in the two Rhodesias to this problem are very marked. Southern Rhodesia insists that you cannot legislate against the colour bar on such matters; that you can only sanction its removal on a voluntary basis. Northern Rhodesia, on the other hand, proposes to make such colour discrimination illegal’.\textsuperscript{34} On 1 September 1960, discrimination in all public spheres

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\textsuperscript{32} AC 3/1/1 Correspondence. E.H. Ashton to Welensky, 13 January 1958.

\textsuperscript{33} Hollemann, Mann and van den Berghe, ‘A Rhodesian white minority under threat’.


All the press cuttings quoted on this episode below come from the same file.
became illegal in Northern Rhodesia. Before the colour bar became illegal, many white café and restaurant owners voiced their concerns: ‘I pay £200 a month rent on this place. I have spent years building up this business. All Africans will do is buy 6d. cold drinks and tea - and that won’t pay my rent’. To counterbalance this, the Race Relations Bill provided for proprietors to claim compensation if they could prove that their business had suffered as a direct result.

When discrimination was criminalised, the reaction of many whites in Northern Rhodesia was scandalous, but quite in keeping with the threat many of them felt as the colour bar came down: ‘tonight, as Africans and Europeans sat together for the first time, the day’s “casualties” were being totted up ... European women boycotted the hotel lounge at Mufulira after Africans, men and women, had poured in - some of the women carrying babies on their backs ... Cafes all over the territory complained of European customers of long standing refusing to patronise them while Africans were admitted’. There were violent episodes in Kitwe that night:

a large white crowd swayed backwards and forwards and many Europeans screamed derisive cries of “Kwacha” and swore at the police. Many incidents were due to European trouble-makers ... After two hours of scuffles and tension, police threw a canister of tear gas into a crowd of Europeans ... Trouble began when Europeans became involved in isolated incidents. One man, lounging at the entrance of the Astra Cafe, was kicking Africans with the back of his heel ... at one point a European threatened to kill the Northern News’ photographer.

In Lusaka and Kafue, white men were throwing drinks over the bar walls at the Africans. The newspapers were scathing about the implications of the Europeans’ actions the previous night.


38 *ibid.*

In an editorial entitled ‘the pot and the kettle’, the *Evening Standard* wrote: ‘many Europeans think that responsible and civilised hands mean European hands for the foreseeable future ... The implication is that most Africans are neither responsible now civilised whereas Europeans are. Let us examine that assumption in the light of recent happenings’.\(^{40}\)

What kind of example, however, do they themselves set?

[In the Copperbelt] Europeans who do not agree with the implementation of Northern Rhodesia’s new ordinance ending the colour bar in hotels, restaurants and cinemas, were involved in incidents. They did many of the things which they advance as proof that Africans are not responsible and civilised - and, ipso facto, not fit for the vote.

They stoned cars, they assaulted the police, they threw glasses and bottles at a police tender, they screamed and swore and attacked Africans. One person even spat in a policeman’s face.

White women joined in with the men in these unedifying scenes.

Perhaps there is some justification after all for the remark by a Labour Party Member to a Rhodesian visitor to the House of Commons, that he could see no greater danger for the European if his future was placed in the hands of Mr Kaunda, than for the African if his future was left in the hands of some Europeans.\(^{41}\)

The *Northern News* praised the ‘tact’ and ‘super-human patience’ of the police, without making the point that had the mob been African the police would certainly have acted more forcefully, and commented sadly that ‘the most ironic paradox of all yesterday’s events was the fact that, while police were exploding tear-gas bombs to disperse a European mob at one end of Kitwe last night, a debating society at the other end of the town, with not one black face in the audience, was approving the motion: “That the development of the Federation has shown that a policy of racial partnership is the best one for Africa”’.\(^{42}\) The *Sunday Mail* went further, adding that ‘the last few days show clearly that the words “white” and “civilised” are not necessarily

\(^{40}\) *Evening Standard*, 2 September 1960.

\(^{41}\) ibid.

\(^{42}\) *Northern News*, 3 September 1960.
synonymous, and that Europeans can behave like savages’.

However, not all white proprietors were as aghast at lowering the colour bar, and not all white patrons were as violently opposed as the ones detailed above. The *Livingstone Mail* ran an apposite story about a white woman, a Mrs. Hitchins, who opened the first multiracial bar in Livingstone. A few months later, the *Herald* reported that ‘the experiment was paying handsome dividends in improved race relations ... On holiday here [in Southern Rhodesia], Mrs Hitchins had nothing but praise for her African customers. “Mostly they are better behaved than the whites”, she said’.

After a week, ‘most of the initial consternation and controversy has died down ... Africans in the main have behaved reasonably in using their new-found freedom’. The whites also calmed down, and few reports of disturbances occurred after the initial violence. The episodes on the Copperbelt indicated that when it came down to it, whites were unwilling to allow their privileges to be eroded without a fight. Although the violence on the Copperbelt was not repeated, it also should have sent the message to the Rhodesian elite that the average white employee would not graciously accept Africans as fellow-citizens. If sharing a bar or cinema caused so much trouble, it would be difficult to imagine a greater show of altruism to allow the Africans onto a common electoral roll with low qualifications. The ideal of a common nationhood was not shared further down the white social and economic ladder.

**Post Offices and Hotels**

One of the more pressing issues to come to terms with in Southern Rhodesia was the everyday discrimination, the ‘pinpricks’ which were so common and so visible as to provide ample ammunition for partnership’s critics. Salient among these issues was the matter of

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43 *Sunday Mail*, 4 September 1960.


45 *Herald*, 1 October 1960.

46 *Herald*, 9 September 1960.
segregation in post office queues. In early 1959 Hodgson wrote a worried memorandum entitled ‘Removal of Racial Discrimination - Order of Priority’, where he established that ending discrimination in post offices, hotels and clubs, and the railways, was urgently needed in that order. In it he wrote:

Although a great deal has been achieved in the establishment of the Federation and its government, its finances and its services, there remain many aspects of its partnership policy which require the early attention of the new Federal Parliament. We have now reached the stage when goodwill should be actively demonstrated and Southern Rhodesia as the “dominant state” of the Federation has a vital role to play in this regard.

Hodgson’s reasons for post office reform were:

(a) Its discontinuance would be the most dramatic gesture affecting the greatest number;

(b) most major issues are still in the main academic exercises attracting the attention of the more politically conscious section of the African community whereas the average African is far more concerned with, and perturbed by, the day to day pinpricks and indignities suffered;

(c) the segregation in Southern Rhodesian Post Offices undoubtedly causes most frustration, irritation and humiliation amongst the emergent and more enlightened African especially members of parliament, qualified professional men and women, teachers, businessmen, etc. - similar discrimination is not made in respect of Asians and Coloureds.

He continued that the weakness of the Southern Rhodesian Post Offices’ uncompromising attitude was accentuated by a number of points:

(i) There is no legal sanction for the segregation practised, and in consequence the Southern Rhodesian Post Offices are the main targets for anti-colour bar campaigns and demonstrations to test the Federal Government’s sincerity in regard to its non-racial policy.

(ii) The discontinuance of discriminatory practices should not appear as a triumph for the agitator but as a credit to the community and the Federal Government.

(iii) Discriminatory practices have already largely disappeared in Federal Government offices in the Northern Territories.
(iv) Service to the African customer is often inadequate and to the European customer more than adequate.

(v) Assuming a total commitment to partnership policy and the necessity for steadfast contra-indication to those fearing apartheid inclinations in the Federal Government, it would appear inevitable that the new Federal Government will have to do much without delay to relax these practices. It would be most unfortunate if such future policy were to be prejudiced by overt action which made it appear that Government had been forced unwillingly into a change.

(vi) If members of the public cause a disturbance in the face of discriminatory practices, unsupported by law, but indicated by notices in Government buildings, it will always be a moot point in the Courts whether the responsibility for provoking the disturbance rests on the individual, white or black, or on Government.

(vii) In the event of a disturbance started by a European taking exception to the presence of an African in a Post Office queue and the police being called it is unlikely that the removal of the African from the premises would not also be discriminatory.\footnote{F120/L136 Race Affairs - Discrimination in Post Offices and other Government Offices. G.C.D. Hodgson, ‘Removal of Racial Discrimination - Order of Priority’, 26 January 1959.}

Discrimination in post office queues came to an end in Southern Rhodesia in 1960, when the Post Office relented in the face of pressure from both the Federal and Southern Rhodesian governments. In this case, a major ‘pinprick’ was addressed, although without tackling the underlying systemic reasons for discrimination, and importantly, without addressing the issue of hostility from the whites towards a more inclusive sense of citizenship.

A related issue was the lack of multiracial hotels and clubs in Salisbury where local Africans and non-white visitors to the Federation could stay in comfort and mix with people of their choice, and where they could meet with influential people in the Federation without the embarrassment of the colour bar. This was especially acute as the Federation was much more in the public eye, and there were examples of various incidents which served to tarnish its image.

In January 1958, when the British Labour MP Barbara Castle was visiting Salisbury, she insisted on breaking the colour bar by inviting some Africans to Meikles Hotel for a drink. Some four weeks after that Lawrence Vambe and Nathan Shamuyarira, both journalists, were
physically ejected from a reception given for journalists at the Embassy hotel by a disinfectant firm. Stewart Parker commented, apparently without irony, that this had ‘caused a stink’.\textsuperscript{48}

Added to this,

this weekend we are faced with the possibility of Dr. Hastings Banda who, for all his faults, is a well-qualified medical man and of some standing, not being able to find accommodation in a hotel in Salisbury. The point I am trying to make is that the lack of a multi-racial hotel is likely to be felt more and more acutely and the situation in that respect is boiling up rather quickly. It seems to me that if we are going for a multi-racial policy, this is something could and should be tackled with energy ... may I suggest that the issue is acute enough to warrant an informal discussion between yourself, Whitehead, Field and Aitken-Cade. It seems that this is the sort of matter which should be taken out of politics in the national interest ... credit might be gained by the Federal Government for initiating this.\textsuperscript{49}

The Federation was faced with the bizarre situation whereby multiracial hotels would only be accessible to Africans from outside the Federation.

The hotel situation continued to be embarrassing into 1959 when it transpired that Central African Airways were having to revise their flight schedules to avoid Africans from the Federation having to stay overnight in Salisbury to make their connecting flights to London. CAA’s General Manager wrote to the Minister of Transport about an incident where two men from Nyasaland were flying to London, and would require hotel accommodation in Salisbury.\textsuperscript{50} He wrote that the Jameson had declined to accommodate them because it could only accept Africans who were normally resident outside the Federation. Various calls to ministries accomplished nothing, and in the end the two men had to be booked onto an East African Airways flight to Nairobi instead, ‘at a financial loss to CAA’. Apparently, letters to the Office of Race Affairs had not been acted on, and ‘the burden of work and embarrassment and the

\textsuperscript{48} WP 251/3 f. 1. Parker to Welensky, 1 March 1958.

\textsuperscript{49} ibid.

\textsuperscript{50} WP 251/3 f. 4. M. Stuart-Shaw to Minister of Transport, 10 June 1959.
The possibility of press comment unfavourable to CAA is, I feel, a situation which it is not reasonable to expect CAA to continue to bear indefinitely and I do not want to be faced with the necessity of declining to accept African passengers on any services involving nightstops in Southern Rhodesia’. The letter finished with a flourish: ‘Incidentally, perhaps it is appropriate to make mention that with effect from July 1st 1959, our flight CE 865 has been re-scheduled in such a manner as to make a direct ‘same-day’ connection with the Rhodesian Britannia CE 892 possible, so long as the timing of that service remains unchanged’.

By 1960, the issue had still not been resolved. The *Daily News*[^51] related the story of the Rt. Rev. Joseph Kiwanuka, a bishop from Uganda, who was unable to find accommodation in Salisbury, which it connected with the incident in Northern Rhodesia where the prominent Nigerian Sir Francis Ibiam was ‘driven away’ from a café in Lusaka. The African Affairs Department said that had Kiwanuka announced his arrival, arrangements would have been made for him. The *Daily News* disagreed, saying that this was not enough, in addition to which ‘no educated, self-conscious and well bred person’ would make a fuss about who he is in order to get better treatment. ‘No Englishman would dream of doing that, brought up as they are, like the African people, to appreciate modesty and shun the limelight’. It concluded that the only solution was to scrap ‘special arrangements’ and abolish the colour bar altogether.

