

Britain, Northern Rhodesia and the First World War

Forgotten Colonial Crisis

Edmund James Yorke



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Britain, Northern Rhodesia and the First World War

Forgotten Colonial Crisis

Edmund James Yorke

Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst, UK

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*Dedicated to all those people, civilian and military, who
perished on the German East Africa Front during the Great War
and, on the Western Front, to my grandfather, Percy Albert
Yorke, of the 13th London ('Kensington') Regiment who lost his
leg to shellfire in the Ypres salient and to my step-grandfather,
John Walter Collins of the Machine Gun Corps, who was
severely gassed and wounded during the battle of the Somme.*

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Foreword

Until very recently the history of the First World War in Africa, if it was told at all, focused on Paul von Lettow-Vorbeck and his selective account of the German campaign in East Africa which he commanded. He described how he had led British forces in a merry dance from Kenya and Uganda to Mozambique and Rhodesia. Africa was there to provide colour to a war which it so conspicuously lacked in Europe. The fates of Africans themselves were scarcely addressed and the use of Africa as a European battleground was rendered as a military strategy rather than a human catastrophe. Edmund Yorke's *Forgotten Colonial Crisis* exposes the reality, showing just how narrowly focused, self-serving and misleading are Lettow-Vorbeck's memoirs, and all the books shaped by them.

The ideas of 'total war' may have been developed on the back of the First World War in Europe, but this book shows how relevant many were to the war outside Europe. Fragile rural economies were made to sustain a four-year campaign. Their most important input, labour, was conscripted for the purposes of the war, as porters carried food and munitions hundreds of miles in order to sustain the troops in the field. In Europe stalemate became synonymous with the war's terrors; in Africa mobility multiplied the demand for manpower and spread the devastation. And because the carriers were on the line of march, they were not in their homes and engaged in the more productive business of cultivation. Any economic benefits which had accrued to East Africa and its adjacent territories before 1914 were wiped out by 1919.

In 1916 Northern Rhodesia provided the base for the British invasion of German East Africa (then Tanganyika and today's Tanzania) from the south-west – just as Kenya did from the north. Under the command of Brigadier General Edward Northey, troops of the King's African Rifles crossed into southern Tanzania, territory that had been barely touched by German rule. War therefore became the motor of imperialism, opening up hitherto unpenetrated areas of equatorial Africa to the realities of British and German colonisation. But it also undermined empire, as farmers and settlers, as well as police and colonial administrators, were sucked out of Africa's more developed areas. Northern Rhodesia was one of these. By 1918 the indirect consequences of war confronted it with crisis. At the end of the year Lettow-Vorbeck himself burst into this

volatile mix. He finally surrendered on 25 November, two weeks after the German armistice in Europe.

Edmund Yorke weaves together economic, imperial and military history to show the impact of war in ways that each in isolation cannot begin to convey. He provides context and illumination from one to the others. Here in microcosm is a case study of the effects of 'total' and protracted warfare. It gives pause for thought – in relation not just to our understanding of the First World War but also to conflict more generally in sub-Saharan Africa.

Hew Strachan
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Acknowledgements

As primarily a study of colonial policy and local response with an emphasis on official policy, the bulk of research for this book was originally conducted within the government archives of Great Britain and Zambia, notably the National Archives, Kew (formerly the Public Record Office) and the National Archives of Zambia, housed in Lusaka. In addition, extensive use was made of private papers and mission archives located mainly in Britain and Italy. Oral history research, focused on a few of the last surviving African veterans of the Great War, was also carried out in a selected number of villages located in a primary First World War recruiting area, the Ngoni and Chewa villages of the Eastern Province of Zambia.

Over the past three decades many individuals and institutions have contributed to the evolution of this book. The Department of Education and Science, the Cambridge University 'Smuts Memorial Fund' and my old college, Pembroke College, provided essential and generous financial assistance for research conducted both in Britain and overseas. I also wish to thank the ever-hospitable staff of the Rhodes House Library, Oxford University, the National Archives, Kew, the Wiltshire County Record Office and the National Archives of Zambia for valuable assistance afforded during the search for source materials. The custodians of both the High Commissioner Lord Buxton and BSAC Director Philip Lyttelton Gell Papers kindly granted me access to their vast private collections. Dr Robin Palmer and Professors L. H. Gann and Andrew Roberts provided great academic advice during the early stages of this research and I will never forget my several memorable, academically stimulating and highly productive meetings conducted in a snow-covered Balliol College (interspersed with teas and room cricket!) with the late Beit Professor of Imperial History, Ronald Robinson during the bitter winter months of early 1979.

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Preface

As Professor Bill Nasson recently observed in the *Cambridge History of the First World War*, 'the volume of writing about Africa and 1914–18 remains comparatively modest'. This book will hopefully fill one substantial gap by analysing the impact of a total war, the First World War, upon one colonial African political economy, that of Northern Rhodesia. It will demonstrate how escalating imperial war demands overwhelmed the political, social and economic fabric of this immensely fragile and embryonic colonial state. The war ended in a full-scale crisis of colonial control.

Northern Rhodesia, at the outbreak of war, represented a uniquely grossly underdeveloped British colonial state, a social and economic backwater, undercapitalised and insecure within its own political boundaries and, until as late as 1912, severely neglected by the ruling administrative authority, the British South Africa Company (BSAC). By 1914, even the process of colonial conquest, of political subjugation, was by no means complete; substantial areas of the Territory remained deeply hostile to Company hegemony. Company investment policies, almost totally concentrated upon her rapidly expanding sister-state, Southern Rhodesia, combined with potent environmental barriers to ensure limited European settlement; white mining and agricultural sectors remained embryonic. This lack of white enterprise facilitated (again in stark contrast to Southern Rhodesia) the survival, even expansion, of large cohesive bodies of African peasantry, successfully producing for and competing in the domestic market. Such powerful political and economic constraints also meant that even Northern Rhodesia's main economic purpose, to serve as a labour reservoir for the agricultural and mining industries south of the Zambesi River, was severely compromised; by 1914 her labour resources were significantly underexploited and large groups of Africans remained resistant to sustained participation in the Central African labour economy.

The advent of the First World War dramatically changed all this. It called for unprecedented exploitation of African food and labour resources and it exercised an ultimately unacceptable strain upon the political institutions of such a fragile colonial state. This process is the principal concern of this book. It can be summed up in one crucial question: How did such an avowedly enervated colonial state, despite such

heavy politico-economic stress, survive for over three years before crisis and, eventually, partial collapse overtook it?

By way of answer this book adopts two intrinsically related modes of analysis. Firstly, the growing political strain is examined in terms of the changing perspectives of political officers at all levels of the colonial state. These range from the highest level, the Colonial Office in London, down to the basic ground-level agencies of colonial control, the district *boma* and its African allies. The latter is a particular area of focus as it was the political survival of traditional authorities, chiefs and headmen, as colonial mediators or communicators, which ultimately determined the success of wartime food and labour requisitions, and upon whom the system of colonial control ultimately rested. Secondly, in relation to this perceived strain on Northern Rhodesia's political system, changes of policy designed to prop it up in face of growing indigenous resistance to wartime food and labour demands are clearly distinguished.

These two interrelated themes are pursued within a broad time frame. In order to explain the continued survival of the state it is essential to divide the war period into two distinct phases. These imposed markedly different levels of strain, which, to a large extent, explain how the colonial state not only survived but maintained African food and labour supplies for so long before succumbing to crisis. The first phase was one of limited strain. Before General Northey's offensive of early 1916, it will be shown how demands were haphazard and tolerable and indigenous resistance accordingly low. Thereafter, there was a period of intense strain, of truly 'total war', when maximum exploitation of African food and labour resources occurred and when the reciprocal scale of passive resistance reached uncontrollable levels, culminating in a full-blown crisis of colonial control.

During the primary phase, in almost two years of war before Northey's great offensive from Northern Rhodesia into German East Africa, the colonial authorities were able, if with great difficulty, both to maintain internal order and to successfully exploit existing African food and manpower resources. This is explained in terms of three important variables. First and foremost, this initial resilience is accounted for by the widespread African willingness to volunteer food and labour as a means of private profit and, because such demands remained geographically and quantitatively limited, it will be shown that severe pressure was largely confined to the three districts closest to the north-east border, while carrier pay and conditions remained attractive and akin to peacetime. Secondly, the institutional strengths and greater degree of market participation of those martial tribal groups most favoured by the colonial authorities for war labour recruitment, notably the Bemba

and Ngoni group, are identified as further factors to explain this initial resilience. Finally, the enormous expansion of colonial, political and coercive support accorded to traditional authority as a whole as the main pillar of the colonial state in wartime is stressed.

Northey's offensive into German East Africa in 1916 marked the decisive watershed in the political fortunes of this colonial state. It will be shown how, as Northey's communication and logistical lines inevitably extended and his supply needs massively multiplied, and as carrier conditions severely deteriorated, the scale of African resistance concomitantly magnified, particularly as the BSAC authorities in Livingstone were compelled to open up new and often less reliable food and labour regions. The ruthlessness of these policies is illustrated by the forced deployment, by the always profit-orientated BSAC, of large quantities of raw Lozi labour recruits from Barotseland to the Katanga Mines, in order to compensate for the loss of north-eastern recruits to the war effort, a policy which resulted in the deaths of hundreds if not thousands of Lozi males. These policies, in turn, caused fresh, often impossible strains upon the political position of traditional African elites, particularly within acephalous societies. Their growing political dilemma is a primary focus of this book.

During this second phase of intense strain, it will be shown how the 'politics of survival' began to dominate the colonial state's response to the deteriorating conditions of control at ground level. Largely futile attempts to buttress the legal position of traditional elites are highlighted, notably the widespread deployment of newer supportive agencies, notably divisional headmen. They soon proved inadequate in preventing the vilification and isolation of many chiefs and headmen as oppressors and exploiters. This internal political stress is graphically illustrated by the increasingly bitter conflicts erupting between the civil and military authorities over the latter's abuse of carrier service conditions. The acute vacuum of colonial power created by Northey's advance, which effectively deprived the Territory of the bulk of its existing police forces, is also illustrated both by the prevailing Company paranoia and its weak defensive response to the anti-colonial Makombe Rising in neighbouring Portuguese Mozambique and by its increasing loss of labour control on the north-east Plateau and parts of the north-west.

By October 1917 it is observed how official recognition of the internal crisis caused urgent BSAC appeals for imperial support for a relief scheme, designed to redress the growing war-inspired social unrest. During the ensuing twelve months the 'politics of crisis' at the highest political levels is analysed, as both the BSAC and the Colonial Office

united to force a recalcitrant War Office to underwrite the scheme. During these critical months, it is contended that internal collapse was only narrowly averted by the continued and disproportionate reliance upon the more politically cohesive, reliable and malleable tribal groups, namely the Lozi, Bemba and Ngoni, and secondly, by a temporary respite from labour and food demands as Northey's columns disappeared deep into strategically remote Portuguese East Africa. With the renewal of intense food and labour demands by mid-1918, it is shown how a major, official 'emergency' tour of the north-east and north-west districts exposed the imminent breakdown of the chain of war labour recruitment, even within the authority structure of the most reliable Bemba tribal group. This incipient collapse is matched by the government's inability to prevent widespread political decentralisation as many famine-stricken African villages scattered to remote illegal *mitanda* or garden settlements so as to increase local food supply or evade military labour levies. In September 1918, after the High Commissioner's stark warning of imminent disaster and continued War Office obduracy, a desperate Colonial Office was forced to intervene directly in a bid to de-escalate the crisis by implementing a virtually unprecedented ban on compulsory African war labour recruitment within Northern Rhodesia. The gravity of this colonial crisis is thus strikingly revealed by this de facto suspension of Northern Rhodesia's support for the imperial war effort. No other British Colonial Territory had experienced such a level of crisis.

It will be pointed out, however, that such drastic action by no means cured this underlying crisis of white authority. The totally unexpected German invasion of Northern Rhodesia a few weeks later revealed just how rotten the structures of British authority had become. Colonial control completely collapsed across much of the north-east Plateau in a maelstrom of chaos and lawlessness. The rapid emergence of an active and intrinsically anti-war Watchtower movement in the closing months of the conflict represented the apotheosis of this wartime political crisis. This conclusion is substantiated by the movement's close relationship to wartime repression, its attraction for ex-military *tenga-tenga* (carriers/porters) and *askari* (troops), its total rejection of the repressive authoritarianism of both the *boma* and its wartime allies, the traditional elites, and the establishment of a power-base in those border districts which had suffered most from excessive military demands and social unrest. British authority, it will be demonstrated, was saved only by the fortuitous arrival of the Armistice.

Acronyms and Abbreviations

Admr	Administrator (of Northern Rhodesia)
AM	Assistant Magistrate
ANC	Assistant Native Commissioner
BP	Buxton Papers
BSAC	British South Africa Company
BSAP	British South Africa Police
CCWM	Congregational Council for World Missions
CG	Commandant-General
CO	Colonial Office
DC	District Commissioner
District Circ.	District Circular
DNB	District Notebook
DoA	Department of Agriculture
DoM	Department of Mines
DoNA	Department of Native Affairs
GOC	General Officer Commanding
GP	Gell Papers
HC	High Commissioner
HCP	Hughes Chamberlain Papers
HM	Historical Manuscripts
IRNK	Inspector or Rhodesian Natives, Katanga
IS	Imperial Secretary, Cape Town
KAR	Kings African Rifles
LACA	Lusaka Cathedral Archives
LMS	London Missionary Society
LP	Long Papers
NAZ	National Archives of Zambia
NC	Native Commissioner
NERACA	North-East Rhodesia Agricultural and Commercial Association
NRP	Northern Rhodesia Police
NRR	Northern Rhodesia Rifles
NWRFA	North-West Rhodesia Farmers Association
OC	Officer Commanding
PMS	Primitive Methodist Society
RC	Resident Commissioner

RHL	Rhodes House Library, Oxford
RNLB	Rhodesia Native Labour Bureau
R.W. & Co.	Robert Williams and Company
SLA	Secretary, Livingstone Administration
SNA	Secretary for Native Affairs
SOAS	School of Oriental and African Studies
SoS	Secretary of State
UMCA	Universities Mission to Central Africa
USoS	Under-Secretary of State
VC	Visiting Commissioner
WFA	White Fathers Archives, Vatican, Rome
WMS	Wesleyan Methodist Society
WO	War Office

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Pre-War Northern Rhodesia: The Structural Weaknesses of Colonial Control

The political overlords and problems of policy formulation: the BSAC and Northern Rhodesia – commercial estate or settler colony?

In 1911 two contemporary observers, both BSAC employees, commenting upon the politico-economic development of the north-east Rhodesian Plateau, were forced to admit to its state of stagnation as a 'colossal Might-Have-Been [...] of gloomy unproductiveness'.¹ It was a description applicable to other substantial areas of the Territory before the outbreak of the First World War. Moreover, the lack of development reflected very much the region's anomalous position as a declining asset of a profit-orientated commercial company. Once the political hegemony of the British South Africa Company had been finally established north of Zambesi, albeit precariously so, with the crushing defeat of Mpeseni's Ngoni *impis* in 1898, the BSAC Directors based in London Wall Street, London, were confronted by the pressing problem of how best to develop such a vast expanse exhibiting, apparently, severely limited commercial potential.

In terms of lucrative mineral development, for instance, prospects seemed patently discouraging compared to the expanding resources of Northern Rhodesia's sister-state, south of the Zambesi. By 1914, after nearly a decade of copper mining, the two principal mines situated at Kansanshi and Bwana M'kubwa had produced only £268,544 worth of copper but at minimal profit and great production cost.² Zinc, another important mineral produced, was valued at only £85,000 for the same period. The gold and silver output for the year 1913–14 represented a mere £900 in value and was described as 'very small'.³ Output fluctuated wildly, the scattered mines being frequently closed down and

reopened as production costs mounted or labour difficulties arose. Such was the lack of political interest in mineral exploitation that a Mining Proclamation was not promulgated until 1912, specifically encouraging prospecting in selected areas of the Territory, notably the East Luangwa District. Thus, in 1910, the Company confirmed to the North Charterland Exploration Company that, as a result of the Government notices of 15 February 1907 and 29 January 1910, 'a prospector has no rights at all in Northern Rhodesia', but that 'A Mining Law for Northern Rhodesia has now been drafted which, it is hoped, will be put into force at an early date when prospecting will be recommended and mining allowed'.⁴

Similarly, from London Wall's perspective, the potential for white settlement and consequently for commercial agricultural development seemed restricted. The tsetse fly problem, 'discovered' in 1907 and pervading large tracts of north-east and north-west Rhodesia, had emerged as a potent barrier to extensive white settlement particularly in respect of the north-east Plateau. Reviewing the Company's land assets in 1912, H. Wilson Fox, the Company's commercial manager, while observing that BSAC land holdings in Rhodesia were 'prima facie far greater than in Southern Rhodesia', nevertheless pointed out that as land 'infested by tsetse fly is in the present state of knowledge useless for settlement or stock-raising, a serious deduction has to be made from the land at present available for these purposes'. Its effect was to reduce available land totalling 141.6 million by 75.6 million acres to just 66 million acres.⁵

From the prevailing Company viewpoint therefore, until at least 1912, and, in some quarters for the whole of the pre-war period, Northern Rhodesia represented a pauperised extension of her mineral-rich and relatively tsetse-free Southern Rhodesian neighbour. Her role was designated as merely that of a client state, feeding the increasingly rapacious mine and farm labour demands south of the Zambesi, and more recently, west of the Luapula River. Moreover, it was to be an area of exploitation but at minimum extractive cost. In Wilson Fox's own much quoted words: 'The problem of northern Rhodesia is not a colonisation problem. It is [...] the problem of how best to develop a great estate on scientific lines so that it may yield the maximum profit to the owner'.⁶ Southern Rhodesia remained the primary focus for development. As Wilson Fox put it: 'My inclination [...] would be to postpone action in the North if to take it would mean reduction of the programme for the South'.⁷

It was not until as late as 1912 that this prevailing policy strategy was seriously challenged at London Wall. Among the Directors, the principal

advocate of a new revised policy towards the north was H. Birchenough whose report (based on favourable impressions gained on a recent visit to white farming areas in the north-west), severely criticised the previous decade and a half of neglect. In regard to land settlement, the 'pressing problem', he openly admitted was that 'we have not had any clear idea in London during the past few years of what was going on north of the Zambesi'. Such was London Wall ignorance that, 'we have had no map in London showing the position and extent of alienated land nor have we known of the number or quality of the settlers in occupation of farms'. He argued that, in view of the significant influx of white settlers during the past five years and the proven success of cattle-raising in parts of north-west Rhodesia, the Territory could no longer be perceived as 'a sort of "terra clausa" which could be held in reserve in case we sold our interests in Southern Rhodesia "lock, stock and barrel" and retained the north [...] the time has clearly gone by when we could deal with the north in this way'. Birchenough stressed: 'The events of the last three or four years have made it impossible to "lock up" the territory in any sense [...] too many people have already come in for us to say we wish to discourage settlement altogether'. This, he postulated, would involve an initial heavy financial commitment: 'At present our administration is in the main a native administration and to adapt it to a white community means large added expenditure'; but, he argued, 'the increase of administrative expenditure would be out of all proportion to the increase of revenue that would immediately accrue'. Birchenough concluded: 'We have, perhaps, inadvertently passed the parting of the ways where the choice between opening up the country to settlers or closing against them was open to us. We *must* now go on placing settlers on the land.'⁸

Within a year Birchenough's northern policy initiative had attracted the support of a powerful ally. In 1913, L. S. Jameson, President of the Board of Directors, spoke at a rally in Southern Rhodesia in which he stressed the necessity of expanding white settlement in the north.⁹ Although H. Wilson Fox remained sceptical of the proposals, by December 1914 a firm commitment to development in Northern Rhodesia had belatedly emerged in the Company's Rhodesian policy. In a speech to shareholders, Jameson described the recent change of policy during the previous two years, a period in which, he pointed out, the number of white settlers in Northern Rhodesia had almost doubled from 1,500 to 2,500:

Up to within a few years past we really looked upon Northern Rhodesia as an estate to be developed in the interests of shareholders

and merely that, but now we have got to take a different view [...] we now find that we have come to a stage when it has to be treated as a growing-up white community which is going to have its requirements and is going to demand these requirements.¹⁰

The escalating administrative deficit,¹¹ the outbreak of war and the protracted negotiations concerning the political future of both Rhodesias, overshadowed this significant policy shift. Consequently, no actual development programme regarding the expansion of white settlement in Northern Rhodesia ever emerged after 1914 and the Territory remained unchanged in real terms as a cheap, black labour-reservoir for the south and west. Nevertheless, the markedly more positive Company attitude towards the colonisation of Northern Rhodesia was, as we shall see, to be a significant reinforcement to the politico-economic position of the white settler community during much of the ensuing war period.

The imperial perspective: the great dilemma

In December 1914, L. S. Jameson bluntly informed a shareholder's meeting:

We are not 'persona grata' with the Colonial Authorities. I do not know why. The only reason, which comes to my mind is that they know that we are doing the work which they ought to have done themselves. It is only human nature; we know that you are much more severe on those who benefit you than on those you have conferred benefits upon.¹²

Jameson's comments summed up the profound ambiguity of the pre-war Company-imperial relationship. The *raison d'être* of the grant of the BSAC Charter in 1889 had been to secure imperial strategic interests primarily north of the Limpopo and ultimately, north of the Zambesi rivers at minimum cost to the British Treasury. During the subsequent two and a half decades the Company, as administering authority over both territories, had proved a creditable servant of this aspect of the imperial cause. By 1914 British supremacy in the Central African area had been adequately safeguarded.¹³

Imperial gratitude for the Company's valuable imperial service, however, obviously engendered serious implications for the successful operation of concepts of 'Trust' policy.¹⁴ 'In delegating administrative authority to the Company and refusing to reassume it, the Colonial

Office also delegated the power to give full effect to [...] Trust duties'.¹⁵ Acceptance of the Company's political hegemony in the area meant inevitable acceptance of much of the Company's ruthless economic policies underpinning its own long-term commercial viability. The dilemma became acute when such policies involved the expanding extraction of cheap African labour through political mechanisms such as hut tax, in order to secure the profitability of the mining and farming interests of Southern Rhodesia.

In the case of the South, the imperial guardians of African welfare could at least devolve responsibility for the Trusteeship 'burden' upon a significant white polity acting politically in concert (albeit often antagonistically) with the Company government, a strategy that 'salved English consciences without cribbing the exercise of white supremacy'.¹⁶ North of the Zambesi, however, with a Territory incorporating, by 1914, a mere 2,500 white settlers and well over 800,000 Africans, the realities of trusteeship were more uncomfortably obvious. In Northern Rhodesia 'there was no white representative body to provide a cover for imperial inaction'.¹⁷ From the very beginning, the northern Territory was identified as a black man's country to which white settlement was purely peripheral. Successive High Commissioners had confirmed this. In 1899 Milner had argued that the Zambesi was 'the natural boundary of what would one day be a self-governing British Africa. The North [...] must ultimately become a black imperial dependency, like Uganda or Nigeria'.¹⁸ Selbourne similarly ruled out the possibilities for large scale white settlement and Gladstone had gone so far as to suggest buying out the Company north of the Zambesi although Harcourt, the Colonial Secretary, had suppressed the idea for fear of prejudicing the possible political claims of the Union of South Africa.

Moreover, the Colonial Office's political commitments to the Territory as a whole were far more pronounced than in Southern Rhodesia. The imperial authorities retained special obligations to the maintenance of Barotseland's political status resembling that of a black protectorate with a significant degree of autonomy from Company rule.¹⁹ Until 1911, moreover, north-west Rhodesia remained under the direct responsibility of the High Commissioner in South Africa.

Nevertheless, by 1914 imperial control over Northern Rhodesia did exhibit important structural weaknesses. The extent of the Company's misrule, as revealed to the imperial authorities during the aftermath of the 1896-7 rebellions and the earlier Jameson Raid, resulted in an apparently major reassertion of imperial control over both Rhodesias. The 1898 Southern Rhodesian Order-in-Council theoretically 'established an

extensive series of Imperial controls over legislative and administrative action by the Company'.²⁰ Local imperial control was to rest primarily upon two local posts, that of the Commandant-General who would control military and police forces, and more importantly, a Resident Commissioner to act as a 'political watch-dog' for the imperial authorities. 'Such an officer', wrote Milner 'would be distinctly our man, not the Company's tool, and [...] while getting on with them will be the "eyes and ears" of the High Commissioner and of H M's Government'.²¹

In the case of Northern Rhodesia, however, the Resident Commissioner, based in Salisbury, remained physically very remote from the policy-making of the local Livingstone executive. The even greater remoteness of the High Commissioner based in South Africa added to the problems of effective imperial scrutiny. In other ways, imperial control could be circumvented. The Supplemental Charter, for instance, provided that within eight days copies of all resolutions, minutes, orders or proceedings of the Board of Directors which related to the administration of the Company's territories were to be sent to the Secretary of State who would have the right to cancel, suspend or amend any decision. Nevertheless, the Company was able to evade this by making use of private correspondence between officials and members of the Board. Furthermore, correspondence of a political nature could often be placed under a heading of 'commercial', thereby escaping imperial scrutiny.

Theoretically, however, at the time of amalgamation of north-east and north-west Rhodesia, the imperial authorities could have rectified some of these weaknesses. Clause eight of the Northern Rhodesian Order-in-Council, for instance, promulgated in August 1911, stated that: 'A Secretary of State may, if and when he should think fit, appoint an officer who shall be called the Resident Commissioner.'²² In fact, no appointment of a Resident Commissioner in Livingstone was ever made, chiefly on the grounds of economy. Indeed, H. Wilson Fox perhaps understandably recognised the 1911 Order-in-Council as a significant political gain for the Company over their imperial masters; the Order, as a whole, was a 'highly satisfactory document'. Direct imperial control of north-western Rhodesia had been rescinded on amalgamation and thus

the two points for which the Company had fought in the past and to which Mr Rhodes attached greatest importance had been conceded [...] the Company will in future administer the whole territory and the name Northern Rhodesia will be accepted as the official designation for the territory.²³

Indeed, in one sense it was an ominous portent for the future role of Trust policies in Northern Rhodesia during the ensuing decade and a half before 1924, when the Colonial Office was finally able to establish full and direct control over the whole Territory. The Colonial Office's new political obligation to BSAC administration in the north-west was, as we shall see, to be demonstrated through its reluctance to seriously challenge the Company's handling of the Kasempa crisis of 1912. It was a dilemma soon to be greatly accentuated by an assumption of wartime responsibilities for the defence of Northern Rhodesia, responsibilities under which African welfare would necessarily and tragically take second place to the survival of imperial interests.

Colonial control on a shoestring: pre-war problems of administration at ground-level

The pre-war Company policy of 'minimum administration at minimum cost' seems to have seriously undermined the quality of administration at district level. The overall structural pattern of local administration in many respects mirrored that of neighbouring colonial societies. Thirty-five *bomas* manned by several score white officials struggled to maintain a modicum of control over more than 800,000 African inhabitants.

In one significant aspect, however, the Northern Rhodesian Administration differed from its counterparts. For most of the pre-war period, particularly the latter years, it was subjected to unusually stringent economies as London Wall, haunted by the knowledge that its Rhodesian assets as a whole had consistently failed to realise a dividend for Company shareholders, strove to reduce a heavy annual deficit. Consequently, Company policy-makers remained increasingly reluctant to expand the district service even as administrative responsibilities mounted. In 1911, Wallace, the Administrator, had felt compelled to increase white district staff from a total of seventy-seven in 1909 to eighty-seven two years later, 'owing to the development of the country and the increase of European settlers', emphasising that it would 'not be safe to estimate for less'.²⁴ Nevertheless, the shortage of staff continued, resulting in severe undermanning of district stations in many areas. In March 1912, the Secretary for Native Affairs drew attention to 'the fact that those stations which are situated on the Railway are very much under-staffed'. In a comment exposing the Company's lack of a controlled and systematic settlement policy he observed that 'were the entire white population of Northern Rhodesia concentrated in Livingstone, little, if any addition to the present staff would be



Map 1.1 Northern Rhodesia in 1914: Principal Government *bomas*, mission stations and administrative divisions (compiled and drawn by E. Yorke)

necessary, but in the circumstances of a widely scattered white population it is otherwise'. Consequently, 'Native Commissioners complain that they are overworked and that their native duties are neglected because it is quite impossible for them to attend to them!'. The matter, he stressed, was 'one which calls urgently for attention'.²⁵

By 1914, although the district staff had increased to 103 in total, control problems remained acute in many areas, particularly in outlying districts (see Map 1.1 for an overview of Government Administrative Divisions). The 'thin white line' displayed a distinct raggedness at the edges. Individual *boma* officials found their district work gravely impaired. District touring, for instance, a crucial aspect of local colonial control, often suffered markedly; annual tour totals for census and tax purposes often fell well below the norms perceived as essential by senior Livingstone officials. This was as much due to staff shortage as a rapid staff turnover in many areas. Thus, in Chinsali for instance, the inspecting Magistrate reported in 1914 that the division 'badly needs travelling'. In a nine month period the resident official had achieved only forty-two days travelling in his district.²⁶ When the latter demanded an assistant, an economy-conscious Livingstone executive would only contemplate a reshuffle of existing district staff, stressing: 'The staff in the Awemba District cannot and will not be increased.'²⁷

The quality of control at ground level was compromised in other respects. Essential district records were frequently indifferently

maintained, highlighting general administrative apathy. As late as August 1914, the Kasempa District Commissioner was reprimanded by the Livingstone authorities for his negligence in this area: 'No District Notebooks appear to have been started in any of the sub-districts. I am to say that something should be done in this respect before it is too late.'²⁸

The comparatively enfeebled state of 'white' administration assumed far-reaching implications for the structure of colonial control. In one context it precipitated an excessive dependence upon local African agencies to transmit colonial demands. As elsewhere in Africa, traditional elites provided the cheapest and most convenient medium for this role.²⁹ As one district official explained:

In order to manage things as cheaply as possible we have to maintain all the less abominable features of ancient custom – village unity, obedience to headmen, fiefdom to chiefs etc. – and really besides demanding by tax a certain amount of work from the natives and preventing them from spending it on spirits we don't do much positive innovation. I can't tell you how great the deficit is even now in running the country but you can't imagine a country run much more cheaply. We make the chiefs and headmen do most of the management.³⁰

Indeed, within the general policy lacuna for Northern Rhodesia during the pre-war period the BSAC Board was at least agreed on this one issue, namely, the paramount importance of an indigenous collaborative system, through which to satisfy essential tax and labour demands, and thereby avoid the excessive deployment of costly coercive forces. As early as 1902, P. L. Gell, a Company Director, had stressed this priority in the Company's policies towards Barotseland:

We must do our best to keep Lewanika and his son Yeta on their legs. If there should be a reaction against them, a territory as big as Germany [...] will be in chaos [...] It is our settled policy to administer Barotseland through native authorities and not to supplant them [...] It would be far more expensive to try and administer so large and unhealthy a territory through white officials.³¹

By 1908 the duties of chiefs and headmen had been legally delineated under the High Commissioner's Notice for North Western Rhodesia No. 68, and the King's Regulations of 12 December 1908 which applied to north-eastern Rhodesia.