Hotels could only become multiracial by special amendment of the Land Apportionment Act. This was not passed until 1961, although the CPIC had secured in 1959 the agreement, in principle, of the Southern Rhodesian government that the LAA would have to be amended to allow multiracial hotels to operate in Southern Rhodesia. The Federal government tried to encourage the atmosphere by, for example, insisting that its ministries and departments should organise hospitality only in hotels which had taken out multiracial licences.[^52] Welensky approached the Southern Rhodesian government with a view to the latter taking similar action.

[^51]: *Daily News*, 30 December 1960

[^52]: F120/L273 CPIC Correspondence. CPIC, ‘Multi-Racial Hotels’, 20 March 1961. Kennan wrote this memo as a result of a discussion at the 21 January 1961 meeting of the CPIC.
Still, by 1961 the Jameson hotel in central Salisbury, the Victoria hotel in Bulawayo, and the Victoria Falls Hotel had all taken out multi-racial licences, and the Kariba Hotel was willing to accept guests of any race. So while there was little accommodation for Africans in the small towns, at least there was accommodation for them in the two largest cities and tourist centres. Also, National Parks were allowing their facilities to be used by members of any race, although no official permission had been granted yet. For cosmetic purposes in particular, the multi-racial licences of the Jameson and Victoria Falls Hotel ‘have proved of extreme importance’, in that African dignitaries could be put up in style without special arrangements having to be made which would have created adverse publicity for the Federation.

But there was a problem, in that the Jameson’s owners wanted to close it down, not because of any loss of trade through its multi-racial tag - there had been none - but because it was not as conveniently situated as other hotels as regarded the centre of town. Financial assistance from the Federal Government was out of the question because the public would assume it was having to be propped up because of the unpopularity of its open door policy. It was suggested instead that a member of the CPIC make contact with a director or directors of the Ambassador and the Meikles with the intention of persuading them, unofficially, of the wisdom of a multi-racial licence.

The real problem was that the CPIC was only an advisory body without any actual power. It was good that the Federal government recognised, even at this late stage, how much work still needed to be done to make it look as if partnership was working. It tried to make political capital out of the ways in which discrimination was being addressed. For example, in a memorandum prepared by the CPIC in April 1962, it went to great lengths to point out that throughout the Federation the franchises were technically non-racial; the university was multiracial; African lawyers and doctors were operating ‘under European conditions’; Central African Airways had African air hostesses - and South African Airways did not; and commissioned ranks in the Federal Army were open to all races. In addition, in 1960 the Federation broke with the South African Association in athletics enabling it to field a
multiracial team in the 1960 Olympic Games.\textsuperscript{53} This attitude was supported by Jasper Savanhu who wrote in the \textit{Daily News}:

This office was charged with the function of indicating to the Government any racial discrimination in Federal Ministries and, working behind the scenes, has sought by consultation and persuasion to align territorial racially discriminating laws and practices with its own which are non-racial we have worked assiduously to achieve this goal.

The task has not been an easy one since the powers of the office are merely advisory, but quite early in its life it played no mean part in the creation of multi-racial hotels in Southern Rhodesia.

The existence of the office is an honest attempt on the part of the Federal Government to see that partnership is practised throughout the Federation and the absorption of the office into the Ministry of Home Affairs which took place recently will give it greater effectiveness now that the Minister of Home Affairs, the Secretary of Home Affairs and a Parliamentary Secretary are directly involved.\textsuperscript{54}

Despite its rather toothless advisory role, the CPIC is an important indicator of the state of mind of the Federal government when it came to the implementation of partnership. One of its greatest uses was to highlight not only the moves the white elite was making towards implementing partnership, but also the way this compared with South African apartheid. However, it also emphasised just how little had been achieved in the practical realisation of some form of meaningful multiracial partnership.

\textbf{Monckton and the 1961 Constitution}

In the end, however, no matter what the CPIC or RST did to further the cause of partnership, the ultimate fate of the Federation lay in the hands of the British government, and specifically the Monckton Commission, which in 1960 reviewed the success of the Federal experiment. It was ironic that special arrangements had to be made for non-white members of

\textsuperscript{53} F120/L271 Partnership policy. ‘The Policy of Partnership’, memo prepared by the Office of Race Affairs, April 1962.

\textsuperscript{54} \textit{Daily News}, 16 October 1961.
the commission regarding accommodation in Southern Rhodesia. The commission reported that ‘the dislike of the Federation amongst Africans in the two northern territories is widespread, sincere, and of long-standing. It is almost pathological. It is associated almost everywhere with a picture of Southern Rhodesia as a white man’s country’. As a result, the report recommended that while the Federation should not be dissolved forthwith, individual territories within it should be allowed to secede should their inhabitants so wish. The ultimate losers, the white Rhodesians, saw this report as a watershed in their relations with Britain.

As a result of the Monckton Commission’s report, the Central African Emergency in 1959, in which all three territories of the Federation underwent emergencies in February-March 1959, and the urban disturbances in Southern Rhodesia in mid-1960, it was clear that the Federation was effectively doomed. The Emergency in particular polarised opinion, coming as it did with a host of draconian legislation, most well-known of which was the Law and Order (Maintenance) Act, and the detention of 500 people in Southern Rhodesia alone. Tredgold resigned as Federal Chief Justice as a direct protest against this legislation. Whitehead justified the pre-emptive strike against the nationalists in Southern Rhodesia by saying that his government did not subscribe to the ‘very ancient tradition of the British people that governments should defer action until actual rioting or bloodshed has occurred’, and he was supported by the bulk of white opinion - as we have seen, even the liberal Examiner supported his actions on the basis that he was striving to build a multiracial nation and could not allow 500 people working towards ‘black supremacy’ to sabotage the project. He could not allow the

58 For a discussion of the implications of the Law and Order (Maintenance) Act, see Palley, The Constitutional History and Law of Southern Rhodesia, pp. 586-611. Interestingly, the act is still in force in Zimbabwe today.
59 Examiner, 14 March 1959.
nationalists to win ‘by default’. The Rhodesians’ reaction was quite out of proportion to any threat posed by the nationalists, but it did illustrate just how deep the insecurity about African violence, real or imagined, really was.

The Emergency also alienated a good deal of the moderate middle class Africans who were supposed to be seeing the first fruits of partnership. Leopold Takawira, at the time an Executive Officer for Capricorn, wrote a direct article criticising the Southern Rhodesian government for blaming African nationalism elsewhere. He warned:

> the cause is discriminatory measures here at home, and to shift the blame for our troubles onto Ghana or Dr. Banda is to refuse to face the issue ... I feel I am expressing the opinion of all Africans ... when I say that the African hand of co-operation is still extended to the Government and to the white man in general. But this co-operation should be that of man to man, and not that of a horse and its rider.  

Garfield Todd, fresh from his ejection from power, also warned that partnership had failed, although he believed that it was the reluctance of the Federal government, rather than the Southern Rhodesians, which was holding things up and prolonging the ‘policies of domination’. He urged, along with Colin Campbell, the former chairman of the small Constitution Party, that openings for ‘capable and progressive’ and ‘emergent’ Africans be multiplied, because it was only with the goodwill of that group that Federation and partnership would succeed.

Although Welensky did not admit defeat in public, in private the Rhodesians were already mentally retreating back into Southern Rhodesia, the home of the white identity in central Africa. Since Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland were going to become African states in the foreseeable future, Southern Rhodesia also needed a workable constitution which could be used as a basis for independence from Britain. The 1961 Southern Rhodesia Constitution

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60 Examiner, 28 March 1959.

61 ibid.
changed the Southern Rhodesia franchise again.\textsuperscript{62} The government in Southern Rhodesia believed its claim to independence was at least as strong as the other two territories’, if not stronger. The 1961 Constitution was an attempt to prove to Britain that she could safely abrogate her responsibility for Southern Rhodesia’s African population, and entrust Southern Rhodesia with full self-government. Provisions for African political advancement were therefore an important part of the negotiations. The 1961 Constitution also came at a time when the Southern Rhodesian government was seriously considering taking liberalising steps which

\textsuperscript{62} F121/F2/1 Federal Franchise and Electoral Policy, 1 January 1959 - 1 December 1962. ‘Qualifications for Southern Rhodesia Electoral Rolls’, n.d. [1961] For both rolls qualification were:
1. Federal citizenship.
2. 21 years of age.
3. 2 years residence in the Federation and 3 months in the constituency immediately preceding the date of application.
4. Adequate English and the ability to complete the form (except in the case of Chiefs and Headmen)

A Roll:
1. £720 p.a. for each of the 2 years preceding the date of application or property worth £1,500. No education.
2. £480 p.a. for each of the 2 years preceding the date of application or property worth £1,000. Full primary education.
3. £300 p.a. for each of the 2 years preceding the date of application or property worth £500. 4 years secondary education.
4. All Chiefs and Headmen

B Roll:
1. £240 p.a. for 6 months preceding the date of application or property worth £450. No education
2. £120 p.a. for 6 months preceding the date of application or property worth £250. 2 years secondary.

For people over 30 years of age (still B Roll):
1. £120 p.a. during 6 months preceding the date of application or property worth £250. Full primary education.
2. £180 p.a. during 6 months preceding the date of application or property worth £350. No education.
3. All kraal heads with a following of 20 or more heads of families.
5. Married women have the same qualifications as their husbands if ‘she has no means qualification in her own right’.
just two years previously had seemed impossible, and which the CPIC had been advocating for the last two years. Whitehead promised at the 1961 UFP Congress that the UFP would repeal the Land Apportionment Act, the cornerstone of racial discrimination in Southern Rhodesia, if it won the next election.

The new constitution was a departure in Rhodesian politics in that it admitted for the first time the inevitability of majority rule, and it was the first time tangible steps were taken to increase African representation - within a tightly qualified framework - rather than limit it. Whitehead claimed that the new franchise would result in African majority rule in about fifteen years. In a referendum in July 1961, the electorate ratified the constitution by 42,004 votes to 21,846. Whitehead took the 2 to 1 majority as a vote for liberalism, and as an indication to Southern Rhodesia’s critics overseas that the colony was approaching political maturity. However, it would appear that most of those who voted in favour of the new constitution did so because of the promise that it would form the basis for full self-government free from the metropolitan government, rather than because the predominantly white electorate was becoming more liberal. In any case, the UFP’s own referendum campaign had stressed that the increase in African representation was the minimum concession necessary to obtain full self-government from Britain. Clearly, under the new constitution, many more Africans would be eligible for the vote, and the size of the Legislative Assembly increased from 35 to 65 to accommodate them. The new franchise abandoned the common roll in favour of a two-roll system with a complex formula for cross-voting. The A roll would retain the high qualifications of the common roll, and elect 50 seats (‘constituencies’) to the Legislative Assembly. The B roll had

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66 Hancock, White Liberals, Moderates and Radicals, p. 94.

67 ibid.
lower qualifications, and would elect 15 seats (‘districts’).\textsuperscript{68} It was clear that the vast majority of voters on the B roll would be Africans, and since they had been admitted onto the electoral roll with lower qualifications, it made sense to the Rhodesians that their influence should be similarly circumscribed, keeping effective power in the hands of the predominantly white A roll voters whose higher income, property and educational qualifications made them more ‘responsible’.