The political bargain struck between the Lozi leadership and the BSAC was, however, in many senses unprecedented. Lewanika, the Lozi paramount, had skilfully accommodated Company designs by means of a series of political agreements under which Barotseland had secured a significant degree of autonomy in its internal affairs, an autonomy not achieved elsewhere in Northern Rhodesia, or, indeed, Central Africa. Several studies have sought to identify the reasons explaining the diversity of African responses to European imperialism, why some African societies resisted and others collaborated.³² In the Lozi case it took the form of collaboration, a collaboration undoubtedly facilitated by a timely consolidation of Lozi unity and power. The defeat of Kololo and Lewanika's successful suppression of internal political challenges enabled Lewanika to negotiate with Company agents both early and on more equal terms than elsewhere, at a time when Lozi influence had reached its zenith.³³

For other African societies the process of accommodation or submission to Company rule was much more decisive and often quite devastating, with a much deeper absorption into the new colonial state and with a greater vulnerability to its politico-economic demands. Thus, the other two main obstacles to Company hegemony, the Ngoni and the Bemba, proved not so fortunate in their political fate. Mpeseni, the Ngoni paramount, controlled a more highly militarised and expansionist state than the Lozi whose social cohesion and stability was dependent largely on raiding. Betrayed by rebel defections to the Company and, facing more determined Company economic encroachments upon his country's labour and supposed gold resources by the late 1890s, Mpeseni, under the pressure of his frustrated and hemmed in 'young military' was reluctantly forced into a disastrous war with well-prepared BSAC forces.³⁴ His inexorable crushing defeat ensured that the future collaboration of Ngoni traditional authority was based on total submission rather than negotiation.³⁵

The fate of the powerful Bemba was less violent but politically just as devastating. Plagued by disunity, epitomised in the earlier power struggle between the leading Chief Mwamba and the reigning paramount Sampa, its politico-economic base seriously undermined by Company pressure on its vital trading outlets, the Bemba tribal polity offered only piecemeal resistance to a rapid occupation. The submission of other north-eastern peoples, notably the Lunda, soon followed.³⁶

In a sense the Ngoni and their powerful rivals, the Bemba, were the victims of timing;³⁷ by contrast with the Lozi, confrontation with the Company had come late when both were short of room for political manoeuvre. In the case of the Bemba, decisive Company pressure came

after the untimely death of Mwamba, their most capable leader and at a time of locust-inspired plague and famine which, as A. Roberts suggests, may have helped to significantly undermine Bemba resistance.³⁸ For Mpeseni's Ngoni, confrontation came as an ageing Mpeseni, conscious of the fate of his Ndebele neighbours, was seeking accommodation by negotiation, only to lose control of his more militant war group at a time when Company power was at its most overwhelming and uncompromising.

What seems to have been an easy and comprehensive conquest by the BSAC was, however, misleading. In substantial areas of the Territory, the Company had failed to decisively secure the submission of resident peoples, let alone construct a reliable basis for mediation or collaboration. The nomadic Lunda and Kaonde were a prime example. After securing nominal authority over the area by 1905 the Company had still failed to secure the cooperation of many chiefs and headmen. Musokantanda, for instance, the Lunda paramount, remained firmly resident in the Belgian Congo and outside Company control for the whole of the pre-war period.³⁹ This lack of any collaborative base undoubtedly contributed to the series of disturbances in Kasempa which the Company was only able to quell, as we shall see, by a major show of force in 1912.⁴⁰ Similarly, in the north-east, the Company singularly failed to secure a firm collaborative relationship with many chiefs and headmen of the Bangweulu swamp peoples with, as will again be shown,⁴¹ important consequences for taxation and labour control during both the pre-war and war period (see Map 1.2 tribal and linguistic divisions of Northern Rhodesia).

In utilising this imperfect collaborative network, moreover, the Company administrators faced growing problems common to adjacent colonial states, arising from the initial decline in the power and prestige of many traditional authorities. The advent of Pax Britannica had inevitably undermined aspects of their traditional role. Politically, important chiefly functions such as leadership in war and supremacy in judicial and police affairs were clearly made redundant under the new colonial hegemony. Similarly a chief's spiritual supremacy was challenged in some areas by the pervasive ideology of local Christian missions.⁴² New socio-economic groupings such as peasant cultivators, returning migrant labourers and mission-educated elites were beginning to challenge their authority. At Fort Rosebery, for instance, in reviewing the status of chiefs and headmen, the official noted:

Their people certainly turn out well for work, sell food and do a certain amount of road making [...] but the people themselves want to do this and are paid for it and I doubt whether any chief or headman

now has the influence to control the food or labour supply of his people one way or the other.⁴³

The physical evidence of the relative loss of traditional control mechanisms and the break-up of tribal societies was reflected in the post-conquest dispersal of the African population, as pre-colonial concepts, such as protected villages, became socially irrelevant. For the colonial authorities, the problem reached acute levels in areas of fairly concentrated white settlement, where land and labour pressures were most pronounced: notably along the line of the railway, or where existing tribal structures had been apparently weakened through subjugation to more powerful neighbours during the pre-colonial period.

To remedy the overall decline of chiefly authority and consolidate the 'collaborative network' the Livingstone executive had pursued several supportive strategies. Of these, the most extensive had been the attempt to amalgamate village settlements and thereby buttress the power of chiefs. Describing population dispersal as 'an evil which tends to break down all tribal authority', the Administrator confirmed: 'For some years it has been the policy of the Administration to control the movement in such a way as to get the people back into larger villages.'⁴⁴



Map 1.2 Sketch map: Tribal and linguistic divisions of Northern Rhodesia (compiled and drawn by E. Yorke)

A concomitant of this policy was the widespread attempt to suppress the practice of *mitanda*, or dispersal to garden huts, for seasonal agricultural activities. The Awemba District Commissioner accordingly reported in 1914: 'Considerable efforts have been taken to put a stop to *mitanda* during the year. For prevention of crime and the exercise of an effectual control over the people it is absolutely necessary to put a stop to this evil.'⁴⁵ Support of residual rights and privileges of chiefs which did not conflict with the supremacy of the *boma* obviously represented an additional strategy to preserve the elevated status of traditional elites. Of this, the allocation of monetary incentives or cash subsidies was perhaps the most important, enabling the chiefs' traditional authority to maintain a degree of economic viability as tribute payments became less reliable.

Serious problems also arose from the continual attempt to impose a rigid collaborative structure based on one particular model of traditional authority, upon a huge kaleidoscope of African political groupings. Local colonial perspectives of the ideal type of collaborative system were predominantly coloured by early experience with polities such as the Bemba and Lozi. The latter incorporated easily recognisable structures of authority from paramount chief to village headman, thus apparently facilitating a more convenient and credible basis for active collaboration. Thus, at Kasama, it was reported that district headmen were not employed: 'The Awemba tribal organisation is supposed to be efficient enough to do without salaried district headmen.'⁴⁶

Attempts to construct similar collaborative models around less centralised tribal groupings in Chilanga were a good illustration of this problem. The Soli possessed no identifiable chiefly authority apart from their leader, Undaunda, who, the local official observed 'was once a slave of the Ngoni in Fort Jameson District and has no influence over them'. The official thus felt the need to devolve authority upon the headmen of the villages, a mistake he himself soon realised as 'the duties of the headmen' were 'made exceedingly difficult as they never at any time possessed any real authority over their people'.⁴⁷ Similar colonial misperceptions undoubtedly added to the collaborative problems experienced with other acephalous African societies such as the Toka, Tonga, Lamba and Swaka inhabiting large sections of the Batoka and Kafue Districts. As we shall see, it was to become a massive problem under the pressures of wartime.

The Administration's strict insistence on ethnicity as the sole qualification for legitimate African political authority within both acephalous and centralised African societies also added to problems

of collaboration. The philosophy that, in the words of T. O. Ranger, 'African political authority depended or had once depended, or should properly depend upon ethnicity',⁴⁸ was one practised by many other colonial administrations, but it was one ripe for exploitation by African opportunists who quickly recognised the political advantages to be gained from either the ignorance or expediency (or both) of the incoming European power.⁴⁹ In Northern Rhodesia the rapid, albeit haphazard nature of colonial conquest appears to have also facilitated such European misperceptions with significant advances by African marginal authorities over their immediate superiors. Thus on the eve of the First World War, senior Company officials discovered, after extensive enquiries in two districts, Fort Rosebery and Fort Jameson, that some pioneering officials had mistakenly constructed a new class of African authority without any legitimate ethnic foundation. In the former division, during the early years of Company rule, significant numbers of 'district headmen' had been appointed by the *boma* as chiefs 'whose duty it was at any *indaba* (meeting) held to report on all matters connected with their districts, the Chiefs generally never uttering a word'. By 1913, to the dismay of the District Commissioner, it was found that 'of the 39 Chiefs in the Luapula Division recognised by the Government, 23 [...] had not the shadow of a right to the title'. Claiming that the new men were 'abusing their authority' and the previous official's 'mistake' had given rise to 'endless disputes', the chiefs 'bitterly resenting the fact that certain of their headmen had taken portions of their land and many of their people', the District Commissioner hastily returned the deposed chiefs to their positions.⁵⁰ The usurping headmen were returned to their original subordinate status. In Fort Jameson District also, Ngoni District Headmen (confusingly titled 'District Messengers'), who had similarly usurped the role of several traditional chiefs were also being replaced on the eve of war,⁵¹ thus demonstrating the depth of the Administration's commitment to a rigid collaborative model based on ethnicity.

The Administration's heavy reliance upon traditional elites as collaborators, however, ironically failed to protect the latter from the political impact of ruthless pre-war economy drives. By 1914 the pressure to economise had significantly intensified. One Circular, for instance, warned District Commissioners

to exercise the strictest supervision over the expenditure in your sub-districts [...] The officials in charge of the sub-district should be warned that, if their Votes are exceeded they are liable to be moved

and placed in a position where they will not be allowed the control of expenditure.⁵²

Vote estimates for successive years were drastically cut back, even for basic items such as Posts and Mails.⁵³

Such frugality often invoked protests. The Luangwa District Commissioner, for instance, complained in March 1914:

Judging by the amounts voted for the coming year the Expenditure is expected to be reduced somewhat, but as the amounts expended under every head are already as low as it is possible to make them, it is difficult to understand how the District is to progress on a decreased expenditure.⁵⁴

Others were more dutiful. The Awemba District Commissioner recorded: 'It is not easy at times to control the Votes to avoid over-expenditure but every effort is made to do so.'⁵⁵ It was not long before chiefs and headmen's subsidies, representing up to one third of most *boma* budgets faced severe cuts. In some districts this created serious administrative problems. In East Luangwa, for example, the efforts of the District Commissioner to economise by abolishing the subsidies of fifty Petauke headmen precipitated a sharp disagreement with the official of that division who argued that 'to do so, would, I am sure, have a bad effect and the economy effected would be small'.⁵⁶ At Mporokoso the *boma* official felt compelled to remind his superiors that, despite the territorial addition of a large section of the Katwe area, no fresh allocation had been provided in the Votes, particularly in regard to the necessary expansion of the collaborative network.⁵⁷

Four years earlier, in 1910, a report commissioned by London Wall itself had severely criticised Company policymakers for financially undermining the position of chiefs in this way. Noting the increasing problems of control experienced by chiefs, the author commented: 'The root of the trouble seems to be that chiefs and others are given responsibility without power and work without pay.' In return for 'burdensome duties', he complained, 'they are occasionally given a small subsidy, but in the great majority of cases they receive nothing from the Government'. Though acknowledging that 'to give a subsidy to all native chiefs and headmen would involve considerable expenditure', he nevertheless stressed the urgent need for an enquiry into the problem.⁵⁸ Predictably, no enquiry was ever undertaken. The decision announced in early 1914, to apply the new five-shilling poll tax to the previously

exempt north-eastern chieftaincies, was a prime example of the way in which financial imperatives were allowed to undercut these crucial pillars of political control. The news of the tax imposition was coldly received at *indabas* throughout the north-east and strongly criticised by many district officials, not only for the damage caused to the chiefs' economic positions (although in some cases this was cushioned by increased subsidy payments), but for the profound implications for the chiefs' social status and, above all, for the perceived 'moral' basis of the collaborative relationship. A Fife official protested:

It should be noted that these men have enjoyed an exemption from tax ever since same was first imposed and when so imposed were given to understand that they would not be called upon to pay tax in respect of themselves and their wives for life. It would therefore appear unfair to break a promise so made.⁵⁹

Other officials reflected upon the serious implications for chiefly political status: 'The taxation of Chiefs, tends [...] to lower their prestige to an unnecessary extent. It is not so much the actual cash spent which affects them as the knowledge that they are not differentiated from the common herd.'⁶⁰ Many 'smaller' chiefs and headmen were less fortunate and received no extra payments to cushion the impact of the new tax.

The detrimental impact on political control of such stringent economies was not confined to traditional elites. *Boma* employees also suffered from the fierce economy drives. Each *boma* necessarily employed salaried African staff, ranging from messengers and mailmen, to prison warders and police. Their selection reflected either specific skills, *boma* clerks for example required obvious educational qualifications, or conformed to settler stereotypes, such as the predominance of 'martial race' perspectives in police recruitment strategy, or even both.⁶¹ Of these 'primary' collaborators, messengers were of central importance as the functional link between the colonial administration on the one hand and traditional elites on the other.