In order to convince the British government that this new franchise was worthwhile, the UFP embarked on a widespread voter registration programme. It was estimated that about 50,000 Africans would now qualify for the new B roll, and every effort should be made to register them. Far from fearing swamping by ‘immature’ African voters, the government now welcomed new voters as protection against the Dominion Party (after April 1962 the Rhodesian Front) which had so nearly won the 1958 election. New African voters, instead of presenting a ‘threat’ to the government, were now seen as its allies, who would be encouraged to vote for the UFP’s promises of sweeping liberalism. To this end, the UFP ran the Build a Nation campaign, one of whose functions was to act as a voter-registration drive.\textsuperscript{69}

The 1961 Constitution was in reality the last meaningful attempt to develop a franchise which would gradually allow greater African participation in electoral politics, and was the last chance for a ‘non-racial’ franchise. It was also the last time that the marked difference in philosophy - that Africans should be encouraged to raise themselves so that they could enter the European system rather than develop a parallel African system - was evident. In this way, the rhetoric of partnership and the accompanying moves to deal with discrimination were as close as the Rhodesians could get to espousing a system which could deliver an inclusive body politic, at least for the African middle class. Theoretically the Rhodesian system would remain


fundamentally unchanged, it would merely expand to accommodate extended membership. Under Huggins before Federation, and then under the Rhodesian Front after Federation, the emphasis was placed on Africans developing representation in their own areas, separate from mainstream electoral politics. As we have seen, only Huggins seriously considered actually closing the voters’ roll to Africans, but the RF placed great emphasis on community development as an alternative to direct representation in the legislative assembly. It should be kept in mind that the opening up of the franchise in this period did not see a commensurate increase in Africans claiming the vote, certainly not in enough numbers to threaten European paramountcy. In 1951, there were about 400 Africans on the common roll in Southern Rhodesia. By 1961, there were just over 1,000, and after the new Constitution was enacted and the voter registration campaign had finished, there were some 12,500, of whom 10,000 were on the devalued B roll. This compares with European numbers of about 48,000 in 1951, and about 88,000 in 1961.

The Build a Nation Campaign, 1961-62

Following the Monckton report’s recommendations, by 1961 the state of the partnership debate was fraught with problems. The policy and its dynamics were seen by increasing sections of white and black society as fraudulent and potentially even dangerous, despite the CPIC’s efforts to push it along. It was also clear that the Federation itself was doomed. At the very least, Nyasaland would secede, and Northern Rhodesia would almost certainly follow suit. In order to salvage the ideal of partnership, not to mention the existing structures of power, the focus hastily switched from the Federation to Southern Rhodesia. Just as the white mindset was asked to expand in 1953 to accommodate the black inhabitants of Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland, so in 1961 it contracted to concentrate on Southern Rhodesia alone.

With this in mind, the UFP in Southern Rhodesia embarked on a campaign to enrol as many African voters as possible before the 1962 Southern Rhodesian general election, starting

\[70\] See the Epilogue.
on 3 January 1962 when the new franchise qualifications became effective, although there had been a significant build up to the campaign’s inauguration in the previous few months, especially after the UFP’s Congress in October 1961. The campaign’s added ingredient was a call to ‘all Rhodesians’ regardless of race to join together in building a nation, and thus the campaign was named the ‘Build a Nation’ (BAN) campaign. It was run in tandem with the ‘Claim your Vote’ campaign, and the two overlapped quite considerably. Given the provisions of the 1961 constitution and franchise, African voters were being actively wooed instead of obstructed. It was a way of giving middle class Africans a voice in the political process - while ensuring that real power lay in the hands of the more ‘responsible’ A roll voters, who earned more, had higher educational levels, owned immovable property, and who were almost exclusively European. It was also an attempt to present the 1961 constitution as a viable avenue towards majority rule; if enough Africans enrolled for the franchise, the constitution could be presented as a step in the direction of non-racialism and not end up a ‘hollow victory’.

BAN was also the final attempt, as it turned out, to build an inclusive nationhood. By 1961 the rhetoric of building a multiracial Rhodesian ‘nation’ was infused with an increasing sense of urgency. Federation had clearly failed, and Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland were poised to become the independent states of Zambia and Malawi. In addition, after the Congo erupted into violence in 1960 on the Federation’s borders, and thousands of refugees poured into the Federation, the white elite’s feeling of insecurity was aggravated. Welensky gave an interview in August 1960 where he stated:

71 The Claim your Vote campaign was run predominantly in the media, in that there were no specific provisions made to enrol more people - enlist more registration officers, for instance - like there were with BAN. It was an awareness-raising exercise. BAN provided the material infrastructure which Claim your Vote lacked.

72 King, ‘Guarding the Democratic Shrine.’

The old carefree days are gone forever - but running away by the whites is no solution and if trouble should hit Rhodesia there is no question of quitting, for this is our homeland ... we have no other country to run to ... For me there is this lesson to be learned from the Congo: while there may be grave dangers in granting responsibility and power to the African on a scale too little and too late, there is a far worse danger in granting them to him too much and too soon.\textsuperscript{74}

The ‘nation’ that BAN wanted to encourage was supposedly a Federal one - a last-ditch attempt to save the Federation - but in reality the white mental landscape had retreated back to Southern Rhodesia, where eighty per cent of the Federation’s whites lived, and where the seats of both the Federal and Southern Rhodesian governments were to be found, and so the vast majority of BAN’s resources were used in Southern Rhodesia. It was tacitly recognised that the two northern territories could not be saved, and in Southern Rhodesia the whites would be fighting their last stand against encroaching Africanisation. It was also the final attempt to define the Rhodesian national identity as being intimately connected to the British Empire, as, for so long, the Rhodesians’ ‘imagined community’ had been the Empire.

BAN met with scepticism among much of the white elite. Jack Howman thought it ‘a bit intellectual and airy-fairy and I wasn’t impressed. I don’t know that you can go dragooning people into supporting you that way. It didn’t seem to me a practicable proposal’.\textsuperscript{75} Clifford Dupont was more withering, especially when Occupation Day was re-named Pioneer Day in 1961: ‘this was all part of the Build a Nation campaign, trying to appease the militant side of the African population. It was the whole picture, I think, that they regarded that African rule was inevitable, and let’s be lovey-dovey with the Africans so that when they come to rule us we won’t be thrown out’.\textsuperscript{76} Greenfield thought that the whole campaign had been organised in a slapdash way: ‘it aroused hostility on the part of many people who didn’t want to see a large influx of Africans on the voters’ roll ... also there was a general feeling that this campaign was

\textsuperscript{74} WP 493/1 f. 10. Transcript of interview given to the \textit{Daily Express}, 10 August 1960.

\textsuperscript{75} ORAL/238 Jack Howman Interview.

\textsuperscript{76} ORAL/DU4 Clifford Dupont Interview.
run very inefficiently, which I think reacted on Whitehead’s supporters as well as the floating voters’.\textsuperscript{77}

The aims of BAN were also criticised by some of the black elite. In August 1962, some eight months into the campaign, Jasper Savanhu resigned as a Federal minister, complaining that partnership had not been supported by the Federal and Southern Rhodesian governments. He said bitterly: ‘No African who thinks he can influence the trend of events can continue to hobnob with a European party which has no intention of putting into practice what it preaches ... I was a piece of window dressing’.\textsuperscript{78} Although the Federal and Southern Rhodesian governments tried to play down the importance of Savanhu’s very public resignation, the real result was that realistic hopes of maintaining credibility with ‘moderate’ Africans effectively vanished. Nonetheless, it is entirely possible that had a campaign like BAN been run in 1953 instead of 1962, with its promise to open the franchise and repeal the Land Apportionment Act, the African elite would not have been alienated, and the nationalist movement would not have developed into one of mass mobilisation. As Stanlake Samkange, who supported BAN, wrote:

it is a thousand pities that this idea was not brought up a few years ago. Imagine how electrifying it would have been in the early 1950s. Imagine how the Africans would have reacted in 1954 if somebody had brought this suggestion and said that it was a determination on the part of the European to build a new nation as the result of the creation of the Federation.

I am prepared to bet that had this been done then, the Federation would not be in the great danger of disintegrating that it is in now. It would not be a swearword in Nyasaland and in Northern Rhodesia.\textsuperscript{79}

African delegates at the 1961 UFP Congress echoed Samkange’s sentiments, one on record as saying ‘Build a Nation should have been done long ago - many Africans already lost’.\textsuperscript{80} Even

\textsuperscript{77} ORAL/GR2 Julian Greenfield interview.

\textsuperscript{78} Herald, 15 August 1962.

\textsuperscript{79} Daily News, 31 October 1961.

\textsuperscript{80} WP 493/3 ff. 6-8. ‘The Southern Rhodesia Build a Nation campaign - Some Notes of an Informal Meeting of about forty Congress delegates held on 5th October 1961’.
among ordinary Africans there was a sense that BAN was somehow fraudulent. As one reader of the Daily News wrote:

Campaigners will find it difficult to tell one person that he cannot be allowed to vote (implying by Rhodesian standards that he is not a responsible citizen because he earns a couple of pounds less than is required), and then call on the same man and his friends to join in building one nation. Human dignity cannot be divided in this arbitrary manner.  

There were other middle class African supporters of BAN. Patrick Rubatika, chairman of the UFP’s Harare branch, said in support of BAN ‘we want to guard against [racial conflict] by creating a single nation in Southern Rhodesia transcending race’. Rubatika went further, blaming Africans for the failure of BAN and the subsequent rise of the RF:

Had Whitehead not been defeated in the election, racial hatred between Blacks and Whites would not have occurred. Sir Edgar Whitehead had dedicated himself to handing over the country to the Africans in ten or fifteen years time. Unfortunately, the Africans rejected Sir Edgar Whitehead and they refused to register themselves as voters, thus depriving themselves of the chance to vote him into power ... [Whitehead was] a conservative liberal who had given himself entirely to the handing over of the country to African rule with a concept that a nationalism be found that eclipses racial nationalism.

Rubatika was perhaps being too kind about Whitehead’s motives, but there is no doubt that BAN had high-calibre African support. As well as Samkange, Savanhu and Hove also supported the campaign, at least at first, continuing the tradition of working within the system. However, as we have seen, BAN was taking place too late.

Given the Southern Rhodesian scope of the campaign, BAN can also be considered the

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83 AOH/57 J.D. Rubatika interview.
final attempt by the Southern Rhodesians to decolonise themselves, rather than let the British government or the nationalists do it for them. By binding people of all races together into a single ‘nation’, the Southern Rhodesian elite thought that London would have no reason or excuse to deny Rhodesia at least Dominion status or even full independence once the Federation had been formally wound up in 1963. If middle class Africans and new African voters could be made to share these vested interests, then surely the wind would be taken out of the sails of the nationalist revival.

The electoral calculations which made BAN attractive to, and even necessary for, the white elite revolved around the fact that in the final analysis, the white electorate was not as liberal as the political elite wished it to be, and so enough Africans had to be enrolled as voters to act as a buffer. In addition, it was possible that the National Democratic Party\textsuperscript{84} would seek to contest the election as well, raising the problem of newly-enfranchised Africans voting for the nationalists. BAN was the UFP’s attempt to claim the moderate middle ground between the extremes of white and black nationalism. In 1958, the right wing Dominion Party, which by 1962 had fused with other right wing groups to form the Rhodesian Front, had very nearly won the Southern Rhodesia election. It had polled more first-choice votes than the UFP, but was defeated by the first-past-the-post system, and the fact that most voters had put the UFP down as their second choice. Second-choice votes were counted only if the leading candidate in a constituency did not poll more than 50 per cent of the first-choice votes, and the fact that the UFP polled more second-choice votes than the Dominion Party is what ultimately saved it. In this way, BAN was able to present a picture of the UFP as occupying the middle ground as opposed to the right wing of Rhodesian politics. However, as we have already noted, BAN’s main target were the African nationalists, and when the 1961 Constitution was in the process of being negotiated, it was still unclear whether the NDP would boycott the elections - hence the urgency to sway the masses. In addition, the October 1962 election in Northern Rhodesia

\textsuperscript{84} The NDP had replaced the SRANC which was banned in 1959. In turn, the NDP was banned at the end of 1961, and was reincarnated as ZAPU.
returned a UNIP-dominated government.\footnote{Roberts, \textit{A History of Zambia}, p. 221.} UNIP had polled some 80,000 votes, the vast majority from Africans. Southern Rhodesia risked nationalist disruption as happened in Northern Rhodesia if too few Africans were enfranchised, and if it were to look as though African votes could not significantly affect the result of the election.