The perceived value of such agencies, however, as with chiefs and headmen, by no means exonerated them from Company financial pressure. In May 1914, for instance, the custom of exempting Messengers and Mailmen in north-western Rhodesia from payment of tax, as enshrined in a 1905 Circular, was abolished. As one 1914 Circular asserted, 'the principle of exempting Messengers and Mailmen is quite wrong. They are better able to pay than most natives.'⁶² In other ways, the economic position of *boma* employees came under attack. Messenger pay, a large item in *boma* expenditure, was rarely increased and often

even reduced as part of the pre-war economy drive. In reference to his Messenger staff, one Mporokoso official wrote: 'I have hesitated to ask in the Estimates for any large increase of pay to the men, but it does not appear that their wages are in any way adequate when compared with those, say, of the Civil Station Police, or even the ordinary Station workers.'⁶³ It was possibly relatively poor remuneration combined with the greater responsibility accorded to these 'primary collaborators' in many areas where the white staff levels remained deficient, that accounted for the frequent occurrences of abuse of power, particularly by Messengers. As one district official observed: 'zeal, smartness and a high standard of conduct cannot be expected of men whose pay is little better than that of the local farm labourer and hardly more than half that received by the Police on the Station.'⁶⁴ So prevalent were cases of misconduct that, on the eve of war, a special district circular impressed 'the imperative necessity of keeping Native Messengers and Police under such supervision and control, that the possibility of [...] offenders going unpunished may be reduced to a minimum'.⁶⁵

The Company's political neglect of Northern Rhodesia had other significant implications for the structure of colonial authority. In many areas, mission stations retained a disproportionately high degree of political influence in relation to the *boma*. Missionary influence had been a crucial factor in opening up large parts of Northern Rhodesia in the days before formal organised control.⁶⁶ By 1914 many retained their cogency as control factors, particularly in the outlying districts. The White Fathers and London Missionary Society, for instance, still retained significant influence in many areas of the north-eastern Plateau where *boma* political influence remained comparatively limited compared to the more settled southern districts. At Kasama, for instance, the local White Fathers cooperated with the local *boma* on a virtually equal basis regarding policies such as the suppression of *mitanda* practices, settlement of land and disputes between chiefs.⁶⁷ Company economies again ensured that, by 1914, apart from the Barotse National School, vital control of education had lapsed totally into the hands of the missionary bodies. The lack of a positive 'mission policy' was reflected in the fact that by the time of the outbreak of war no less than thirteen denominations, many of them hopelessly ill-financed, were scattered indiscriminately across the Territory. Several were engaged in bitter wrangles over respective zones of influence. In 1912 one senior official commented upon the resultant debacle:

The education of the natives is in the hands of the missionaries [...] with this unlucky number of religious sects operating in the same

field – for it does not seem that they can come to any lasting agreement regarding spheres of activity – education, apart from religious instruction must suffer.

He stressed: ‘The native, the settler and no less the Societies, would benefit if some uniform policy of instruction, acceptable to all sects, could be devised and directed by some central authority. Concerted action is necessary.’⁶⁸ In the prevailing climate of financial stringency such a proposal was doomed. Consequently, in some areas, mission rivalry became acute. An East Luangwa official reported in 1914: ‘During the year the missions appear to have realised that they cannot be confined to “spheres of influence” and this has caused great rivalry between the White Fathers and the Dutch Reformed [Church] Mission.’⁶⁹

An incomplete conquest: pre-war resistance and non-collaboration

In terms of overall colonial control of the Territory, the net result of such unrelenting financial parsimony and political lethargy was that even as late as 1914, on the eve of the war, there were large tracts of country where the Company writ barely ran. These areas principally included the Bangweulu swamp region and much of the border area adjoining Portuguese and Belgian territory. The problems experienced here largely reflected Company reluctance to commit costly coercive forces to regularly enforce tax and labour demands, a problem exacerbated, as we have seen, by the lack of any firm collaborative base or even decisive submission to Company authority.

The peoples of the immense Bangweulu swamp region, for instance the Unga, Batwa and Bisa, theoretically controlled by no less than four *bomas*, frequently proved intractable. While surrounding peoples, such as the Bemba, had signified tacit acceptance of Company authority through regular tax payments from 1902 onwards, it was not until eight years later, in 1910 that, as one official put it ‘a significant proportion paid taxes’ and even then ‘a large percentage managed to avoid payment by keeping out of the Native Commissioner’s and Messenger’s way’. Attempts to extract labour on a significant scale proved fruitless as the ‘swamp peoples’ easily evaded recruiters and earned their tax ‘by sale of otter skins, of which they sell perhaps 3,000 a year and selling, by hand, dried fish about the country’. The collaborative system proved totally unreliable, with chiefs and headmen giving the *boma* ‘little support’.⁷⁰

In the north-west, along the Belgian Congo and Portuguese West African borders, local administration was beset with similar difficulties. Company officials were plagued by the skilful stratagems employed by the nomadic border tribes who frequently evaded tax and labour demands. It was a problem greatly magnified during the immediate pre-war years by the protracted activities of the Anglo-Portuguese Boundary Commission which ensured that even the political limitations of Company suzerainty remained uncertain. One north-west border official thus attributed the substantial fall in tax revenue for the year 1913–14 to 'the fact that, for the last five months, no visits have been paid to any part of the district within twenty miles of the probable Anglo-Portuguese Boundary, nor has any work whatever been done within those limits'. With the addition of a substantial belt of territory to the extreme west of Balovale District as a result of the Boundary Commission's findings, *boma* influence became severely overstretched. The official reported:

It has proved impossible to maintain proper control over the western part of the district, to show any beginning of tax payment there, or to prevent in any great degree the export of cattle and the import of cloth, guns and ammunition from Portuguese Territory.

Unless a new station was rapidly established, the western border would 'never be controlled under present conditions'.⁷¹

Of all the many 'problem areas', however, it was the Kasempa District which consistently emerged as the *bête noire* of the Livingstone Administration during the pre-war period.⁷² In 1908 a district officer had been shot and wounded in the area and in both 1909 and 1911 a European had been killed. The latter incident, combined with the Administration's attempts to introduce Sleeping Sickness controls into the area, deeply resented by the nomadic Kaonde and Lunda tribal groups, seem to have been the main ingredients for the serious disturbances of March to June 1912. Messenger and police patrols were fired upon and the situation demonstrated such severity that the Livingstone executive urgently considered widespread punitive measures, including full-scale disarmament.

In a sense the Kasempa disturbances personified all the shortcomings of Company rule in Northern Rhodesia. The area had suffered from periodic undermanning and a rapid turnover of staff. Solwezi alone had witnessed no less than five changes of official in 1908.⁷³ District records were, consequently, poorly maintained. The collaborative network was frequently unreliable; in some cases even government messengers and

local chiefs had acted in collusion against the *bomas*. Tax and labour demands were often evaded, whole villages often crossing and recrossing the Congo border, much to the chagrin of frustrated Company officials. The exceptionally large number of punitive measures taken in the area before 1912, often merely to enforce tax payments, underlined the fragile extent of control credibility.⁷⁴ Just as significant was the inability of local officials to halt the massive firearm and gunpowder trade across the Congo border.⁷⁵

These profound Administrative weaknesses were openly admitted. The local official confirmed how the *bomas'* own concessionary and vacillating measures had encouraged the 1912 crisis. 'The Bakahondi in the past have been very little interfered with and no great demands were made on their sense of duty and obedience to the government. The laws governing their movements were never rigidly enforced.'⁷⁶ L. A. Wallace, the Administrator agreed: 'These people have not been worried by much Administrative rule and some of them [...] seem to interpret our patience as a sign of weakness'.⁷⁷

The Colonial Office response to Wallace's proposals involving the despatch of police reinforcements to the areas and disarmament of both the Kaonda and Lunda tribes, also again demonstrated the curious ambivalence of the Company-imperial relationship. On the one hand, officials, mindful of Trust responsibilities and suspicious of Company machinations, attributed the trouble to Company excesses. Thus, one official considered that the difficulties were 'mainly traceable to the imposition of hut tax and possibly to recruitment of labour'.⁷⁸ Another official observed that:

The trouble appears to be due in some measure to the restrictions on their movements caused by the Sleeping Sickness regulations. Owing to tsetse these native are said to be unable to raise stock and are dependent on elephant hunting – selling the ivory in Portuguese Territory. If we deprive them of arms what are they to do for a livelihood? It is a difficult position.⁷⁹

Ultimately, however, officials remained cognisant of their political obligations to the Company as the legal administrator of the area. Thus while H. Lambert, a third official, feared the Administrator's proposals for disarmament 'may give rise to trouble, even to a small military operation', he conceded that 'on the facts stated it certainly seems necessary to indicate the law'.⁸⁰

Gladstone, the South African High Commissioner, endowed with a more immediate responsibility for political stability in the area,

understandably provided fuller support for the Company. 'The failure to capture criminals, the defiance of authority and the absence of administrative control and power of control in the territory, particularly that occupied by the Balunda, requires reinforcement of the local police and effective patrolling of the Portuguese Boundary.' He further stressed: 'It is necessary to bring the north-west territory gradually under the administrative and civilised control which has been secured in other parts of Northern Rhodesia.'⁸¹

By June 1912, Wallace's 'show of force' designed to be 'a necessary lesson to the Border tribes and [...] one also to the whole country' had eased the situation.⁸² Nevertheless, less than two years later, local colonial control remained suspended on a tightrope. Collaborative relations, for instance, were far from being secured. It was reported in March 1914 that even the introduction of District Messengers 'might well be deferred for a year or so longer'. Regular census and tax control was far from being achieved. The same official reported, 'some time must elapse before a complete census can be taken. It is necessary to give the people time to settle.'⁸³ Even here, Company economies continued to bite at *boma* efficiency. Thus the Solwezi official noting that 'the present number of Police have proved inadequate', postulated that 'the question of substituting local warders for Police might be considered as an economy'.⁸⁴ In 1914 the Kasempa official confirmed the continuing precariousness of colonial control: 'it would seem desirable to continue the present district policy with as little change as possible. Much remains to be done.'⁸⁵

While Sleeping Sickness controls were only tentatively being introduced into the north-west by 1912, in the north-east they were more firmly established after the 'discovery' of tsetse fly in the area in 1907. The operation was expensive owing to the need to deploy large numbers of special auxiliaries to patrol 'Guard areas' particularly along the Luapula River and the necessity of moving Africans into segregation camps. In 1908 in the Mweru-Luapula District, for instance, the cost was estimated at *1d.* per diem for each patient, and in the Abercorn District as high as *2d.* per diem.⁸⁶ This was despite the fact that only fifty-five cases of Sleeping Sickness were diagnosed in 1908, an increase of only twenty-eight from the 1907 figures.⁸⁷

In fact Sleeping Sickness measures conferred other less obvious benefits, perhaps justifying their initially high cost. They could also be used as an important mechanism of social control, particularly in regard to the north-eastern Congo border. As the local Medical Officer pointed out in a 1908 report to London Wall, the enforced movement of several thousands of local Africans to 'segregated areas' was not only

administratively sound policy but in the long term economical. The scattered settlements along the north-east Congo border had proved difficult to control before 1907. Under the respectable guise of Sleeping Sickness control, however, one 'fly' area alone, which incorporated most of the north-eastern Rhodesian-Congo border, was depopulated in 1908 as some 12,000 people were moved to segregated areas from the Luapula, Mansa, Kalingushi and Luafi rivers, and the British section of Lake Tanganyika. As Dr Spillane pointed out, 'in view of the large expenditure which may be saved by such a policy a few hundred pounds spent by the Administration to expedite the scheme would be well expended'. In regard to remaining areas of the north-east Plateau, he observed that

the people in the Sleeping Sickness area numbering probably about 30,000 now, have never been a regular tax-paying population and a large percentage, especially those living close to the border, never paid taxes at all so that the loss of revenue is not so great as it would first appear.

He concluded:

In the course of time as villages now situated in the Sleeping Sickness area prove themselves [...] to be free from any infection, they will be allowed to cross over and settle in clean country and so be available for labour and taxation; thus if the measures adopted meet with any success the loss in revenue will tend as time goes on to become less and less as the population in the Sleeping Sickness area becomes year by year attenuated.⁸⁸

Not surprisingly, London Wall were keen to communicate 'their approval of the completeness of the steps which have been taken to check the spread of Sleeping Sickness in north-east Rhodesia'.⁸⁹

Apart from these selected areas of the Mweru-Luapula and Tanganyika Districts, however, elsewhere the scheme had made little impact by 1914. This was again partly due to the growing African hostility to enforced movement and segregation, but above all to the lack of police resources. Thus in 1912 the Luangwa Medical Officer reported:

The system is at present regarded with extreme mistrust and fear [...] to depopulate the Luangwa closed area containing probably 120,000 people may, I think, be taken as an impossibility. The natural difficulties are enormous, the population would immediately become

antagonistic. The staff [...] for the work would be immense and an increased mortality from the disease and several years of famine would be the almost inevitable result.⁹⁰

Huge areas, therefore, remained untouched by Sleeping Sickness controls. Moreover, Company economies soon eroded the few police resources allocated to control existing 'Guard areas'. In 1914, in the Mweru-Luapula area for instance, the District Commissioner bitterly decried the gross inadequacy of the seventy Sleeping Sickness guards assigned to patrol the 250-mile Luapula river border and the impossibility of preventing illegal crossings of the Congo border, a problem exacerbated by the feeble state of Belgian border security.⁹¹

Pre-war economic imbalance: structural inequalities within the agricultural sector of Northern Rhodesia

The Company's reluctance to inject capital into Northern Rhodesia's economy, particularly the mining sector and the accompanying neglect of any coherent settlement policy before 1912, had further important implications for the pattern of economic development particularly in respect of agricultural production.

By 1914 the white farming sector remained largely confined to the line of the railway between Victoria Falls and Ndola, depending heavily upon the Katanga market for the export of beef and mealies.⁹² The only other areas of substantial white agricultural settlement were Fort Jameson District where a few score planters produced mainly tobacco and, finally, between Abercorn and Fife where a tiny knot of farmers practised ranching and mixed farming. The relative paucity of white settlement in the Territory and the resultant limitations upon white agricultural production for both expanding local and outside markets therefore created a vacuum which could be successfully filled by local African producers.

In the far west, for instance, Lozi cultivators were not slow to exploit the economic opportunities arising from the colonial presence. Around the small white settlement at Mongu, African producers contributed to a flourishing vegetable market while Lozi grain was sold in significant quantities to the Rhodesia Native Labour Bureau (RNLB) after it had established an active presence in the area after 1905. As Laurel Van Horn has observed, product specialisation for the European market even occurred with, for example, the sale of milk, involving an interesting distortion within the local agricultural system.⁹³

It was in the central-southern areas of north-western Rhodesia, however, that a substantial and successful African peasantry was based before the First World War.⁹⁴ The grain- and cattle-rich Tonga and Ila of the Kafue and Batoka Districts, for instance, soon realised the opportunities presented by both an expanding local market and the Katanga market. Every harvest-time swarms of traders, generally 'low Dutch' set up temporary stores in these areas often denuding the immediate area of surplus grain. One Magoye official thus explained the astonishing seasonal proliferation of trading stores in his district, totalling forty-two:

It must not be thought that the large numbers of stores are any indication of the present trade activity in the district. Practically all those mentioned, which are away from the railway line, are not maintained for more than four months, May to August, during the year. They exist solely for the purpose of buying native grown grain and are closed down as soon as no more can be bought.⁹⁵

In 1912 prices paid for 'native grain' during the previous year had ranged from 5s. 0d. to 10s. 6d. per 100 lbs and, in 1913, prices ranged from 7s. 9d. to 15s. 0d. for a bag of 200 lbs.⁹⁶

The increasing importance of African peasant production was soon acknowledged. In 1913 the Secretary for Native Affairs observed: 'In recent years the natives have increased considerably the areas they cultivate. They have learned to produce for the market.' He further commented, 'the farmer already suffers indirectly from this competition. His labourers leave him between the ploughing and harvesting season when he requires their services most; they go to prepare their own lands and remain away to weed and reap.' The report gave little comfort to the growing complaints of white farmers:

The farmer has brought it upon himself; few farmers do not hold trading licences permitting them to barter for grain with the natives to supplement their own crops which are insufficient to meet the demand. Thus they encourage the natives to grow grain for sale and the farmers must look elsewhere for their labour or curtail production.⁹⁷

The *Livingstone Mail*, the political mouthpiece of white settlerdom in Northern Rhodesia, was predictably more sympathetic to the problems of white farmers, although forced to admit to the strength of African competition on the mealie market. 'For some time past it has been

realised that if this country is to develop as a farming country, the farmers must not be subjected to competition from the natives.⁹⁸ In a sense, the success of African peasant production reflected the deficiencies of Company settlement policy in Northern Rhodesia. Extremely low land prices⁹⁹ and the Company's indifferent settlement policy ensured that significant numbers of poor white Afrikaner subsistence farmers equipped with limited capital resources had penetrated the country from the South. Costly overheads and poor farming techniques ensured their extreme vulnerability to African producers in a competitive market situation.¹⁰⁰ Thus, the *Livingstone Mail* reflected upon the superior African mobility and adaptability in mealie-growing, enjoying the benefits of 'no machinery [...] unlimited labour, unlimited land', their comparatively inefficient white counterparts needing 'to hire male labour', and 'purchase land and machinery'.¹⁰¹

Eventually, under settler pressure, the Company was influenced to intervene and consequently the immediate pre-war years witnessed embryonic attempts to restrict African competitiveness on the north-western grain market. The *Livingstone Mail* reflected on one of these:

With the double object of maintaining a market for farm-grown mealies and a supply of labour the Administration, which was followed by the mining companies and the Belgian Government specified in their contracts that mealies must be 'farm grown' and as a result native-grown mealies ceased to find any but a restricted market.¹⁰²

In fact, this early political mechanism could be widely evaded. African-grown mealies and farm-grown mealies were virtually indistinguishable in appearance and quality, hence white traders encountered little difficulty in buying and selling African mealie products labelled as 'farm-grown mealies' to mining contractors from the Katanga. Indeed, as the Secretary of Native Affairs himself had observed, white farmers themselves hypocritically purchased mealies from local African growers to compensate for their own frequent shortfalls in production quotas.

Even at ground level, the Administration's attempts to restrict the opportunist grain trade in the main African cultivating areas alongside the railway met only limited success. In 1913 for instance, an attempt was made at reducing the trade by way of raising the cost of licences for European grain traders. The latter were required to take out a costly General Dealer's Licence if they traded for more than three days in the same location and opening another station involved paying a further £2 fee.

The weakness of the Administrative presence in many districts, however, combined with the high mobility of European traders operating from 'wagon-stores' made licence enforcement extremely problematical. As one Mumbwa official confirmed: 'The law with regard to trading grain with a licence is capable of being evaded so easily that if the licence and rent cannot be demanded and paid at once, it is made still more difficult to collect.' The same official hoped that the more stringent attempts to regulate the trade encompassed within Circular No. 8 of 1914 would prove more effective. This necessitated the Chief Surveyor's approval concerning the place where traders outspanned, which, he hoped, would ensure 'fewer grain trading stations and in consequence the natives will have to travel farther to trade their grain'.¹⁰³ Again, however, the mechanism presupposed the immobility of African producers and hardly catered for the proven entrepreneurial skills of African 'hawkers'.

These embryonic and somewhat half-hearted attempts to restrict the African grain trade partly reflected the policy contradiction arising from the Government's own dependence on the African food sector. Government *bomas*, especially in outlying areas, often depended on African food and when labour demands were not pressing African commercial growers represented an important revenue source. On these occasions government tax imperatives could overrule settler demands for protection. As early as 1906 one leading BSAC Director, P. L. Gell, had even advocated the deliberate expansion of the African grain market in order to help pay for the working deficit on the Company's Northern Rhodesian railway extension.¹⁰⁴ Moreover, by 1914 in one area at least, the local *boma* officials had put forward a scheme to actively promote and encourage commercial expansion of African grain producers in order to increase tax yields, thus ironically nullifying earlier Administrative restrictions on African trade. As one Namwala official argued: 'Unless some industry is started amongst the natives they will never be able to pay a larger tax than they do. Only a small minority ever go to work, the remainder earning all the money for their requirements by selling grain or cattle.' He therefore suggested that it 'would be wise to encourage the Baila in growing grain for the market: several of them have bought ploughs and others contemplate buying them this year and better seed should be supplied to them at cost price, through the local storekeeper'. The scheme was discussed with the Railway Traffic Manager 'who spoke of a regular market being found for their grain providing it was good and sufficient quantities were forthcoming'.¹⁰⁵

Perhaps the most vivid illustration of the success of African enterprise and the comparative weakness of the European agricultural sector

in Northern Rhodesia emerged in the context of the cattle industry. By 1914 the African beef sector played a vital role in the viability of the colonial cattle trade. The main cattle-owning tribal polities were situated in Barotseland and the southern-central areas of north-west Rhodesia. In 1913 an estimated 197,766 of overall African-owned cattle totalling around 209,755 were owned by tribal groups in these western districts (i.e. north-west Rhodesia and Barotseland). These 197,766 cattle, with the exception of a few hundred, 'were nearly equally divided between the people of the Zambesi and Kafue Valleys, the cattle-holding districts having a joint African population of 259,000'.¹⁰⁶ (Approximately one-third of the total African population of Northern Rhodesia). More significantly, from these African herds were drawn the settlers breeding stock and meat supply of the European communities since ranchers had 'not reached the stage when they can supply the butchers with slaughter cattle'. In 1912 alone, 11,540 African-owned cattle were sold to European ranchers or traders, 2,900 more than in the previous year.¹⁰⁷

By contrast to the wealthy African cultivating and cattle-rich communities of the west and central-south, enormous areas elsewhere in both north-west and north-east Rhodesia were occupied by tribal groups practising agriculture at barely subsistence level. This reflected not only Company politico-economic neglect of these regions,¹⁰⁸ expressed in the lack of communications and investment generally, but potent environmental barriers, such as poor soils and, notably, the tsetse fly problem. This, in turn, discouraged any substantial European settlement or African commercial expansion in the few areas where ecological conditions were more favourable.

In north-eastern Rhodesia, for instance, white settlement and agricultural activity, confined to the Fort Jameson area and the relatively fly-free triangle located between Abercorn, Fife and Kasama, suffered severely from the lack of communications and the long distance from available markets. As one major agricultural report commented, 'the only difficulty the farmers have is to get the cattle safely out of the country to the market down south. To reach the Zambesi with the cattle, they have to travel through Fly country.'¹⁰⁹ In the Fort Jameson area European tobacco planters, similarly remote from the southern markets, faced severe competition from the Nyasaland tobacco market.

In most of the few areas of the north-east where African entrepreneurs had successfully produced cash crops for the colonial market, the acute problems of transport and communications had soon undermined their competitiveness. Thus, initial attempts by the Luangwa Valley Bisa to grow cotton for export, for instance, proved short-lived. It was reported

that the 'cotton-growing there by the natives in 1905–7 realised excellent prices and was highly reported on. The local natives, who grow cotton for their own use took well to the industry and still regret that it was stopped [...] owing to the transport being rather expensive'. One area alone, Kalimbu, had yielded fourteen tons of seed cotton. Consequently, the unsold surplus from this ill-fated venture was, predictably, 'taken in by the officials to help the natives pay the taxes!'. Nevertheless, the pioneering spirit survived in the Valley and even as late as 1910 and 1911 it was reported that the Bisa 'still have cotton in their grain stores [...] and they repeatedly asked [...] when they could be called upon to grow cotton again'. The Report concluded: 'If transport could be facilitated this Valley would undoubtedly prove a valuable cotton producing country.'¹¹⁰ Significantly, European attempts to grow commercial cotton in the area had met with even less success probably because of the additional handicap of costly overheads.¹¹¹

Elsewhere, one of the few exceptions to the general preponderance of subsistence agriculture was the western Luapula District where the mainly cassava-growing northern Lunda and Shila cultivators had taken early advantage of the development and expansion of the nearby Katanga mines. After 1906 the latter provided 'the first marketing and disposal services for the Mweru-Luapula area' despite the considerable dislocation of many village economies caused by Sleeping Sickness removals.¹¹² During wartime this area was to become a major source of food supply for the imperial forces.

Furthermore, in both the north-west and large parts of the north-east, the prevalence of tsetse fly ensured that cattle-raising was extremely limited. In the eastern districts, for instance, African-owned cattle numbered only approximately 12,000 compared to nearly 200,000 in the western districts.¹¹³ Most of these were owned by the Fort Jameson Ngoni tribal grouping whose own herds, however, had already apparently suffered severely from Company sequestrations after the disastrous 1898 War.¹¹⁴

The Administration had made several albeit crude attempts to arrest the cycle of agricultural poverty which characterised much of the extreme north-west Congo border areas and, in particular, the north-east Plateau.¹¹⁵ Although district reports had often highlighted the role of colonial labour demands in exacerbating food shortages,¹¹⁶ particularly amongst *citemene*-practising tribal polities (which depended heavily upon the large-scale participation of able-bodied males), the Government predictably blamed poor African agricultural methods. In 1906 and 1907 Government attempts to coerce the Bemba into forsaking

their *citemene* mode of agriculture for the more productive hoe system, including the growing of cassava and maize rather than finger-millet, only resulted in acute famine and widespread passive resistance.¹¹⁷ After this, Administrative apathy, combined with lack of finance thwarted any more intelligent attempts at agricultural reform and management, apart from the occasional provision of seed for famine relief. Thus, by 1914 the continual low level of food production of, for instance, the Bemba,¹¹⁸ continued to exasperate and anger government officials, particularly as many *bomas* depended upon indigenous food supplies for their own economic viability. At one 1913 *indaba*, for instance, assembled chiefs and headmen were harangued and threatened by the Administrator himself for their failure to improve food quotas: 'You spend your time in *mitanda* but in spite of this you produce nothing in comparison with other tribes [...] I begin to think that if you were made to pay a heavier tax you might produce more food.' As a more direct pressure, even the right to kill game was rescinded. 'If I give you the permission to kill game', the Administrator continued, 'you will eat meat and produce even less food and for this reason no permission will be given; you are improvident and do not think of the future.'¹¹⁹

Not all indigenous food economies were as vulnerable as that of the Bemba; for both social and ecological reasons, others were more resilient.¹²⁰ The Unga and Batwa peoples, for instance, possessed a famine reserve in fishing and hunting game which helped compensate for seasonal crop failures. The Mambwe operated a social system better adapted to larger-scale labour demands. Nevertheless, the predominantly marginal levels of food production in these areas were an ominous portent for a highly fragile colonial Territory, which, by the close of 1914, had been plunged into a major global war with commensurate unprecedented and large-scale food and labour demands.

2

War Labour Recruitment and Mobilisation: The Roots of Crisis

The pre-war pattern of African labour recruitment¹

During the two decades preceding the outbreak of the First World War, Northern Rhodesia acted as a labour reservoir for a wide variety of internal and external industrial and agricultural interests. There were two major externally-based recruiting agencies. The larger was the Rhodesia Native Labour Bureau (RNLB), which since 1903 had served Southern Rhodesian mines and farms and which also recruited, as a sideline, for those of Northern Rhodesia. The smaller, Robert Williams and Company, recruited for Union Minière du Haut Katanga located in the nearby Belgian Congo.