The need to counter the nationalist position was not new to BAN. In 1960, Steve Kock,\footnote{Kock was born in South Africa in 1927. After serving in the South African Air Force in 1943-45, he migrated to Southern Rhodesia in 1952, and was manager of Africair (Rhodesia) 1953-59. In 1960 he became a member of the Planning Commission of the Industrial Development Corporation of Rhodesia. \textit{Who’s Who of Rhodesia, Mauritius, Central and East Africa} (Johannesburg, Combined Publishers (Pty.) Ltd., 1966.)} a UFP official who later played the leading part in organising BAN, stressed the ‘necessity of going over to the offensive and attacking the NDP’, and that UFP MPs would meet with Africans ‘whether voters or not’ rather than taking a merely reactive, ‘negative’ approach.\footnote{WP 500/1 ff. 65-71. Steve Kock, ‘Report for the cosideration of the Standing Committee’, 10 October 1960.} Kock presciently also emphasised the notion, unpopular among many whites at the time, that ‘it is quite wrong to say that most Africans are not politically conscious - they are. And that is where we as a race and party misjudge the situation seriously.’\footnote{ibid.} Soon after the campaign’s launch, its chairman, Denis Etheredge,\footnote{Emphasising the linkages between commerce, industry and the push for partnership, Etheredge was also an employee of Anglo American.} publicly ‘hoped, and intended, that the Build a Nation campaign would succeed in countering ZAPU’s avowed aim to stop Africans registering as voters’.\footnote{Herald, 14 January 1962.} In a typically optimistic report on the campaign in May 1962, Kock confidently asserted ‘we have provided a real alternative to African nationalism’.\footnote{WP 494/2 ff. 66-71. Kock, ‘Progress of the Build a Nation campaign during the first five months of 1962’, 21 May 1962.}
At its 1961 Congress, the UFP announced the repeal of the Land Apportionment Act, the cornerstone of the Rhodesian system, if it won the 1962 election and once the 1961 constitution was in force.\(^9^2\) Two committees were set up, one to look at urban areas and one for the rural areas. The UFP also trumpeted the imminent arrival of BAN. Significantly, this was the first UFP Congress with a notable African presence (which numbered 103) among the delegates. The *Daily News* reported on the Congress:

The Congress of the United Federal Party ... is understood to have evolved a plan to help the party win next year’s general election.

Congress sources say that the party has now set a completely new self-contained organisation with its own headquarters and staff which would be used in the Government’s “Build a Nation” campaign.

The “Build a Nation” campaign ... is being held in an effort to win the Africans to the side of the Government.\(^9^3\)

The editorial column in the same issue was of the opinion that:

The governing United Federal Party has moved steps forward in the direction of promoting a non-racial society, at this annual Congress than at any other single Congress in the past. The resolutions calling for the repeal of the Land Apportionment Act, and for the introduction of legislation to remove racial discrimination by force, cut known tap-roots of the withering tree of bigoted race discrimination in the Colony. It is now up to the Government to implement the resolutions, with speed and a sense of purpose.

Interestingly, the word ‘partnership’ was beginning to slip out of public discourse. The white and black press both used the word less, and the 1961 constitution, coupled with BAN, were seen as connected to, but ultimately different from the practice of the much-vaunted policy of partnership.\(^9^4\) After all, no-one in power in the 1950s had advocated the repeal of the LAA. It

\(^{92}\) *Daily News*, 6 October 1961. The *Daily News* of 17 January 1962 reported that the LAA would be abolished ‘in its entirety’ by the end of the year.

\(^{93}\) *Daily News*, 7 October 1961.

\(^{94}\) *Daily News*, 9 October 1961. Comment by W.H. Kona, President of the Southern Rhodesia
looked as though the Rhodesian elite was moving beyond partnership, but it found that many of the traditional supporters of partnership were beginning to distance themselves from the white establishment. As we have seen, both RST and Anglo American had withdrawn their funding from the UFP and were openly courting the nationalists in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland; indeed, in 1960 RST had given the Northern Rhodesia ANC £10,000. So BAN was at first almost completely reliant on the UFP’s fundraising machine and party organisation. This presented the problem that the campaign was supposedly non-political while simultaneously being bankrolled by the governing party. BAN’s launch in October 1961 was accompanied by widespread advertising in newspapers asking for donations from the public. It also solicited from wealthy individuals and organisations to encourage a healthy cashflow after initial public enthusiasm had dried up. It even sought to raise money from London through a fundraising committee headed by Lord Lennox Boyd ‘on the understanding that the Build a Nation campaign was strictly non-political’.

The most likely cause of the campaign’s official ‘divorce’ from the UFP in April 1962, which was against the UFP’s wishes, was because the fundraisers at the British end preferred not to be seen to be supporting a party political organisation.

The aims of the Build a Nation campaign

With the UFP machine fully behind it, BAN sought to disseminate the UFP’s concept of a multiracial Rhodesian nation through its network of roving field units outfitted with Land Rovers, film equipment and public speaking skills. It sought direct government contact with the people, a clear attempt to usurp the nationalists’ constituency. Whitehead himself went of a two-

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96 WP 500/3 ff. 15-16. ‘Minutes of a meeting of the Executive Committee of the Southern Rhodesia Standing Committee [of the UFP]’, 10 March 1962.

97 WP 494/3 f. 7. Welensky to Chegwidden, 1 August 1962.
week tour of Southern Rhodesia in January 1962 to bolster the campaign’s start. E.M.B. West, the director of the Rhodesian Institute of African Affairs, wrote that Whitehead:

created a very good impression ... whether or not it will have had any marked effect on the registration of African voters is, I think, of secondary importance to the fact of the establishing of contact and that the head of the Government has been seen and has talked with certain members of the African population in the rural areas.\(^\text{98}\)

BAN’s rhetoric was heady and optimistic. An internal UFP document stated that the aims were:

1. To foster an attitude of tolerance and understanding amongst all people and acceptance of each other as part of the nation.
2. To win all people to a non-racial approach to politics and community life.
3. To remove misconceptions based on ignorance.
4. To inform the new voter how he can play a genuine part in the government of his country.
5. To build a lasting and settled democracy, thus creating the most favourable climate for the economic advance of the country.\(^\text{99}\)

The same document stated clearly the kind of inclusivity the white elite were considering:

Essentially a nation exists when every man living in a country no matter what his origin ... regards himself first and foremost as a Rhodesian and accepts all other citizens - whatever their racial origin - as Rhodesians. It involves the people of the country developing a sense of belonging to one great nation, belonging as equals, as first class citizens with a common identity which transcends their individual ties to a race, tribe or overseas affiliation ... At home, at work, at play, we must consciously strive to promote this cause ... Be a Nation-Builder in everything you do.\(^\text{100}\)

\(^{98}\) EWP. E.M.B. West to Whitehead, January 1962.


\(^{100}\) ibid.
The white press generally greeted BAN’s start with tempered enthusiasm, this extract from the *Chronicle* being a typical one:

What is conspicuously absent is a detailed and clearly specified plan. It is all very well to say ... ‘you can only fight ideas with better ideas ... you can only fight bland nationalism, white or black, by creating real Rhodesian nationalism’ ... but these sentiments are nothing more than crashing platitudes ... Something far more positive is required. 101

BAN differed from other rhetoric the Rhodesians disseminated for the duration of the Federation and partnership. For the first time, the white government in Salisbury was actively touring the rural areas and seeking to convert the average African, who would not qualify for the vote, to the elite’s way of thinking. This was a departure from the hitherto accepted aim of partnership, that of attracting middle class Africans. For the first time, the white establishment was trying to reach out into the rural areas, to the bulk of Africans, and so for the first time partnership and a multiracial nationhood could be conceived of as all-encompassing projects, not solely elite pursuits. As the *Daily News* put it:

The Build a Nation Campaign on which the United Federal Party expects to spend some £250,000 will spread its tentacles to rural areas as well because it is these remote corners of the Colony where people do not know what changes are taking place in the country.

Sir Edgar Whitehead, Prime Minister of S. Rhodesia, said here yesterday that the campaign aims at building a sense of one-ness and “founding a democracy for the first time” in the Colony.

In the remote areas people were unaware of the various changes that have taken place and also, of the decisions taken by the Party at its recent Congress in Salisbury - decisions which gave the Government a free hand to legislate on such problems as racial discrimination and the much talked of Land Apportionment Act.

In the light of events taking place in Africa today it was necessary to

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build a feeling of nationhood among all peoples of the country.\textsuperscript{102}

By 1961 it was clear that the NDP exerted substantial influence in the rural areas, and indeed one of the results of BAN was that the white elite now had a much clearer idea of the land hunger and subsequent dissatisfaction in the rural areas, especially as regarded the destocking of cattle as a part of the implementation of the Land Husbandry Act. For example, the Internal Affairs Minister, Jack Quinton, was told in a meeting in northern Mashonaland ‘the people of Urungwe would not plough their fields this year unless they were given larger land units than the present eight acres ... The leader of this delegation, Mr. Mishi, said he and his colleagues protested very strongly against the manner in which the Land Husbandry Act was being implemented in Urungwe Reserve’.\textsuperscript{103} Kock himself recognised that without addressing the land issue, the white elite would effectively be abrogating the initiative and passing it onto the nationalists. Rhetoric alone would not help in the final analysis, and concrete action would have to be taken very quickly. In an internal report he wrote: ‘we will never build a nation until this problem is settled. Considerable, and unanswerable, criticism is levelled at the amount of unutilised land held by Europeans, in many cases adjacent to the reserves with acute land problems ... it presents ideal material for any Nationalist (racialist) party’.\textsuperscript{104}

As well as talking to the African ‘man in the street’ and ‘man in the tribal trust lands’, BAN had a more pragmatic purpose, to register enough voters on the B roll to make the 1961 constitution work, and to strengthen the UFP’s position opposite both the RF and the NDP. Whitehead asserted that BAN ‘could result in the death of white supremacist politics, and in the destruction of the National Democratic Party’s racial approach to politics in this country ... it has to succeed as there is nothing more dangerous than to move slowly with caution’. Making the point, Whitehead concluded ‘changes are now being undertaken which must have appeared

\textsuperscript{102} Daily News, 21 October 1961.

\textsuperscript{103} Daily News, 21 October 1961.

crazy a few years ago’. Reports from BAN campaign workers seemed to indicate that they were getting through, although BAN’s failures would hardly have been reported prominently in the European and ‘moderate’ African press. The Daily News reported meetings where hundreds of people were being registered as voters, and even more were joining the campaign. Herbert Nyangoni, chairman of the Harare branch of the UFP had registered ‘a few hundred himself’ and said ‘“it is amazing to know the very large number of people who qualify for the vote and the enthusiasm they show”’. In one sense, the drive to register voters was a success. It got off to a slow start, with only 1585 Africans registering between 3 January and 18 February 1962, but by the time the rolls closed in October 1962, there were 10,186 African voters on the B roll. This compared with 2268 Africans on the A roll, and with 5177 African voters on the old common roll in 1961, thus showing a total increase of 7277 African voters. This was not an unqualified disaster compared with the way in which South Africa had systematically stripped Africans of citizenship rights. Significantly, for the first time free food and accommodation for domestic staff were calculated as part of the income qualifications for the franchise, and as a result, for example, Whitehead’s own cook was able to register as a voter. But this was the only glimpse of success. It was well short of the 50,000 the UFP had wanted to register. Even worse, only a quarter of the B roll voters actually voted, vindicating the nationalists’ urging of people to boycott the voter registration drive and the election itself. Privately, Kock admitted that the

106 Daily News, 26 August 1961. The Daily News reported that in a single week 114 people in Harare and Highfield had joined the UFP.
nationalists had defeated the UFP and BAN. He wrote in October 1962, as the rolls closed for
the December election,

some 10,000 new applications for the vote were received from Africans. Even allowing for the many difficulties encountered ... this has been a disappointing reaction. There is no doubt that the small number of voters has strengthened the arguments of those advocating “majority rule” immediately.