During the immediate pre-war years, *both* RNLB-registered and voluntary African labour recruited from Northern Rhodesia constituted as much as twenty-five per cent of the mine labour in Southern Rhodesia, fluctuating between 7,000 and 10,000² out of a total labour force which averaged 40,000 annually.³ (See Table 2.1 and Table 2.2.) A few thousand Northern Rhodesian Africans also laboured annually on Southern Rhodesian farms, many of them casual and unregistered, for whom figures are not obtainable.⁴ Robert Williams and Co. required much less African labour to meet the demands of the only recently established Katanga mines; they registered only around 1,000 Northern Rhodesian labourers annually during the peak pre-war period of labour demand from 1911 to 1914.⁵ Several hundred more were undoubtedly either siphoned off or employed by illegal contractors or crossed voluntarily and worked in non-mining occupations and were therefore not registered.⁶

In addition to these major employment centres, some Northern Rhodesian labour proceeded as far south as the Witwatersrand mines⁷ or

Table 2.1 Northern Rhodesian recruited and voluntary African mine labour employed in Katanga 1913-22 (C. Perrings, *Black Mineworkers in Central Africa*, pp. 174 and 176)

Year	North-eastern Rhodesia									
	Recruited workers					Voluntary workers				
	Mean number present	Mortality per mille per annum	Desertions per mille per annum	Turn-over per cent per annum	Mean number present	Mortality per mille per annum	Desertions per mille per annum	Turn-over per cent per annum		
1913	990	70.7	75.8	93.8	-	-	-	-	-	
1914	1,214	124.4	32.1	265.7	-	-	-	-	-	
1915	973	51.4	18.5	297.3	-	-	-	-	-	
1916	1,438	57.0	14.6	214.3	232	60.3	107.8	184.9	184.9	
1917	510	27.5	7.8	175.7	390	23.1	110.3	117.2	117.2	
1918	701	188.3	122.7	188.7	741	143.0	384.6	161.4	161.4	
1919	1,744	56.4	32.8	113.8	930	9.7	184.9	98.0	98.0	
1920	4,634	28.9	11.6	178.3	1,032	7.8	354.7	130.0	130.0	
1921	4,621	24.2	11.9	175.2	707	12.7	291.4	144.4	144.4	
1922	3,175	23.1	9.2	288.1	391	6.8	129.6	103.3	103.3	

Table 2.1 (Continued)

Year	North-western Rhodesia									
	Recruited workers					Voluntary workers				
	Mean number present	Mortality per mille per annum	Desertions per mille per annum	Turn-over per cent per annum	Mean number present	Mortality per mille per annum	Desertions per mille per annum	Turn-over per cent per annum	Turn-over per cent per annum	
1913	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1914	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1915	82	12.2	—	29.3	—	—	—	—	—	—
1916	1,033	171.3	332.0	167.8	35	171.4	257.1	325.7	—	—
1917	510	152.9	205.9	282.2	24	41.7	416.7	212.5	—	—
1918	65	307.7	600.0	360.0	59	70.2	678.0	122.0	—	—
1919	53	300.0	20.0	208.0	83	48.2	530.1	126.5	—	—
1920	104	28.8	384.6	198.1	48	—	875.0	181.3	—	—
1921	176	22.7	306.8	209.1	56	71.4	696.4	223.2	—	—
1922	236	22.6	242.9	183.1	35	28.6	495.2	222.9	—	—

Table 2.2 Northern Rhodesian mine labour distributed by the RNLB, 1906–21 (R. Kuczynski, *Demographic Survey of the British Colonial Empire*, Vol. II, p. 443)

1906	1,579	1910	9,120	1914	5,408	1918	5,418
1907	7,590	1911	6,588	1915	6,602	1919	8,509
1908	7,411	1912	12,126	1916	4,142	1920	14,579
1909	7,457	1913	6,501	1917	8,549	1921	9,058

to the plantations⁸ and railways of German East Africa and Nyasaland. In annual terms, however, these probably numbered a few hundred rather than thousands. Northern Rhodesia's own internal labour demand was also small with little industrial and agricultural development in the territory and few white settlers. Where possible white farmers recruited locally to avoid the costly services of the RNLB. Similarly, the few scattered mines, mainly producing copper, recruited their relatively small labour forces from their immediate hinterlands. Between them, Northern Rhodesian farms and mining sectors probably absorbed no more than 10,000 African labourers⁹ a year, and most of these were signed on for relatively short periods of service. One of the largest mines, for instance, the copper-producing 'Bwana M'kubwa', at peak production usually employed no more than a few hundred labourers annually,¹⁰ while any substantial farm labour requirements such as on the Fort Jameson tobacco plantations were purely seasonal. Other seasonal labour employers included trading companies and transport contractors (especially in Barotseland), Christian mission stations and private individuals (chiefly employing personal servants) who also probably accounted for no more than two to three thousand labourers annually.¹¹ Finally, the chronic lack of Company investment in this Territory meant that until the outbreak of the First World War, government labour requirements were minimal. They consisted of no more than a few hundred labourers a year working on minor development projects such as boundary delineation, essential road-building and repairs and as carriers for essential goods.

Even taking into account evidence of sizeable labour migration to, for instance, Southern Rhodesian mining centres, it is nevertheless clear that on the eve of the war substantial sections of Northern Rhodesia's total taxable male population (estimated at around 200,000 in 1914¹²) remained peripheral to regular and sustained participation in the region's wage-labour economy. This under-utilisation of the Territory's manpower resources was aided and perpetuated by several formal and informal constraints upon labour recruitment which were themselves

generated by important geographical, political, economic and even environmental variables, often acting in concert.

Within the north-eastern districts, for example, the existence of Sleeping Sickness 'Guard' areas precluded early and systematic labour recruitment by either Robert Williams and Co. or the RNLB.¹³ The BSAC could not prevent small but significant numbers of labourers illegally crossing the Luapula river to work in the Congo mines or proceeding south, thanks to a woeful lack of police. But these restricted zones were an important deterrent to large-scale African labour exploitation until at least 1911 when the Company revised its labour policy in these areas in the wake of Nyasaland's ban on RNLB recruitment.¹⁴

In other areas it was the profound lack of Company political and, consequently, economic control which seriously hampered pre-war labour recruitment. By 1914 the Bangweulu swamp region, as we have seen, had barely been explored let alone penetrated by colonial labour demands despite its population of an estimated 10,000 taxable Unga, Bisa and Batwa males. Tax demands, if not often evaded, were met by sale of fish and animal skins. Tribal communities straddled along the Belgian Congo and Portuguese border areas also frequently evaded Company tax and labour demands with impunity, criss-crossing the border at the approach of Company officials.¹⁵

The unsettled state of the Kasempa District in particular precluded its use as a reliable labour reservoir. Thus, as late as June 1910, the Management and Financial Committee of the RNLB was reviewing future labour recruitment policies which would involve exploiting still 'virgin' areas, despite the fact that it had operated in the Territory for the past six years. The plans involved 'opening up' the Kasempa and Balunda countries, 'untapped until this month when 350 boys were obtained', and in north-east Rhodesia 'exploiting the so-called "Guard Areas" hitherto closed'.¹⁶

Within a few months, however, the political crisis which erupted in the Kasempa District served to severely curtail this new source of recruitment. Once the 1912 disturbances had been quelled, recruiting agencies were officially discouraged from operating in the area for fear of upsetting the delicate balance of control, a policy continued until, as we shall see, urgent war needs required its reopening for limited labour extraction. As late as March 1914 one Kasempa official stressed that the local Lunda were 'strongly averse to mine labour' and that it would be premature to allow formal recruitment. He observed that, 'by refusing to grant a recruiter the necessary permission, the Administration may

lose a certain amount of tax revenue, but better this than lose the confidence of the most suspicious race I have ever dealt with especially when [...] we are only, after several years laborious work, just beginning to make a little headway'. He recommended that the recruiting ban be reimposed for another eighteen months or two years, 'since it is possible that an injudicious move at the present juncture would throw back the District into the chaotic state of two years ago'. It was a deeply ominous situation for a Territory on the brink of a devastating total war.¹⁷

Such was the political precariousness of Kasempa that even recruiting for Government purposes at times proved impossible. This forced the Livingstone executive to transfer the burden to other more settled 'safe' districts, much to the chagrin of officials responsible for these areas. In mid-1913, for instance, Kaonde and Lunda hostility to recruiters for the Boundary Commission forced the Administration to switch to the Awemba District in the far north-east in order to secure 300 urgently needed carriers. The Mpika District official, whilst complying with the demand, strongly criticised the Company's political weaknesses which he now had to pay for.¹⁸

Other kinds of political factors interfered with the early recruiting policies of Robert Williams and Co. Anxious to secure that primacy of the hard-pressed RNLB in the recruiting field and therefore to protect the labour supply to the Company's more lucrative interests in Southern Rhodesia, London Wall actively discriminated against rival recruiting agencies from the Congo. For the first five years of the development of the Katanga mines, from 1906 to 1911, 'the BSAC attempted to place an embargo on the shipment of all labour from N. E. Rhodesia to Katanga'.¹⁹ Agreement over the regular extraction of sizeable quotas of labour from Northern Rhodesia by the Katanga mining authorities was only tentatively reached in 1910. Nevertheless, as late as July 1911 one official of Robert Williams and Co. observed that the operation was 'in rather a hopeless state [...] A greater part of the Luapula-Mweru district we cannot touch. Other districts for which I have asked recruiting rights have been refused and under present circumstances our rights to recruit in Rhodesia are of very little value.'²⁰ Not until the last quarter of 1911 were regular supplies of labour arranged. Full permission was then belatedly given to Robert Williams and Co. to recruit up to 1,000 men in north-west Rhodesia, and restraints on recruitment in Mweru-Luapula under the Sleeping Sickness regulations were finally lifted.

The recruiters themselves had financial problems too, which restricted their operations. The heavy costs of transporting and feeding labour imposed strict geographical limits upon their activities. When the new Manager of the RNLB, for instance, considered proposals to open up the Kasempa and Balunda areas in March 1911, to compensate for the loss of labour arising from the Nyasaland ban, he pointed out to H. Birchenough that recruiting from these remote regions would 'cost a lot of money'; indeed, for both of these districts and even for the Kafue, 'no funds are available to really push matters'.²¹

The final and perhaps most potent constraint upon the widespread and systematic exploitation of Northern Rhodesia's manpower resources during the pre-war period arose from the existence, as mentioned earlier, of large, cohesive bodies of African peasantry who, through the sale of produce and livestock, successfully fulfilled tax demands and thereby avoided regular participation in the labour market. The Namwala official thus accounted for the poor labour record of the Ila domiciled along the Kafue riverlands: 'The Baila are very wealthy [...] and a large proportion have no necessity to earn money since by the sale of grain and cattle they obtain what money they require [...] only a small minority ever go to work'.²² The same was true of other north-western tribes especially those near the line-of-the-rail market such as the Soli, Toka and the cattle-herding Tonga.²³ Indeed, in some areas, notably the rich agricultural Chilanga sub-district, local peasant-cultivators so skilfully evaded local labour demands, that outside labour had to be brought in to meet local requirements.²⁴

Similarly, the extensive cattle herds in Barotseland provided a constant cash income by which many Lozi males could readily meet their tax obligations. Before the war, Lozi labour at the Katanga and Southern Rhodesian mines was proportionately small compared to the total taxable male population of Barotseland.²⁵ Even in the remote north-western border districts and north-east Plateau, African producers (probably mainly Lunda and Shila cultivators), were able to meet tax and evade wage labour by sale of grain, cassava and the like to the nearby Katanga mines.²⁶

The flourishing of a substantial peasant base relatively independent of the Northern Rhodesian labour economy was undoubtedly promoted by the marked absence of systematic or sustained political pressure to force black peasants en masse into the labour market. Once tax payment had occurred (10s. 0d. poll tax in north-west Rhodesia and 3s. 0d. hut tax in north-east, the latter only being changed to 5s. 0d. poll tax in March 1914), the Company authorities had few viable long-term

options left with which to push labour out. Naked force could be and was undoubtedly applied at times of acute labour shortage,²⁷ but the weakness of administrative control in, for instance, Bangweulu and many of the outlying border districts, combined with the heavy cost involved in such coercive tactics in peacetime, probably precluded the regular and systematic deployment of such methods as a matter of policy.

In addition, the meagre numbers of white settlers in Northern Rhodesia before 1914 ensured that land pressure remained minimal, by comparison to the larger and more powerful settler pressure group in Southern Rhodesia which, through the application of political mechanisms such as high grazing and land rents and, ultimately, grossly inadequate provision of reserve land, was gradually forcing the black peasantry off the most fertile lands and into the labour market.²⁸ By 1914, with the exception of the heavily populated East Luangwa District, reserve proposals had been barely formulated in Northern Rhodesia and were immediately shelved by the imperial authorities upon the outbreak of war.²⁹ As a result, the Northern Rhodesian African peasant sector retained a remarkable degree of resilience and independence throughout the pre-war period, a stark contrast to the fate of Shona and Ndebele counterparts south of the Zambesi, who by 1915, under the Imperial Reserve Commission proposals faced dispossession of an estimated one million acres of their prime farming lands.³⁰ Indeed, it was the lack of such contrived legislation and tax pressure within the embryonic colonial state of Northern Rhodesia before 1914 that often obliged Company officials to rely instead upon natural disasters to crops or livestock to ensure any significant labour exodus from peasant areas. Thus it was only one such calamity of nature in the Guimbi area in 1913 that facilitated a sizeable labour turnout, the local official reporting the 'great increase in the number [...] engaged through the Bureau on account of the failures of last season's crop'.³¹

Consequently, there was a distinct tendency for colonial labour centres, particularly the mines, to receive a disproportionately high number of recruits from those tribal groups more economically susceptible to colonial tax pressure. Two tribal polities, the Bemba and the Ngoni, were exceptionally vulnerable in this respect. Both had suffered severe economic, as well as political repercussions, from the advent of Pax Britannica.³² The cessation of raiding, a major source of food supply, and their lack of a strong agricultural base, largely precluded surplus food sales for tax purposes (particularly amongst the Bemba) and ensured a

proportionately higher labour migration rate. Despite the lack of reliable census and labour migration statistics (particularly in relation to voluntary labour), Awemba³³ and Fort Jameson³⁴ District officials observed alarmingly high migration rates during the pre-war period. It is possible that the Ngoni suffered even more severely than the Bemba. Their political and military structure had been the only one to be decisively broken by Company forces during the 1897–8 war; their socio-economic system, dependent upon cattle transfer, had undoubtedly been severely disrupted by subsequent Company sequestrations. In addition, settler land pressures in this heavily populated area had reinforced the high exodus of Ngoni males.

By 1914, therefore, despite more than two decades of colonial labour demands, Northern Rhodesia's labour potential was by no means fully realised. Although many black Northern Rhodesians, perhaps the majority, had undoubtedly entered the colonial labour market at one time or another, the Territory as a whole, for the economic and political reasons given, had only been haphazardly exploited. More specifically, it is possible to broadly distinguish between, on the one hand, areas of consistent and heavy exploitation such as the Bemba and Ngoni heartlands and on the other, what might be termed peripheral labour areas, such as the central north-western cattle-rearing and peasant-cultivator districts, the Bangweulu Swamps and remote border areas, whose labour resources remained irregularly exploited, or, in the case of Bangweulu, virtually untapped.

The advent of war: the emerging pattern of strain

For a variety of reasons the outbreak of war in August 1914 directly and heavily affected Northern Rhodesia. Firstly, there were German strategic ambitions. Despite the misgivings of Dr Schnee, the governor of German East Africa, his senior military commander General von Lettow-Vorbeck had immediately decided upon a determined, aggressive and proactive campaign which would absorb and distract the neighbouring principal Allied colonies of the Belgian Congo, Northern Rhodesia, Nyasaland and British East Africa. He told Berlin that 'war in the colony' should 'not be treated as a self-sufficient episode. It and the great war can react off each other.'³⁵ By taking the offensive, Vorbeck's 'Schutztruppen' would, using guerrilla tactics, 'draw British troops away from the main theatre [...] German East Africa was therefore a means to an end'.³⁶ Moreover, it was to be a total war for many Africans in which African interests would be

sacrificed to meet European needs. In the words of distinguished African historian, Professor John Iliffe: 'Lettow-Vorbeck's brilliant campaign was the climax of Africa's exploitation: its use as a mere battlefield.'³⁷

Secondly, Allied strategic pressures added to Northern Rhodesia's burden. After the Allied disaster at Tanga, Britain's Belgian allies had themselves strongly pushed for a two-pronged offensive into German East Africa from the south, with one converging thrust to be launched directly from the Northern Rhodesian border. Belgian military build-up in turn attracted German pre-emptive strikes, notably against Saisi and Abercorn border posts in 1914–15. But, as we shall see, it was to be the outbreak of the Chilembwe rebellion in 1915 in nearby Nyasaland, combined with the detrimental impact of the intractable border war which was to convince both the Colonial and War Offices of the imperative need to launch a major offensive into German East Africa to rescue and restore British prestige. Equally significantly, the outbreak of hostilities in August 1914 and the major 1916 offensive were to have far-reaching and unforeseen implications for the existing Northern Rhodesian labour economy, thanks to an almost total dependence upon human carrier transport to secure the defence of the north-east border adjoining German East Africa.³⁸ In the words of L. A. Wallace, the Northern Rhodesian Administrator:

The difficulties were that between the nearest point on the Railway and the northern border [...] there was 600 miles of country covered with tsetse fly in which no domestic animals could live and therefore no sustained ox, horse, mule, or donkey transport was possible. Because of this no roads had been made suitable for wheeled traffic and motor traffic was not possible until such roads had been made. We were therefore [...] limited to native carrier transport.³⁹

Further, the opening of the major military front upon the north-east border ensured that the main burden of supplying the war effort would be shouldered by the districts of the north-east Plateau, one of the least developed areas of the whole Territory. The population of the Plateau measured no more than three per square mile; Administrative stations were about one hundred miles apart, interspersed with a few scattered mission stations. The limited surplus food production of much of the area posed further serious problems, not so much for feeding the several hundred troops stationed at the border defence posts, as for mobilising the vast quantities of food to ration the carriers themselves en route.

Official figures estimated that the average carrier or porter travelled fifteen miles per day (seven days a week), the net load totalling sixty pounds in weight, to which was added cooking pots, blankets and so on. With rations fixed at a standard rate of two and a half pounds of meal per day, a carrier would, therefore, eat through the full weight of his load in twenty-four days; that is on a twelve day journey outward (180 miles) and a twelve day return.⁴⁰

When no food was available along the route, the number of carriers required would have to be massively multiplied. Wallace calculated that:

If the route be divided into sections of five days travel over seventy-five miles a carrier would deliver at the end of this distance $\frac{7}{12}$ of his load and would eat $\frac{5}{12}$, that is seven would be carrying through loads and five would be carrying food for the road trip. On the next section of seventy-five miles $\frac{7}{12}$ of what had come over the first section would be delivered and $\frac{5}{12}$ eaten. At the end of 450 miles (the distance from the Railway to the main supply depot at Kasama) only $\frac{1}{27}$ of the weight originally started would be delivered at the depot and the border was still 150 miles further on.⁴¹

The logistical implications were therefore appalling. To deliver just one ton of food per day over a distance of 150 miles would require 750 carriers if food were available on the road, but 1,800 with food also to be carried for daily consumption; for a distance of 300 miles the figures would be 1,500 and 7,150 carriers respectively; for a distance of 450 miles, 2,250 and 23,300 respectively. Finally, for the full 600 mile journey from the Ndola railhead 3,000 carriers would be needed if rations were available en route, or a massive 71,000 carrying their own food – all to deliver a mere one ton of supplies to the military.

The establishment of food depots en route did relatively little to alleviate the problem of providing for the carriers who supplied the troops contesting the war.⁴² Moreover, early military strategy ensured that the pattern of strain was at once intense, if geographically limited. The prolonged border war which preceded Northey's offensive in May 1916 meant that, for much of the first twenty-two months of hostilities, most of the responsibility for carrier provision devolved upon the three districts closest to the border, namely Tanganyika, Awemba and Mweru-Luapula. Luwingu war labour figures, for example (a District with a population of only approximately 7,000 taxable males), registered an immense total of 12,786 engagements for the period March 1915–March 1916.⁴³ At the other end of the Plateau, only 12,109 war

labour engagements were registered in the same period for the whole of the East Luangwa District (nearly six times larger, with around 40,000 taxable males).⁴⁴ There could be no better illustration of the inequality of strain according to distance from the Border war zone.

Within these three border districts, labour pressure was varied according to the changing demands of military strategy. Thus the Chienji and Mporokoso sub-districts, for instance, were subjected to heavy local carrier demands, as several Belgian reinforcement columns criss-crossed the area in 1914 and 1915, while the large military garrisons at Abercorn, Fife, Saisi and Kasama made deep inroads into the local labour pools.

It was not until a full year after the outbreak of war that the other major north-eastern districts, East Luangwa and many north-western districts, contributed significant contingents of African manpower to the Border war. The Kafue District, for instance, despatched its first contingents of war labour only in August 1915,⁴⁵ and large calls upon the substantial East Luangwa labour resources were only made from November 1915 onwards.⁴⁶ By contrast, in the far west some districts actually enjoyed a glut of labour during the first six months of war. This was due to a combination of trade depression and an influx of repatriated labour, thanks to the temporary closure of the Katanga mines. In Barotseland, local traders who were starved of stock and transport contractors drastically cut down their labour requirements; in Balovale it was observed that 'owing to the war' many traders had 'closed down in Barotse'.⁴⁷

Total war: maximum labour exploitation

The decision reached in late September 1915 to launch a major offensive into German East Africa completely revolutionised the dimensions of war labour supply in Northern Rhodesia. Thousands more carriers were needed and with them huge quantities of foodstuffs, to supply not only the military formations, but also the carriers themselves.

The first effects on the labour supply were felt with the rapid extension of lines of communication and consequent expansion of recruiting areas. On routes parallel to the central route, from Broken Hill to Serenje, Mpika, Kasama and Abercorn, carrier traffic vastly increased during the offensive build-up, especially along the route from Fort Jameson via Lundazi to Fife. Thus government war labour engagements for Fort Jameson district rocketed from approximately 1,000 for the year ending March 1915,⁴⁸ to 6,084 during the year ending March 1916.⁴⁹

Concerted pressures from the Salisbury military authorities resulted in feverish attempts to complete the motor roads, from the rail point at

Kashitu via Kasama to Abercorn and Fife. In terms of increased labour mobilisation, however, it was the inauguration of a new 'water route' extending across the Lake Banweulu swamp region which represented the most profound innovation in labour strategy (see Map 2.1 for the major wartime labour routes). In February 1916 Wallace told London Wall of the opening of the route by porters and canoe. To control this new labour route, a new *boma* was established at Nsumbu Island on Lake Bangweulu. During the first six weeks, 500 canoes able to carry between 3,000 and 4,000 loads had been organised.⁵⁰ Five months later, at the height of the Northey offensive, Wallace reported that 1,200 canoes were deployed along the river section and 3,000 to 4,000 carriers along the land section between Ndola and Luapula.⁵¹ At peak level, there were no less than 12,000 paddlers in 2,000 canoes, carrying loads weighing from 120 lbs to 300 lbs to Chiwutuwutu depot, within thirty miles of Kasama, where the carriers again took over.⁵²

The combination of canoe and motor-lorry transport did little to reduce the overriding reliance upon carriers. Wallace thought of the road as no more than 'a safeguard against failure' not least because its running costs were so high, up to £70 or £80 per ton over the whole distance.⁵³ It required twenty-six cars to deliver a mere 2,000 lbs of food per day to the main food depot at Kasama, and the road could become impassable during the rains. Nor was the canoe route of decisive importance in relieving the strain on carriers.⁵⁴

The Northey advance added enormously to existing labour strain. At one point, in August 1916, Wallace warned the Commandant-General that the transport position would be 'fairly safe', only if water and motor transport were kept going during the rains 'and that we have not to find carriers and food for the transport beyond our own border [...] If however, more carriers are needed for transport further north or more food for German carriers (which means more carriage of food to the border) men cannot be found for the work.'⁵⁵ Wallace already had to find men to carry supplies as much as 130 miles into German territory and by October 1916 the cross-border carrying distance had increased to 200 miles.

The problem of labour supply was compounded by major underestimates of campaign food requirements. An original estimate by a Major Byas of 3.924 million lbs of foodstuffs required for the period May 1916 to May 1917 was practically equalled during the first six months alone. The Byas estimate of delivery of 280,000 lbs of food per month to the border for the initial six month period proved a hopeless miscalculation. In June 1916 alone, food issues rose as high as 385,000 lbs.⁵⁶

More food required more labour to transport it and the north-eastern districts, in particular, paid the price for such administrative blunders. At Abercorn, for instance, a sub-district with an estimated 8,500 taxable males, about 5,000 carriers had been registered by August 1916 as first- and second-line transport with the troops in German East Africa, and 800 more on roads and telegraphs. At Kasama, the major food and carrier depot, and a sub-district containing roughly 5,000 taxable males, no less than 6,000 war carrier engagements were recorded.⁵⁷

Perhaps the outstanding indication of the intolerable strain upon the north-eastern districts during the Northey offensive was the increasing recruitment of adult females and juvenile males. In 1917 the Tanganyika District Commissioner revealed that 'upwards of 900 Abercorn women worked off and on for three and four months', together with an unknown quantity of female labour from the other two stations.⁵⁸ At Serenje, the smallest of five north-eastern Districts, the Administrator himself saw 1,200 men and women carrying twenty-eight tons of flour to the front.⁵⁹ Anglican missionaries travelling along the Ndola-Kabunda route observed young boys among the 5,600 war porters, many 'quite small' and 'carrying loads slung on a pole between them'.⁶⁰ (See Table 2.3 for a breakdown of war carrier engagements).

One 1916 official tour report by the Administrator provided a striking insight into the vast scale of carrier demands throughout the Territory. From August 1914 to March 1917, a total of approximately 313,000 engagements were recorded, ranging from a few weeks to several months.⁶¹ The dramatic impact of Northey's offensive operations after May 1916 was clearly reflected in the number of war carrier engagements recorded in north-east Rhodesia. These rose from 42,528 for the period August 1914 to March 1915, to 92,337 during the period April 1915 to March 1916. They then reached a peak of 138,930 engagements for the period April 1916 to March 1917. Precise manpower participation figures are impossible to ascertain, since individuals were often recruited several times over. Wallace, himself, estimated that war transport absorbed approximately 15,000 separate carriers in 1916 alone, at times peaking at 30,000.⁶² The heaviest calls for war work naturally fell on the north-eastern war zone. By contrast the geographical remoteness of Barotseland, and to a lesser extent north-west Rhodesia, meant that these areas escaped more lightly.⁶³

After the mass levies of several thousand mainly Ngoni carriers for the Nyasaland military forces, from March 1917 onwards labour demands briefly slackened as German forces disappeared deep into Portuguese East Africa, but pressure upon the five districts nearest to the north-east

Table 2.3 Northern Rhodesian war carrier engagements officially recorded for the period August 1914 to March 1917 (NAZ, BS3/81, Wallace to HC, 1 October 1917)

	N.E. Rhodesia	N.W. Rhodesia	Total
from Aug: 1914 to 31.3.15	42,528	—	42,528
from 1.4.15 to 31.3.16	92,337	15,042	107,381
from 1.4.16 to 31.3.17	<u>138,930</u>	<u>24,052</u>	<u>162,982</u>
Total	273,797	39,094	312,891

Statement taken from Returns of war carriers 1916/17

	1	2	3	4	5
	Taxable males	Nos. engaged in war work	Total No. months work done	Equiv. No. men in constant employment	Est. Nos. in civil employment
Tanganyika	16,470	17,865	55,592	4,633	8,594
Mweru-Luapula	24,749	34,082	55,369	4,615	9,500
Awemba	24,949	43,933	57,299	4,772	10,688
Serenje	5,204	5,893	4,218	352	800
East Luangwa	<u>48,234</u>	<u>17,159</u>	<u>23,437</u>	<u>2,120</u>	<u>10,370</u>
	<u>119,506</u>	138,950	197,875	16,492	<u>39,952</u>
Add: N. Western Rhodesia carriers		<u>24,052</u>	<u>67,541</u>	<u>5,628</u>	To these must be added the unknown numbers who, unregistered have left the country for work in Katanga and Southern Rhodesia
Add: King's African Rifles				1,100	
Add: N. Rhodesia Police				<u>1,400</u>	
Average number in constant employment throughout the year				<u>24,620</u>	

1. The taxable males include the old and infirm and unfit for work.

2. The numbers engaged were principally as carriers, but they include some on road construction. The engagements were for periods varying from six months to a few days on short trips from Station to Station. Each trip is counted as an engagement and many carriers did a number of trips so that the engagements show a higher number than the taxable males.

3. The total months are arrived at as in the following examples:

Awemba District

1,177	men	at	6	months	=	7,062	months
15,465	"	"	2	"	=	30,932	"
11,242	"	"	1	month	=	11,242	"
16,049	"	"	1	month or less	=	8,025	"
				(called ½ month)			
				Total months worked		<u>57,259</u>	

4. The total months worked divided by 12 give the average number in employment during the whole year. This average was necessarily not constant but varied probably between 15,000 and 30,000.

5. Those in civil employment include carriers for short periods, and many so employed may have carried out war work, and would then be included in column 2.

border remained incessant. In March 1918, the Tanganyika District Commissioner still reported that 'just over 33% of the taxable male population had been recruited as military porters for a term of six months during the previous year, compared to 25% the year before that (1916 to 1917)' which 'meant that practically every really able-bodied male has done a term of six months "first line work" [...] the majority have served much longer'. These figures excluded the several thousand employed upon internal 'second line' work.⁶⁴

Recruitment conflicts: the paramountcy of military imperatives

The rapid expansion of the war labour pool within Northern Rhodesia carried important implications for civil employers. Before the war, African labour for Northern Rhodesian white farms, for instance, had been plentiful, despite wage rates often barely a quarter of those obtainable in the mines. The intrusion of military recruitment, however, seems to have been detrimental to the delicate balance existing within the shared mine/farm labour pool. Government wage rates for military carrier work were similar to those of the mines and greatly exceeded those offered by white farmers. At a time when farm pay was no more than 7s. 6d. a month, the carriers' average monthly wage started at 10s. 0d. and rose higher later in the war. Moreover, military call-ups tended to result in the extraction of large quantities of labour, indiscriminately and often at short notice.