The recently banned ZAPU also had considerable influence in preventing citizens in coming forward, without fear, in order to register as voters.\textsuperscript{111}

When the votes were counted, 2572 B roll voters had voted, which was not enough to affect any of the A roll constituencies, although all the B roll districts returned UFP candidates with the exception of Highfield which returned the independent Ahrn Palley.\textsuperscript{112} It seemed that BAN’s message did not come across to the people it was primarily aimed at, the African voters, and Whitehead seemed oblivious to its faults. Todd said that even moderate Africans in the CAP ‘just laughed; they said “this is nonsense, and he’ll have no chance getting the United Federal Party accepted by the people”. But you remember the Build a Nation campaign that ran right through the country, he was quite convinced he could do it’.\textsuperscript{113}

The internal workings of the Build a Nation campaign

BAN, however, had problems throughout its existence, many of them stemming from its close association with the UFP. Clearly, while BAN relied on the UFP for money and equipment, it could not claim to be non-party political, and complaints were voiced that it was far too closely associated with the UFP to be genuinely effective among Africans. A few of its


\textsuperscript{112} ibid, p. 8; also F.M.G. Willson and G.C. Passmore (eds.), Holders of Administrative and Ministerial Office 1894-1964 and Members of the Legislative Council 1899-1923 and the Legislative Assembly 1294-1964 (Salisbury, University College of Rhodesia and Nyasaland, Department of Government, 1966).

\textsuperscript{113} ORAL/TO1 Garfield Todd interview.

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campaigners, eight Africans and one European, walked out of a BAN training course in protest at too many of the lecturers being UFP members. Hierarchically too, BAN was almost completely white. It was divided into eleven field units and one headquarters (in Salisbury), the heads of all of which were white, whereas almost all the field workers were black. This made sense of sorts, considering that African field workers would probably communicate with people more readily than the Europeans, and would be more trusted, but it looked bad for a supposedly multiracial organisation which was trying to inculcate a spirit of multiracial nationhood to be so dominated by whites, and as a result BAN was the target of grievances that it did not practice what it preached.

Taking advantage of the UFP’s organisation, BAN ran a crash course for its field workers in Salisbury in November 1961. Thirty-two prospective field workers attended its lectures on such subjects as ‘Basic Democracy’, ‘Dictatorship and Communism’, ‘The Land Apportionment Act’, ‘The Land Husbandry Act’, ‘African Education’, ‘Policy of the UFP’ and ‘The Constitution and Franchise of Southern Rhodesia’. At this point, there were no plans to train more field workers, which casts doubt over BAN’s capacity to cover as much of the country as possible in the allotted time.

Another problem BAN faced was reports of the reluctance of whites to join in the campaign’s spirit. Along with reports of the success BAN had in enrolling voters, there were also reports of the situation on the ground, where Europeans were still exercising discrimination. Apart from the empty stands in Southerton (see below), the Daily News also wrote of incidents where whites turned their dogs on Africans, and concluded that BAN should be aimed at the whites every bit as much as at the Africans. After all, ‘little good will be done if the main beneficiaries of the lowering of the colour bar are made to feel unwelcome in

114 Northern News, 7 April 1962.
115 WP 493/4 f. 71.
116 WP 493/4 f. 93.
their new surroundings’.

In addition, BAN was plagued with financial problems throughout its existence. When the campaign was launched in 1961, it took out widespread advertising in newspapers asking for donations from the public. It also solicited from wealthy individuals and organisations to encourage a healthy cashflow after initial public enthusiasm dried up. However, by mid-1962 BAN was in deep financial trouble.

To run a campaign of its scope required an ambitious fundraising machine, and the UFP and BAN between them simply did not have the resources to run one. Nominally, the campaign was unconnected to the UFP, especially after April 1962, and originally money collected for the campaign by UFP branches would be separate from that collected for the party itself. By May 1962, however, in contravention to the supposed separation of the two bodies, UFP branches were informed that ‘money raised for Build a Nation would be counted as part of the branch targets’.

The UFP itself had a large stake in the campaign, raising the original money out of donations made to Welensky to help the UFP garner African support. As well as the loan of vehicles, staff and administrative machinery, the UFP guaranteed BAN’s debts. Welensky himself felt particular chagrin at the campaign being taken out of the UFP’s jurisdiction because he himself had bankrolled it to the tune of £14,000 by August 1962, loans which he was forced to write off, and a further £10,000 in November 1962. He had supported the campaign so heavily ‘with the anticipation, which was then justified, that the Campaign would continue to have some link with the party ... I can assure you that they would not had been made if I realised

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121 ibid.
122 WP 494/3 f. 7. Welensky to Chegwidden, 1 August 1962.
123 WP 494/3 f. 65. Chegwidden to Welensky, 7 November 1962.
that the time might come when the Party would not have any means of following from the inside the progress of the Campaign.\textsuperscript{124}

BAN also had a board of Trustees to manage its financial affairs and cushion any shocks. When Sir Thomas Chegwidden was appointed its chairman, he discovered the true nature of BAN’s finances. He had been led to believe that £50,000 would be raised in London, of which only £5000 had materialised, and was therefore shocked to find that on 11 July 1962 BAN was £28,650 in debt.\textsuperscript{125} As this placed the Trustees at personal risk, he was unwilling to accept the situation, and wondered how a ‘new non-political organisation’ could establish any credibility if it was ‘under an obligation to pay a thumping “lobola” to the UFP’?\textsuperscript{126} By May 1962 BAN was spending £6000 a month, and had spent £57,000 in total, the vast majority in Southern Rhodesia. Only £4000 was available in funds. In August 1962 Denis Etheredge wrote to Whitehead and Welensky saying:

\begin{quote}
The financial position is desperate. Visible funds, at about £4600, will meet most of the end-August costs, but there will be nothing over for September. The only regular income is from stop-orders amounting to about £400 per month. No-one is optimistic about the outcome of Kock’s visit to London - even if it goes well, little more than £5000 could be expected.

Whatever the future of the campaign, one this is clear: the majority of its employees must be given notice at the end of the month. Even then, something like £6000 will be needed to pay them off and to settle September accounts. The SR campaign is running at about £4400 per month and the NR about £1000. Figures relating to the SR campaign are rough as Sir Thomas [Chegwidden] does not know the details and we cannot really investigate (outsiders as we are!) until Kock is available.\textsuperscript{127}
\end{quote}

Welensky rejected Etheredge’s suggestion that he make a last £5000 donation,

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\textsuperscript{124} WP 494/3 f. 7. Welensky to Chegwidden, 1 August 1962.

\textsuperscript{125} WP 494/3 ff. 39-44. Chegwidden to Welensky, 23 July 1962.

\textsuperscript{126} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{127} WP 494/3 f. 15. Etheredge to Whitehead and Welensky, 13 August 1962.
\end{flushright}
preferring instead to wind the campaign down and for the UFP to salvage what material, staff and credibility it could from it. There is no evidence to suggest that Kock or anyone else was skimming money from the campaign or indulging in creative accounting. The financial mess was in reality a direct result of the public’s (both white and black) apathy about a campaign like BAN.

BAN fizzled out in an ignominious fashion in November 1962, when virtually all the Rhodesian press was wrongly predicting a UFP victory in the election,\textsuperscript{128} and was formally wound up in early 1963. In some ways, BAN was the culmination of the process of partnership, in that within its rhetoric was to be found some of the most liberal discourse ever uttered by a Rhodesian politicians. However, it was also an example of how the political elite was trying to ‘force the pace beyond what white public opinion was prepared to accept’, with the result that ‘the swing is back in the opposite direction’\textsuperscript{129} As if to illustrate the point, 86 out of 400 stands in Southerton, a lower-income white suburb of Salisbury, were empty largely because Europeans feared it would be one of the first areas to be designated multiracial once the LAA was repealed,\textsuperscript{130} and the day BAN was announced, white girls refused to take part in a beauty contest because African girls were included.\textsuperscript{131} BAN’s sentiments were what the Rhodesian elite should have been pushing in the early 1950s when both the white liberals and the African middle class were most receptive to the concept of partnership, instead of leaving the exercise of the spirit of partnership to societies like the NAA and IASR. Certainly, the franchise on which BAN’s voter registration drive was based, while hardly democratic in the modern sense, would have been better received as a first step towards partnership, instead of becoming its last gasp. BAN was the first time that the Rhodesian elite had publicly advocated the kind of liberalisation

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\textsuperscript{128} The \textit{Examiner} wrote: ‘The UFP will win; the establishment always does’. \textit{Examiner}, 30 November 1962.
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\textsuperscript{129} Tredgold, \textit{The Rhodesia that was my life}, p. 152.
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\textsuperscript{130} \textit{Daily News}, 18 November 1961.
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\textsuperscript{131} \textit{Daily News}, 15 January 1962.
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which partnership implicitly promised back in 1953, although they had argued that the lowering of the colour bar - at a time when South African discrimination was deepening - and the slow extension of the franchise were indication enough of the white elite’s good intentions. However, by 1962 good intentions were not as persuasive as they could have been in 1953 or even 1957. The fact that in 1961 BAN appeared to be a half-baked concept when a few years previously it might well have worked shows how quickly events and opinion had surpassed the Rhodesian elite’s willingness to act to meaningfully implement multiracial partnership, and the African middle class’s eagerness to become a part of the system instead of replacing it.

Clearly, the continuation of partnership was contingent on the Southern Rhodesian electorate’s willingness to follow the lead of its politicians, and the episodes in Northern Rhodesia were simply the most visible manifestation of the white electorate’s reluctance to meaningfully implement partnership. The existence of the Examiner, as discussed in the previous chapter, and the CPIC demonstrated that diverse elements within the elite were willing to push along partnership, but neither of the above came with any legislative clout, and could only attempt to influence events rather than dictate them. When even the politicians were half-hearted about implementing tangible change, it is little wonder that the whole enterprise began to fail, even though RST made spirited efforts through the Examiner to push the Federal and Southern Rhodesian governments along. Lord Alport, British High Commissioner to the Federation between 1960 and 1963, remarked on an episode which seemed to him to encapsulate the problems the Rhodesians created for themselves. Upon arriving in Salisbury in 1960, Alport was met by Welensky:

His ministers were assembled there; some were Africans, and of course the majority were Europeans; also representatives of his party both black and white. I noticed that as he walked along the ranks he shook hands with all the Europeans and none of the Africans.132

132 Lapping, End of Empire, p. 470.
Conclusion and Epilogue

Conclusion

The 1962 election and the Build a Nation campaign marked the end of moves by the Rhodesian elite to build any kind of partnership with the African majority, and of any realistic - for southern Africa - moves to co-opt more of the black elite into the colony’s political, social and economic mainstream. Partnership was another event and idea in a long line of ways in which elites sought to protect their vested interests by trying to be more inclusive towards their perceived adversaries, but some good did come from it. Although the moves to open up opportunities to Africans had been tentative and half-hearted, had the UFP won the election on the basis of the 1961 constitution, there would probably have been marked advances for African aspirations during the 1960s, and the Land Apportionment Act might have been modified out of recognition within a few years. Certainly, the guerrilla war which finally won Zimbabwe independence in 1980 might have been avoided, and the African middle class might not have been alienated to the extent it was, making the development of a multiracial Rhodesian system easier. Hardwicke Holderness believes that a multiracial political nation based on the citizenship rights which were extended by the 1957 Southern Rhodesian franchise could have provided the foundations from which a genuinely multiracial Rhodesia could develop. Holderness wrote that as soon as the Rhodesians deviated from the common roll, as they did with the Federal franchise in 1957 and the Southern Rhodesian franchise in 1961 and thus debasing the lower-roll voters’ influence, they lost the structures which could have supported the idea of a multiracial nation. ¹

While this analysis should not be entirely dismissed, it should be heavily qualified by the fact that partnership was a mechanism to react to perceived threats from Africans and Afrikaners, not a proactive process which the white elite was using to drastically change the structures and dynamics of colonial hegemony. Importantly, the very structures which the white elite would use to develop a multiracial Rhodesia were also the same structures which had built a discriminatory society in the first place, and to whose existence the bulk of the white population

¹ Holderness, Lost Chance, p. 232.
owed its comfortable lifestyle, and it was that reluctance to share the advantages of the Rhodesian system which doomed partnership.

The spirit of partnership did not entirely die in 1962. Not all of the new RF administration believed that African advancement was necessarily as threatening as it might seem. Within the RF the concept of trusteeship was still taken seriously, albeit by a shrinking minority of people. Jack Howman remembered his father telling him: ‘if you cannot foresee the day that a black man will be prime minister of Rhodesia, then you have no business staying in Rhodesia. It will come as surely as the sun rises. Your function, your job is to ensure that when the time arrives that he knows what he is doing and that he has been taught sufficient to be able to govern with responsibility’.  

The failure of partnership and the Federation should be analysed cautiously, however, for while there was little altruism to it, it is easy to simply think that the Rhodesians were engaged in no more than collective hypocrisy, and leave it at that. In addition, while one can be cynical about the white elite’s motives, we should remember that partnership was an exercise in realpolitik, and as such the moral judgements about the failure to tackle the systemic reasons for discrimination many commentators and scholars have made are misplaced. In a regional context, its rhetoric was far removed from the National Party in South Africa. We should also remember that enough of both the white and black elites thought partnership a viable project throughout the 1950s, and even up to 1962. Without a doubt, partnership, however flawed in practice, did open up opportunities for Africans which simply had not been there before. In the context of southern Africa, with South Africa moving towards ever more brutal apartheid, this is something of an achievement. Africans were employed in higher ranks of the civil service than before, hotels and clubs were encouraged to lower the colour bar, and legislation was used when persuasion failed. Discrimination in post office queues ended, and the Land Apportionment Act was amended with a view to its eventual abolition. The only institution of higher education in the Federation was multiracial from its inception, and remained that way, educating a

\[2\] ORAL/238 Jack Howman Interview. Emphasis in the original transcript.
considerable number of Rhodesian Africans within their own country. More people than ever before were able to vote, although the value of their votes was severely limited. But it looked to be a start in the right direction. The problem, in many ways, was that having decided to make certain moves towards lowering the colour bar in the interests of developing a situation which could lead to Dominion status, the Rhodesian elite was taken by surprise by the rapid sequence of events which meant that their buffer, the African middle class, became disenchanted with partnership and the Federal project. They miscalculated the way in which the rhetoric and promise of partnership would open up the debate on discrimination and opportunities. They also misjudged the conservatism and self-preservation instinct of a predominantly white electorate to which had been added the very people who would see partnership as a direct threat, and yet on whom the success of partnership ultimately depended. In addition, this thesis would argue that the many of the achievements of partnership were such that the RF had to take heed of changes made during Federation. The RF put up black candidates for all 15 B roll seats in the 1962 election, a recognition of the presence, however limited of Africans on the political scene. Despite the new Land Tenure Act which crystallised segregation in a way the Land Apportionment Act did not, the RF was not able to significantly roll back the anti-discrimination legislation which had been passed - for example, the university remained multiracial - nor seriously stand in the way of African economic advancement within the existing system, although it is also true that the RF did not go out of its way to encourage less segregation wither. The 1969 franchise, discussed in the Epilogue, is an example of the recognition that Africans would advance economically.

However, the time for gradualist advances towards an inclusive political and social arrangement had passed. Africans in Southern Rhodesia were not going to wait ten or fifteen years for the mere possibility of majority rule when throughout Africa colonies were turning into independent states. In addition, as we have already seen, the Rhodesian system itself

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3 The new act, for instance, abolished the special status of church and mission land, leading to fears that a white priest would not be able to preach to his black congregation. Godwin and Hancock, *Rhodseians Never Die*, pp. 44-45.
militated against any hopes for genuine inclusion. As Colin Leys put it, ‘a solution to the country’s major problems is fundamentally impossible within the system. To solve them is to change it’. The understandable reluctance of the white political elite and the electorate to sanction such a drastic transformation meant that a guerrilla war was the most likely outcome of the failure to open up the system to Africans.

In essence, the December 1962 election marked a time when the fundamental nature of the Rhodesian national identity, which had been developed as a safety barrier against regional competitors and especially the Africans, began to flourish again on the political scene. For all that there had been liberal strains in Rhodesian thought throughout the colonial period, the debate about a multiracial Rhodesia did not penetrate effectively beyond the elite level. Although much of the elite advocated certain concessions to the principles of multiracial nationhood, the majority of Rhodesians considered that the sacrifices necessary to achieve that objective and the inclusion of Africans in what was after all an exclusive system designed to keep them out were too much, and voted accordingly. The moves to encourage a common loyalty based on the Rhodesian identity meant that the Rhodesian system itself would have to be radically overhauled. Since it was this system which provided such a comfortable standard of living for the whites, those who already benefitted from it were loath to share their bounty with the very people their identity had developed in opposition to. Similarly, the African elite who were supposed to be co-opted into the Rhodesian identity found that the very identity they were being asked to associate themselves with did not welcome them, and had little in common with their experiences as second-class citizens in their own country. The project was not unrealistic in the context of the early 1950s, maybe even up to 1957, but thereafter the contradictions between the rhetoric and reality became all too clear, and it foundered; basically, ‘the founders of the Federation set out on an Olympian course in the naive belief that it could be accomplished in a pedestrian manner’. But also, the Rhodesian elite’s desire to encourage a

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5 Tredgold, *The Rhodesia that was my life*, p. 201.
multiracial arrangement based on the white identity and upholding white achievements as the touchstone of ‘civilisation’ turned out to be incongruous, in both black and white eyes, and this paradox was neatly encapsulated by a reader of the Daily News commenting on BAN:

Campaigners will find it difficult to tell one person that he cannot be allowed to vote (implying by Rhodesian standards that he is not a responsible citizen because he earns a couple of pounds less than is required), and then call on the same man and his friends to join in building one nation. Human dignity cannot be divided in this arbitrary manner.\footnote{Daily News, 13 November 1961.}
Epilogue: The Rhodesian Front and UDI: a return to divided nationhood?

Part of the reason why the Federation is seen as a chimera in Rhodesian and Zimbabwean history is because it was overshadowed by what followed it. The story of the Rhodesian Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI) of 11 November 1965 is well known, and there is an enormous literature on the era. However, it is worth mentioning a few aspects of Rhodesian Front rule and UDI to understand the contrast that Federation and multiracial partnership were when compared to the periods before 1953 and after.

Ian Smith maintains even today that there had been no change in philosophy between Whitehead’s government and the RF, and that the Rhodesians were well on the way to developing structures for majority rule. However, if anything, the RF entrenched racial separation and divided nationhood, as the new franchise qualifications which were introduced in 1969 demonstrated, and returned to a more blatant protection of white interests. The RF government abolished the Southern Rhodesian two-roll franchise introduced in 1961 which at least tried to retain the principle if not the practice of the common roll, and replaced it with the only openly racial franchise Rhodesia ever had. It had two rolls: one for Europeans (which ironically included Coloureds and Asians), and one for Africans for which the qualifications were lower. There was a lower House of fifty members returned on the European roll, eight

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7 The literature on UDI is huge and of very variable quality. However, the following texts are useful: L.W. Bowman, Politics in Rhodesia. White Power in an African State (Cambridge MA, Harvard University Press, 1973); David Caute, Under the Skin. The Death of White Rhodesia (Evanston IL, Northwestern University Press, 1983); Henrik Ellert, The Rhodesian Front War. Counter-insurgency and guerrilla warfare 1962-1980 (Gweru, Mambo Press, 1989); Hancock, White Liberals, Moderates and Radicals. In addition, BBC2 ran a three-part series in March 1999 called ‘Rebellion’ about UDI and the war, and is the best television discussion of UDI thus far.

8 Interview, Ian Smith, 24 September 1996. Clearly, Smith is forgetting his infamous quote where he declared that there would not be majority rule ‘for a thousand years’.

9 There were certain similarities with the South African tri-cameral system and franchise which was introduced in 1984. However, this analogy should not be taken too far. The Rhodesians kept a single lower house and members of all races would sit in it. And of course the South African system, even after the modifications, completely excluded Africans.
Africans returned on the African roll, and eight Africans to be chosen by chiefs, headmen and councillors of the Tribal Trust Lands. The Senate consisted of ten Europeans chosen by the European members of the Assembly, ten Africans chosen by the Council of Chiefs, and three persons of any race who would be appointed by the Head of State. There was provision for African membership of the Assembly to reach parity (but no more) by the addition of two members at a time, by the direct and indirect method in turn, and in proportion to income tax payments by Africans once African contributions had reached 26.5 per cent of the total. In 1969, only 968 Africans paid income tax, amounting to 0.5 per cent of the total. The prospect of parity was a distant one.  

As an alternative to a voice in the electoral process, the RF went back to two pyramids and the updated version, community development. Also, the RF believed that Western-style democracy based on ‘the individualistic society’ was unsuitable for Africans, because their political and historical evolution was so different from the Britain which had ‘exported her parliamentary techniques, like crates of merchandise to be dumped on other countries’. Therefore, once the RF took office, it enthusiastically backed community development. By 1968, 167 Community Boards had been set up. But implementation of community 


13 Mutizwa-Mangiza, Community Development in Pre-Independence Zimbabwe, p. 40.
development in Rhodesia was designed to enshrine the system of racial separation, and it suffered from the contradiction of claiming to strengthen democracy at a local level while democracy at a national level was denied to the vast majority of people. In encouraging African areas to develop ‘at their own pace’, allowing them a certain degree of ‘freedom of action’, community development in Rhodesia looked suspiciously like two pyramids, and even the bantustan system in South Africa. However, the official reasoning behind community development was ‘that the roots of democracy lie in the decisions and responsibilities of people diversified into local governments and communities’, because ‘a system of planning and administration from one remote and impersonal centre, in term of some technical or doctrinaire concept of “the good of the people”’ would inevitably fail. As a result, the RF placed more emphasis on the role of chiefs than the Federal or pre-1962 Southern Rhodesian governments had done. Upon the imposition of white rule over Southern Rhodesia, chiefs lost almost all their powers to native commissioners. They were now being co-opted back into the power hierarchy, on European terms and as paid employees of the government, and were being trumpeted as the mouthpiece of the people. Writing in NADA, Roger Howman, the former Chief Native Commissioner said: ‘We have not recognised and supported sufficiently the powers and traditional duties of the chiefs ... All the evidence points to the great importance of the chief and the tribal hierarchy, and we must bring that power into the open, build on it, support it’. Their new role, therefore, was an integral part of the Rhodesian government’s attempt to limit direct African participation in electoral politics. Coupled with community development and the native councils, Rhodesian politicians could claim that the wishes of the African people were being voiced, and that their political education, to prepare them for participation in electoral politics, was underway. The contradiction between this and the very real obstacles to meaningful African participation is one of the biggest problems with Rhodesian-style democracy and nationhood.

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15 Weinrich, Chiefs and Councils in Rhodesia; Holleman, Chief, Council and Commissioner.

16 Howman, ‘Chieftainship’, p. 11.
The new RF government was concentrating on African political rights within ‘traditional’ African society, thus differentiating between the two races once more. It was the opposite of what partnership was supposed to achieve.

This was essentially a return to two pyramids, inasmuch as the emphasis was placed on ‘communities’ and group political rights at a local level to the detriment of individual rights at the national level. Some of the white elite went public in their criticism. Robert Tredgold, who had resigned as Federal Chief Justice because of draconian security legislation, despaired of what he considered the blindness of the new government. Writing that segregation could not possibly hope to succeed, he said:

Either the Europeans will accept the full logic of the situation voluntarily or it will be forced upon them by nation-wide economic and social breakdown. Even those most opposed to segregation would hardly wish that it come in the latter way. It would be too much like the gunpowder that Victorian housemaids would use to clear the chimney flues - effective, but liable to burn the house down. Surely, before it is too late, the Europeans in Rhodesia will shake themselves and awake from the dream that a modern industrialised state can be run on the lines of ‘Alice Through the Looking Glass’. 17

As a result of the disengagement from Britain, the period after 1962 saw the development of a distinct Rhodesian national identity which was moving away from the British Empire as a material entity and which was forging its own independence, and so the white mental horizons were retreating back into the laager in which they originally evolved. 18 The end of Federation meant that, in effect, the British connection with central Africa was being severed. At the time UDI was something of a gamble, and many Rhodesians had misgivings about open rebellion against the cornerstone of their imperial identity, the British monarchy. The Empire was quickly joined, and to a certain extent replaced, by the western anti-communist alliance as

17 Tredgold, The Rhodesia that was my life, p. 166.

the justification for Rhodesia’s existence in the world - although, importantly, Rhodesian identity still held itself to be the very best of British, and that it had been the metropolis, not the frontier, which had retreated in a craven fashion. As early as 1950, David Stirling had stressed Rhodesia’s strategic importance in terms of minerals and political loyalty to the anti-communist front, but until the late 1950s the external bogeyman in Rhodesian demonology was not so much the Soviet Union, but rather the National Party government in South Africa.

Until the metropolis abandoned Rhodesia, Rhodesian identity was intimately linked to the Empire, and the concept of Britain. Now that the Empire was unravelling and Britain was looking more towards Europe and the USA, a new raison d’être was needed, and the Cold War provided it admirably. Although UDI received muted support at the time, many whites came to regard it as the zenith of Rhodesian national identity. In keeping with the mental time-warp many Rhodesians find themselves in today, this author found many advertisements on the Buy/Sell pages of the Rhodesians Worldwide website asking for the green-and-white UDI flag, including one from an 18-year old about to start university who wanted the flag to decorate his room. UDI severed the imperial connection, at least formally. Many Rhodesians retained their attachment to the British monarchy, and continued to think of Rhodesia as the embodiment of all that was best about Britain, separating the emotional figurehead of the monarch from the British government itself - all the more telling since Britain in 1964 elected a ‘socialist’ government for the first time in thirteen years. As a result of the end of the imperial connection, many Rhodesians placed themselves in the forefront of the Cold War, declaring that they were now defending western Christian civilisation against the Communists, who were using the African nationalists as their tools.


Although UDI was not welcomed with any great emotional outpourings by Rhodesians, it marked a watershed in the development of Rhodesian identity. From being a small country with close emotional ties to the metropole, Rhodesia was choosing to proclaim its own independence. The Crown remained a focus for identity. The British government tried to play on this in the various negotiations which took place after UDI, as did the Rhodesian government which tried to assert the difference between the Queen and her ministers, even as far as suggesting she was a mere puppet in their grand schemes. Before UDI, the entire Rhodesian Cabinet signed a letter to the Queen assuring ‘Your Majesty that whatever happens there will still be found among Rhodesians that same loyalty and devotion to the Crown which have guided and sustained our country since it was founded’. Indeed, UDI provided for the Queen to be Rhodesian Head of State and the UDI proclamation itself ended ‘God Save the Queen’ - a curious way to end a document marking the end of formal ties with Britain, one might think, until one remembers that the Rhodesian government had no clear idea of how to define its own nationhood separate from Britain. However, a Rhodesian identity developed which was closer to a Rhodesia divorced from its emotional home. The years of UDI, and the ‘nation building’ experience of the war in the 1970s are today seen as the zenith of a Rhodesian nationhood by many Rhodesians around the world. South Africa quickly turned from an anti-imperial neighbour viewed with suspicion to a friend in the fight against Zimbabwean liberation armies.

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21 Pimlott, The Queen, p. 348.


23 Pimlott, The Queen, p. 348.

and unfriendly world opinion, although the South African government, with an eye on realpolitik, never formally recognised the Rhodesian regime.

UDI even had an ironically comical side to it. Since there was no clear idea of precisely how Rhodesia would function as a totally separate entity, the Governor, Humphrey Gibbs, remained in situ. His life was made as awkward as possible by the RF. The telephone was disconnected, the police guard was withdrawn, rent demands even started appearing for Government House, and as a result Gibbs did not spend a single night away from his official residence between UDI and his resignation in 1969 in case the RF took advantage of the situation to lock him out. But on the other hand, for a while after UDI Ken Flower, the head of the CIO, reported to both Smith the Prime Minister and Gibbs the Governor, even though the two men were clearly in conflict.25

Certainly, the RF was not the first Rhodesian administration to entertain the possibility of a UDI. Federation had necessarily involved re-thinking the British government’s reserve powers, and although those powers remained in place until 1961, there was little in reality that the British could have done in the face of concerted settler opposition. Huggins had obliquely threatened a Federal UDI in the 1950s, referring to the complete control the settlers had over their armed forces and hoping that these forces would not be used the same way the American colonists used theirs.26 Welensky considered such a course of action in 1960, saying to the Federal Parliament ‘We go forward to the conference table in 1960 firmly believing that the achievements of Federation fully justify the granting of independence. Should we fail ... then it will be time to take stock and decide what other action is necessary. I personally would never be prepared to accept that the Rhodesians have less guts than the American colonists had’.27 What stopped Welensky at the time was the prospect of open coup d’état against the crown, one of the


cornerstones of Rhodesian identity, but also the more prosaic fact of the presence of British troops in Kenya and that the Governor of Northern Rhodesia, Arthur Benson, placed the 5,000 strong Northern Rhodesia police on alert, emphasising the presence of British police and civil servants outside Southern Rhodesia.\(^{28}\)

By 1965, however, ties with the two northern territories had been broken and the British government’s image in Rhodesian circles was so tarnished that a UDI could be contemplated. It is possible that this could have been avoided. The greatest asset Britain had was the threat of military force, as well as the loyalty of the Rhodesian forces to the Queen and the Queen Mother. But Harold Wilson declared a few days before UDI that ‘if there are those in this country who are thinking in terms of a thunderbolt, hurtling through the sky and destroying their enemy, a thunderbolt in the shape of the Royal Air Force, let me say that this thunderbolt will not be coming’.\(^{29}\) As a result, Wilson lost the initiative. In any case, when the Federation was dissolved Rhodesia inherited almost all the armed forces, including the hardware.\(^{30}\) This was a Cold War calculation, but it also gave the Rhodesian government the military confidence to go ahead with UDI. Welensky himself had mentioned in a meeting with President Kennedy that ‘whites are fighting for time now and will use violence to defend their basic interests’.\(^{31}\) Some people thought that a military confrontation with Rhodesia would be anathema to the British forces and public alike, using the ‘kith and kin’ argument.\(^{32}\) It is clear that the Labour Cabinet itself had been advised by the secret services that such a confrontation would be resisted by the


\(^{32}\) In fact, Douglas Hurd co-wrote a thriller about a coup d’état in Britain, Send Him Victorious, which had a Rhodesian military conflict as the catalyst.
Rhodesian forces, and that it could not be supported logistically through Tanzania and Zambia. On the other hand, Ken Flower was convinced that British officers took their oath of allegiance to the sovereign seriously enough to willingly use force against Rhodesia, and that Rhodesian commanders would not oppose force with force. Other people maintain that Britain could have stationed a detachment of troops in Salisbury in the early 1960s to act as a visible deterrent, and that the French, in contrast, would certainly have used force against a rebellious colony.

The story of the Zimbabwean liberation struggle is as well-known as that of UDI. Both those polarising events have since overshadowed the attempts to create a certain multiracial partnership. We should not forget the ‘chimera’ that was the Federation, and the atmosphere partnership encouraged which was as much in keeping with Rhodesian assumptions and identity as the ‘little white laager’, as it was out of step with the dominant currents of white settler politics in southern Africa.

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34 Flower, Serving Secretly, pp. 50-51.

35 Conversation with David Beach, 22 May 1995, Harare.
Appendix 1

Memoirs and autobiographies: a note on sources

As stated in the Introduction, Rhodesia was a widely researched society. It was also a society which produced a prodigious amount of biographical and autobiographical publications, for a variety of audiences at different times in the colony’s life. The sources for a considerable number of aspects of this thesis are autobiographical memoirs written by (and ghost-written for) the Rhodesian elite and people close to them. It is important to note the sheer number of such memoirs.

From the earliest days of Rhodesia, settlers wrote and often published their memoirs about how the colony was settled, pacified, and ultimately how it developed socially and politically. Specifically, Marshall Hole\(^1\) and Ethel Tawse Jollie\(^2\) provide a clear picture of a small, recently settled, colonial society. They also stress the British character of Rhodesia, with extremely pointed comparisons with Afrikaner-dominated (as they saw it) South Africa.

Overall, such a number of memoirs created the impression of a well-informed settler community, one with deep knowledge of its surroundings. This illustrates the emphasis placed on ‘the man on the spot’ and explains the importance Rhodesians attached to their supposedly superior knowledge of ‘their’ Africans as compared to metropolitan ignorance of the local situation. Significantly, the most important Rhodesian historical and ethnographic publication was NADA, the ‘bible’ of the Native Affairs Department, which was published once a year. Who better to write about Africans than Native Affairs Department officials, police, game rangers, or agricultural officers? Such a development helps explain the antiquarian tradition which rose in Rhodesian society, since the amateur scholarship of Rhodesian/Zimbabwean

\(^1\) H. Marshall Hole, *Old Rhodesian Days*.

history, anthropology and linguistics certainly helped the white appropriation of African history, symbols and land. Because Rhodesian intellectual circles were so small and so isolated from the wider world, there was a sense that intellectual skills were transferable, so someone like Michael Gelfand, who was a medical doctor, also wrote substantial texts on Shona religion and society, and co-authored a biography of Huggins. In effect, Rhodesians were staking a claim through their apparent expertise and intimate knowledge of their surroundings.

Additionally, if Rhodesians wished to legitimise their presence in central Africa and claim the loyalty not only of their own whites, but also that of the Africans, they needed a reason for being there in the first place. They also needed to counteract the youth of their country by creating an historical memory of Rhodesia as a separate entity, something which is apparent in the number of memoirs which appeared in the early days of the colony and again from the late 1960s, both times when the white population felt to itself to be under serious threat. This is important if we accept that the process of leaving the metropolis means ‘a colonial culture is one that has no memory. The discontinuities of colonial experience make it inevitable that this should be so’. The sheer number of Rhodesian novels and memoirs attest to such an insecurity. From the very start, Rhodesians were staking a claim on the colony and attempting to strengthen it with every passing year and watershed, and Federation was one such watershed. But Roy Welensky’s 4000 Days, ghost-written by the journalist John Connell, while the memoir of the highest-profile architect of Federation, contains little of use about the concept of partnership, and rather more about what Welensky saw as the British government’s duplicity in dismantling Federation after only a few years. It was little more than a retort to the British for the failure of Federation. It is striking, though, that the more measured memoirs of Federation, such as Tredgold’s The Rhodesia which was my life, are not especially concerned with British deception, or any overt threats to white hegemony. They were trying to defend what they


considered a fundamental decency in Rhodesia, as evidenced by the inclusive philosophy of partnership, in contrast to the segregationist RF government and the polarising event of UDI - so their audience, in reality, was not the nationalists, or even the British, but the RF. Greenfield’s *Testimony of a Rhodesian Federal* falls between the two, referring to ‘the British Government’s betrayal’ which discredited partnership while also calling the RF’s election victory ‘a disaster of the first magnitude’ which would ultimately ‘play into the hands of Russia’.

Of all the memoirs of the Rhodesian elite, Hardwicke Holderness’ *Lost Chance* is probably the best because of its sense of perspective, and unlike Welensky and to an extent Greenfield, he places the responsibility for the failure of partnership squarely on the Rhodesians themselves. Holderness had not only been a major participant in the debates on partnership, but he also left the country in disgust in the mid-1970s. *Lost Chance* seeks to rescue partnership from obscurity and opprobrium, stating - perhaps a little too strongly - the good intentions of the white elite and crediting them with more altruism than was the case. Importantly, Holderness’s analysis is also the only significant memoir of the white elite to be published after Zimbabwean independence, so it has a different audience. By 1985 it was clear how not only partnership, but settler rule in general, had failed, so Holderness’s audience was the new Zimbabwean government and his motive was an effort to revive the memory of partnership to show that not all whites sided with the RF and that the guerrilla war might have been avoided.

But settler memoirs did not need to be published to pass into posterity. As previously mentioned, the National Archives went to considerable lengths to collect manuscripts, photographs and interviews. By the 1970s, Rhodesia had been catalogued and preserved. Parallel to the work done by the National Archives, a number of Rhodesians deposited papers, manuscripts and memorabilia at the University of Cape Town and Rhodes House, Oxford. The

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6 The blurb on the back of *Lost Chance* describes the book as ‘evidence that there were whites worthy to be listed among the ancestral spirits of the new nation’.

biggest such collection is the enormous 900-box set of Welensky’s papers in Oxford, which Welensky gave to Oxford rather than the National Archives because he feared for its safety under the RF.\(^8\)

The next time after the early pioneer days where Rhodesia felt profoundly insecure came with UDI and its aftermath, and especially the guerrilla war. Significantly, in 1968 Books of Rhodesia started trading, and it aimed at a local and southern African market.\(^9\) It concentrated on reprinting old memoirs - such as Hole’s - and also modern autobiographies, such as Greenfield’s. The late 1960s onwards was a good time to publish books on Rhodesia for largely domestic consumption. The colony had just declared UDI, forcing the issue of the Rhodesian identity and its place in the world. By 1972 Rhodesia was quite clearly at war with its own people, and not long after that in 1976 Ian Smith was forced to concede the principle of majority rule. But UDI and the liberation war were watersheds in Rhodesian identity, and the character of the books published during that time attests to this.

Within Rhodesia itself in the late 1970s and in the diaspora after Independence, nostalgia for the old days manifested itself in the profusion of books which were published, and many were reviewed by a University of Zimbabwe history lecturer, Ray Roberts, in the university’s journal *Zambezia*. A few of these books appeared in the Books of Rhodesia series, and at first concerned lawyers-turned-politicians,\(^10\) while studiously avoiding the country’s new leaders. Books of Rhodesia also produced reprints of a few lightweight volumes on white schools, pioneer reminiscences, philately, a who’s who of Rhodesian sport and early figures in Rhodesian history such as Thomas Baines. These were useful markers for the strength of

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9 Books of Rhodesia still exists, now renamed Books of Zimbabwe and based in a small town in KwaZulu Natal, but still selling such reprints. In its own small way, it is helping keep alive the memory of Rhodesia.

Rhodesian identity. After all, the country was changing rapidly, and it seemed as though such books were clinging to the past, reluctant to let it go or let its readers forget the origins of the country and system which had given them such a pleasant lifestyle. Roberts also reviewed the multitude of coffee-table books which appeared during the war in the 1970s. Their collectable value increased as the publishers also brought out deluxe leatherbound editions, implying that the books were for collection rather than actual reading. Among those coffee-table books were many which concerned themes discussed in Chapter 1: the connection with the landscape, martial prowess, and the frontier days. There were even books of architectural plans and aerial survey maps. The sheer abundance of such books suggests people whose identity was tied to a country which would soon not be theirs, and who wished to create as many mementoes of it as possible. It is indicative of this that editions of a few books soon changed hands for the then high price of ZS300-400. It was as if Rhodesians were desperate to chronicle their country and their view of its history before it disappeared.

The variety of sources for Rhodesian history has been advantageous for the researcher, since there is no shortage of material dealing with settler society. It is as well to also keep in mind the various audiences these memoirs, books, articles and sundry writings were composed for, since this way one adds a dimension to the understanding of settler history in this part of


12 For example, B. Whyte, Beneath a Rhodesian Sky (Salisbury, Graham Publishing, 1972). This book contained photographs of Rhodesian scenery without a single one of Great Zimbabwe whose origins were still referred to as ‘mysterious’ and ‘a riddle’. It was as if it had been recognised that Great Zimbabwe now ‘belonged’ to the nationalists even though the Zimbabwe bird was also used in the Rhodesian coat of arms. The book went through seven impressions.

13 D.J. Laird and S.T. Darke, Uniforms of the Security Forces of Rhodesia (Salisbury, Musketeer Press, 1979). This book was bound in elephant hide and brass, and only 515 copies were produced to maintain its value. Other books included P. Badcock, The Shadows of War (Salisbury, Galaxie, 1978) and P.L. Moorcraft, Contact II: Struggle for Peace (Johannesburg, Sygma Books, 1981). The latter was described on the dust cover as a poignant reminder of Rhodesia’s ‘brave and noble heritage ... [a] book [that will] proudly recall Rhodesia’s struggle for peace’.
Africa, and explores the nuances and subtleties which too often are ignored in the study of a small society.
Appendix 2

Dramatis Personae

The white elite discussed in this thesis was small in number, and so its members’ personal and professional relationships with one another were of more immediate relevance than would be the case in a larger country. Many had shared experience of education in South Africa or Britain, and of war service. Moreover, they frequently belonged to the same, or related, industrial, commercial or farming organisations, as well as sometimes being parliamentary colleagues. This appendix, briefly setting out their biographical details, is useful in tracing such interconnections.

Details were gleaned from a wide variety of sources, although the Southern Africa Who’s Who of 1959\(^1\) and the Rhodesia Who’s Who of 1966\(^2\) were especially useful. Interestingly, but not surprisingly, not a single African appears in the Southern Rhodesia or Federation sections, despite their growing presence in parliament, government, journalism, etc. Such omission betrays their place in the Rhodesian mindset separate from any public role they might play.

Below follow brief biographical descriptions of the main individuals in this thesis, as well as a few others which might have appeared only once or twice. The aim is to convey in a compact space thumbnail sketches of the kinds of people who were members of the elite and who played a role in the discussion, formulation and execution of partnership.

Abe Abrahamson
Born in Southern Rhodesia in 1922. Fought in Southern Rhodesian forces in World War II, and educated at the University of Cape Town (UCT). Became MP in the Southern Rhodesian legislature in 1954 for the URP. President of the Bulawayo Chamber of Industries from 1951-53. President of the Jewish Board of Deputies. President of the Federation of Rhodesian

\(^1\) Who’s Who of Southern Africa 1959 (Johannesburg, Ken Donaldson (Pty.) Ltd., 1959).

\(^2\) Who’s Who of Rhodesia, Mauritius, Central and East Africa (Johannesburg, Combined Publishers (Pty.) Ltd., 1966.)
Industries, and first President of ARNI in 1957.

Walter Adams

Malcolm Barrow
Born in the UK in 1900, emigrated to Nyasaland in 1927. Owned tea plantation. Unofficial member of the Nyasaland Legislative Council until 1953, then Federal MP and Federal Minister for Home Affairs.

T.H.W. Beadle

Thomas Chegwidden
Born in the UK in 1895, migrated to Southern Rhodesia in 1947 to head the Public Services Board and Police Advisory Board. Chairman of the Interim Federal Public Service Commission. Civil servant and company director. President of ARNI 1958. Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the UFP’s Build a Nation Campaign in 1961-62.

David Cole
Born in Sheffield and emigrated in 1948 to join the Johannesburg Star. Moved to Northern Rhodesia in 1949 to become representative for the RP&P. When the RP&P took over the Northern News, in which Welensky had shares, Cole became editor. Appointed editor of the Chronicle in 1954. Became a public relations consultant to Ronald Prain, through whom he became Managing Director of the Central African Examiner. On leaving the Chronicle, he became a full-time independent PR consultant in Salisbury. He left Rhodesia suddenly in 1963, for reasons which are unclear.³

Sir Charles Cumings
Born in Southern Rhodesia, he returned home having served as the Chief Justice of the Sudan. Succeeded Ellis Robins as the BSAC’s Resident Director in Salisbury.

Geoffrey Ellman-Brown

³ Most of the information on Cole from Rhodes House MSS.Afr.s.2152, R.H. Hobson, ‘The Last Gasp. A note on the attempt to save the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland by means of a public relations campaign’, unpub. MS.
Dennis Etheredge
Born in Durban in 1921. Came to Southern Rhodesia in 1955 as Assistant Manager of Anglo
American in Southern Rhodesia, and later became PR consultant to Anglo American. Moved to
Anglo American’s Lusaka office in 1963.

Julian Greenfield
Born in South Africa in 1907. Came to Southern Rhodesia as an infant. Educated at UCT and
Oxford (Rhodes Scholar). Called to the bar at Grays Inn, London, and became Advocate in
Salisbury in 1933, QC in 1949. MP from 1948. Southern Rhodesia Minister of Justice and

Edward Harben
Born in Surrey in 1901. Educated at Eton and Royal College of Science. Emigrated to Southern
Rhodesia in 1922. Tobacco farmer, on the Southern Rhodesia Tobacco Marketing Board. Listed
as his recreations as ‘cricket, politics’.

Cyril Hatty
Born in the UK in 1908, emigrated to Southern Rhodesia in 1948. Member of the Bulawayo
Chamber of Industries. Southern Rhodesia MP and Minister of the Treasury and Mines in
Southern Rhodesia 1954-62. For a time in the 1980s he was Minister of Finance in
Bophuthatswana.

L.M.N. Hodson
Born in Natal, and migrated to Southern Rhodesia as a child in 1911. Educated at Prince
Edward School and Wits University. Employed first by the civil service in Rhodesia, then in
private practice as an advocate; became QC in 1943, and later made leader of the Southern
Rhodesian Bar. Elected to Salisbury City Council twice. Served in the war as a legal officer in
North Africa. In 1945 he initiated a movement to create a university in Southern Rhodesia.
Southern Rhodesia MP from 1946 to 1954, and Federal MP from 1954 to 1962.

Hardwicke Holderness
Born in Salisbury in 1915. Educated at Rhodes University and Oxford (Rhodes Scholar). Served
in RAF during World War II, and thereafter worked as a lawyer in Salisbury. Co-founder of the
NAA and IASR. MP for Todd’s United Rhodesia Party 1954-58, and followed Todd after the
latter’s ousting from power. Left Rhodesia in 1975 in protest to UDI and the war.

Godfrey Huggins
Born in the UK in 1883, qualified as a doctor and emigrated to Southern Rhodesia in 1911. MP
Director of the BSAC.

Steve Kock
Southern Rhodesia in 1952. Manager of Africair (Rhodesia) 1953-59. Member of the Planning
Commission of the Industrial Development Corporation of Rhodesia.

Donald Macintyre
Born in Glasgow in 1891. Emigrated to South Africa in 1915. Federal MP and Federal Minister
of Finance 1953 onwards.

**Harry Oppenheimer**

**Frank Owen**

**Cedric Paver**

**Ronald Prain**
Born in Chile in 1907. Educated at Cheltenham College. Involved with enormous number of interconnected mining companies. Came to Southern Rhodesia in 1953 as Chairman of RST.

**Harry Reedman**

**Ellis Robins**

**Muriel Rosin**
Born in London. Educated in England and Switzerland. Emigrated to Southern Rhodesia in 1932. Involved in a variety of committees with philanthropic or Jewish tendency, also the University Inauguration Board. Southern Rhodesia MP 1954-58, Federal MP 1958-63.

**Jasper Savanhu**
Born in Southern Rhodesia, Savanhu started his career in journalism, working for Cedric Paver’s African Newspapers group, rising to Chief Editor in 1951. He was a member of the SRANC, and was later in the delegation which went to London in April 1952 for the federation talks. He was the most prominent of the African Federal MPs, and an important guest at multiracial functions throughout the 1950s. He was also the first (and only) African elevated to ministerial level during Federation. He resigned in 1961, disturbed by the slow progress of partnership.

**Garfield Todd**
Robert Tredgold

Roy Welensky

Edgar Whitehead

N.H. Wilson
Born in Suffolk in 1886. Migrated to Southern Rhodesia in 1906 and was in the BSAP until 1910, when he joined the Native Department until 1923. Secretary to the Minister of Lands and Agriculture until retirement in 1924. Founded NADA in 1923, also editor of New Rhodesia. Co-founder and General Secretary of the Southern Rhodesia Public Services’ Association in 1919. Took up journalism in 1929 and elected Chairman of the Progressive Party, which after amalgamation with the Country Party formed the Reform Party. He also founded the White Rhodesia Association and was secretary from 1929 to 1932. Became an MP for the Reform Party in 1933. Co-founder of Capricorn and chairman of its African Affairs Committee, but resigned in 1954, and founded the Southern Rhodesia Association in 1957. Died 1960.4

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4 NADA, 38, 1961, p. 104.
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The classification groups of files below is not a complete list of those consulted, and is intended as a guide only. Individual files are in the footnotes.

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ORAL/GR2 Sir Julian Greenfield
ORAL/GR6 Capt. N. Greenslade
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ORAL/HO5 L.M.N. Hodson
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