From late 1915 onwards, angry complaints by white farmers against the Company's recruitment for the military appeared in the *Livingstone Mail*. Farmers claimed they were being compelled to seek labour through the highly expensive services of the RNLB, which, in any case, already extracted good quality labour from the area. In October 1915 one farmer predicted that the coming planting season would

Prove disastrous to seventy-five per cent of the farmers of this territory mainly because the Government have taken for carriers, for war work [...] thousands of natives on whom we were relying for the production of crops and are still allowing the RNLB to continue recruiting thereby letting the balance of our labour leave the territory.⁶⁵

At the 1916 north-west Farmers Association annual meeting, another farmer protested that the Government 'were recruiting [...] three

thousand boys in the Magoye District, a settled area, while only 300 had been taken from the Namwala district where there were no settlers'.⁶⁶ And the costs of relying on the services of the RNLB were overwhelming. Before the military recruitment 'boys could be recruited at their own doors by the farmer for 5s. 0d. a month', but those farmers who went to the RNLB had to pay 12s. 6d. per month on top of a capitation fee to the Bureau of 30s. 0d.⁶⁷

Friction over war labour recruitment extended to the tobacco-growing district of Fort Jameson. Here conflicts arose during 1916 and 1917, especially after the mass military levies of Ngoni males from March 1917. The tobacco planters required several thousand casual labourers annually, not merely to harvest the crop, but to transport and store the leaf in warehouses in a critically short period immediately thereafter. In March 1917, the North-East Rhodesia Agricultural and Commercial Association demanded that the RNLB be barred from the district until the end of the year. Planting labour was already in dangerously short supply thanks to military demands. The Association even feared that without such restrictions on commercial recruiting, the local Africans' food supply would suffer. Much of the remaining labour was, after all, that rejected as medically unfit for work as a carrier.⁶⁸ In August 1917 a meeting held between the Administrator and a farmers' delegation resulted in a ban on RNLB recruitment for an initial period of five months.⁶⁹

Of greater concern to the Livingstone executive and London Wall were the strident protests received from local mines as military requisitions undermined their labour supplies. The Company authorities were obviously loath to restrict mining recruitment. As Wallace stressed in early 1916, 'No restrictions are placed on recruitment by Mining Companies except when absolutely necessary.'⁷⁰ Undisturbed mining development brought considerable revenue from taxes and royalties. Moreover, the war had provided a notable stimulus to production of the two principal mines, the Bwana M'kubwa and the more recently re-opened Broken Hill mine, thanks to the enhanced Allied demand for copper and lead. The Mines Department reported in early 1916 that lead smelting had begun at Broken Hill and that between June 1915 and March 1916, 852 tons of lead of an estimated value of £1,709 had been declared.⁷¹ By 1918 the same mine had increased production tenfold to 10,951 tons of short lead, valued at over £164,000 and had commenced royalty payments to the BSAC amounting to several thousand pounds.⁷²

Unfortunately for the Company, the labour catchment areas of these two mining companies coincided with that of the major war-carrier depots at Ndola and Broken Hill. In early 1916 the Mines Department

reported that military labour demands had been so heavy that it was difficult to get labour of 'the right stamp' for the mines.⁷³ By June 1916, the London office had received bitter complaints from the Secretary of the Bwana M'kubwa Mining Company. He attacked the BSAC's apparently discriminatory war labour policy, pointing out that 'Boys came in very satisfactorily for work until the Government decided to send 4,000 carriers monthly with war loads from Ndola to the border troops.' He continued: 'Since then but few natives have come in for work as the Government are absorbing all available and [...] have increased their pay to carriers by 50%'.⁷⁴ A second letter deprecated the apparent victimisation of indigenous mining companies, especially after they had spent £4,000 in reopening property which would be 'thrown away if the mill cannot be run to full capacity'. The mine protested 'that if the Government had not sufficient labour then recruiting on the Congo Mines should be disallowed before restrictions were placed on local industries'.⁷⁵ The Directors of Bwana M'kubwa, while agreeing that military needs 'must have first consideration', nevertheless considered that the Company had been placed 'under a serious injustice', particularly in view of 'the importance at present of the output from the mine being maintained and made available in the market, as soon and as regularly as possible'.⁷⁶

Externally-based recruiting agencies were, nevertheless, also hard hit. In February 1916 the Company had already been forced by the growing military labour demands to place a partial ban on the RNLB's north-western recruiting operations. This generalised the situation already existing in the three north-eastern border districts, where the local officials had already imposed civil recruiting restrictions at the outbreak of war. The north-western white farming lobby was to some extent appeased, as was its north-eastern counterpart, when RNLB recruiting operations in East Luangwa were suspended after August 1917. In February 1917 it was the turn of Robert Williams and Co. whose recruitment operations were also abruptly halted at the height of the Northey offensive.

War and labour metamorphosis in Northern Rhodesia: implications for the Central African labour economy

These wartime restrictions reluctantly placed upon both internal and external civil recruitment agencies, resulted in grave labour shortages in the rest of the region by the end of 1916. For the RNLB the loss of formal recruiting rights in most of Northern Rhodesia for much of 1916,

combined with similar wartime restrictions in neighbouring Nyasaland and Portuguese East Africa, contributed to a serious labour deficiency and substantial losses of revenue. Recruits from Northern Rhodesia, the primary labour reservoir, dropped by over a third between 1915 and 1916, from 6,602 to 4,142.⁷⁷ Similarly, total capitation fees paid fell from £34,751 in 1915 to £20,171 in 1916.⁷⁸ At the annual meeting of the RNLB Board held in 1917, the Chairman not surprisingly described 1916 as the 'worst year in the Bureau's existence'; many of the Bureau's subscribers had found themselves short of labour.⁷⁹

The steady strangulation of Robert Williams and Co.'s major recruiting grounds in north-west and north-east Rhodesia also occurred at a highly inopportune time for the Union Minière du Haut Katanga. During the year 1916–17 they required an above average number of African labourers to meet an ambitious expansion programme, itself the result of the escalation of Allied war demands for copper. The annual report for 1916–17 anticipated the need for a workforce of some ten to twelve thousand Africans by the end of 1917 to man the planned extensions of the mining complex.⁸⁰

The problem for the BSAC, therefore, was how to maintain labour supplies to such commercially important labour agencies as the RNLB and Robert Williams and Co. (particularly the former in view of its vital role in the viability of the Company's Southern Rhodesian assets) and to internal mining and farming interests, whilst also meeting the rapidly escalating military demands. A single natural disaster, occurring early in the war, helped to provide one unexpected partial solution. In April 1915, a severe outbreak of bovine pleuropneumonia amongst the extensive Lozi cattle herds, followed by an inevitable quarantine of the cattle trade throughout most of north-western Rhodesia, wiped out Lozi tax-earning capacity; thousands had to enter the labour market.⁸¹

The scale of the disaster was reflected in all six Barotse districts from mid-1915 onwards. Lukona tax revenue, for instance, was halved from £3,162 for the reporting year 1914–15 to £1,516 for 1915–16, the year of the pleuropneumonia epidemic.⁸² The enhanced depression in the store-keeping and transport industries further reduced the opportunity for many Lozi males to earn tax locally, thus exacerbating the overall disaster.⁸³ In Balovale, a weakly-administered district, it was reported that 'Natives south of the Kabompo, who are the only regular tax-payers, have been deprived, owing to the cattle sickness, of the means of getting cash by the sale of cattle, whilst others have lost a normal means of earning owing to the decrease in the demand for paddlers from traders.'⁸⁴ In cattle-rich Sesheke, severe famine in early 1916 added to the many

tax defaulters arising from the cattle-trading ban, 'the men having gone to look for food rather than tax'.⁸⁵

The Livingstone Administration was not slow to exploit this vast new unexpected labour potential accruing from the existence of several thousand impoverished Lozi males, representing a labour pool traditionally very reluctant to participate in the colonial market.⁸⁶ Throughout much of 1915 and 1916 they maintained an orchestrated campaign to push the thousands of virtually penniless Lozi males northwards, to work for the already labour-starved industries of Katanga, or south via the RNLB, to Southern Rhodesian mines and farms. Not only would Rhodesian employers be thereby compensated for the drying up of recruits elsewhere, but the Company would be able to recoup the Barotseland tax revenues out of the migrants' wages.

In August 1915, at a meeting of the Khotla (the Supreme Lozi Council incorporating the royal family), the newly-appointed 'Visiting Commissioner' impressed on the Lozi royal family the necessity of rapidly pushing men out on to the labour market. Noting the large shortfall in tax revenue, he stressed that there was little prospect of the Lozi being able to sell their cattle since the quarantine was likely to be in effect for a long time; instead, he advised them that 'the Native Commissioner will always point out where work is available'.⁸⁷ Pressure was similarly applied to assembled headmen at many meetings arranged in outlying sub-districts. At Nampuna, Lukona and Mankoya the message was everywhere the same. There was no point in holding off the labour market in the hope of being able to raise tax money by the sale of cattle; nor would taxes be remitted. The men would have to go out to work.⁸⁸

Where labour could not be readily induced to move, coercive tactics were promptly and extensively employed. When substantial numbers of Mankoya tax defaulters failed to depart for employment in Southern Rhodesia, one official reported on the widespread punitive measures implemented by his assistant: 'Mr Walton has, during the past three months been arresting tax defaulters in large numbers (in order to induce the natives to realise that they must find work).' The small number of guards available for gaol duty was regretted, 'making it impossible to arrest and look after as many as one could wish'.⁸⁹ Similarly, in Nalolo, it was observed that Africans were 'undergoing punishment for non-payment of taxes'.⁹⁰

The opening up of Barotseland to unprecedentedly intense labour recruitment did much to reduce growing friction between local Company officials and civil labour agents, angry at the steady erosion of recruiting opportunities. Until October 1915, for instance, Robert

Williams and Co. had faced increasingly severe restrictions on their recruiting grounds in the north-west as military demands expanded even into the Kasempa District to meet the needs of Northey's offensive. Moreover, following this, local officials became even more wary of excessive civil recruitment in view of the Kasempa area's turbulent pre-war history. In August 1915 the Lunda Division west of the Kabompo was thus excluded from active recruiting. To reduce the risk of labour abuse it was also laid down that 'the employment of natives to assist in labour recruiting is prohibited'.⁹¹ In mid-October, R. W. Yule, the principal recruiting agent for Robert Williams and Co. in the north-west, whilst expressing relief at the news of a brief lull in military conscription just after a batch of 1,400 carriers had gone off to the war, nevertheless impatiently warned that if civil recruiting was effectively barred from Kasempa, it would mean 'bringing up labour from Portuguese East Africa and therein lies a chance of Kasempa labour being eventually shut off from a means of earning their tax money'.⁹² Within a fortnight of this complaint, however, the recruitment situation had been transformed by the news of the new virtually unrestricted recruiting rights in Barotseland.⁹³ These lasted until February 1917 and in turn reduced labour pressure upon the 'politically unstable' Lunda.

For both the RNLB and Robert Williams and Co. the injection of the new 'Lozi labour factor' into existing employment strategies played an enormously significant part in alleviating the overall labour shortage in 1916–17. Of the reduced total of 4,142 Northern Rhodesian Africans recruited by the RNLB during the twelve months ending December 1916, over sixty per cent were Lozi in origin (i.e. 2,646).⁹⁴ During 1917 Lozi labour played a vital role in Bureau labour supply for both Rhodesias, not only in the context of purely Northern Rhodesian labour but in the context of labour from all territories. During 1917 the Bureau distributed a total of 10,110 Africans originating from all territories. Nearly 4,000 came from Barotseland, making up virtually the whole of the increased recruitment from Northern Rhodesia which doubled from 4,142 to 8,549 in 1916–17.⁹⁵ Lozi labour thus proved a major, though not complete, compensation for the loss of north-east Rhodesian labour diverted to war transport.

Lozi recruits similarly played an increasingly important role in Robert Williams and Co.'s operations in Northern Rhodesia. Large gangs of Lozi recruits arrived in Katanga during late 1915 and by July 1916, of the total of 3,232 registered Rhodesian Africans working in the three main mines of Lubumbashi, Star and Kamboye during that month, 464 originated from Barotseland.⁹⁶ As north-east Rhodesian labour was increasingly

diverted to war work, the proportion of Lozi labour rapidly increased. By November 1916 it was reported that the Rhodesian recruits arriving that month were 'almost exclusively Barotse'; very few from the north east were now coming through.⁹⁷ Lozi recruitment figures reached a peak during the months of December 1916 and January 1917 before their exceptionally high death rate in the mines compelled, as we shall see, belated imperial intervention and a virtual cessation of recruitment after February 1917.

Not only were Company officials in Barotseland delighted by the way in which the labour flow promised to wipe out the 1915–16 tax deficit⁹⁸ but Lozi labour was also being directed to making the rest of Northern Rhodesia more productive. With greater Company control it was possible now to compensate Northern Rhodesian mine and farm interests for the loss of labour commandeered for war purposes. In early 1918, for instance, the Mines Department recorded the crucial supportive role played by Lozi recruits at Bwana M'kubwa. Operations had been 'handicapped by a shortage of labour, especially underground, due to war transport and the closing of the best recruiting district'. Labour was, however, 'subsequently procured from Barotseland in sufficient quantities'.⁹⁹ By late 1916 Northern Rhodesian white farmers were also told of the new employment opportunities arising outside Bureau supplies, thanks to the glut of Lozi labour.¹⁰⁰

Finally, a smaller but significant proportion of Lozi males was drawn directly into war service, principally as carriers along the Ndola-Kabunda route; this, by virtue of its geographical proximity to the Barotse heartland, made their military deployment economical in terms of their own food supply. Lewanika, the Lozi paramount, voluntarily donated 2,000 of his people to the imperial cause in 1915; a few thousand more were recruited in 1916 and 1917 to meet intensive military demands.¹⁰¹ At the height of the Northey offensive, one missionary dramatically confirmed from Ndola that the government were 'having to import men by the thousand from Barotseland [...] they are sending off 6,000 to 7,000 loads per week to the Front'.¹⁰²

The enormous socio-economic ramifications of the massive labour mobilisation were not solely confined to the Lozi. Military service itself introduced many other north-western peoples (including some who in peacetime had largely remained on the periphery of civil labour markets), into a pattern of disciplined and relatively highly paid employment very similar, as it turned out, to post-war labour conditions in the mines. Wallace himself pointed out the importance of war carrier service in this respect; it was an invaluable large scale 'training school' for

future industrial employment: 'The effect of calling out so many men has on the whole been good. It has enabled District Commissioners to insist on some work being done by those who habitually shirk it or who are disinclined to go from their homes to seek it, not individuals only but whole communities.' War service had taught many that their labour could command a price on the Central African labour market since 'as carriers they have mixed more with men of other tribes and have learned more of the conditions prevailing elsewhere'.¹⁰³ Even the remote imperial authorities acknowledged the 'educational' impact of military cash wages. Reviewing District reports for 1916–17, the Resident Commissioner's Secretary observed that 'the possession of money cannot fail to have its educational effect on the young men who will, to an increasing extent, realise that employment enables them to earn money, wherewith to meet their obligations to the Administration and to satisfy other requirements'.¹⁰⁴

The social impact was obviously most pronounced in the north-eastern districts, an area of mass military employment. One Mporokoso official, responsible for an area geographically remote from major employment centres and therefore considered under-exploited in peacetime, recorded the local implications of war service:

The war has certainly had the effect of making natives especially the younger male population realise the advantages from all points of view of employment and thereby earning money; [...] after the termination of hostilities, an outlet will have to be made, and [...] I suggest that this District be opened for recruiting for Robert Williams and Company in the Congo.¹⁰⁵

It was a comment applicable to significant numbers of Mambwe, Lungu, Iwa, Tambo and other border peoples, for whom continuous war service often provided regular and sustained employment on a local basis for the first time.

But it was the opening up of the 'water route' along the Luapula river and through the Lake Bangweulu swamps which provided the outstanding example of the way in which the war created new recruiting areas. Despite, as we shall see, growing resistance, whole communities were suddenly initiated into the predatory labour system. Before the war, the 'swamp peoples' had successfully avoided large scale participation in the labour market. From January 1916 onwards many of the estimated 10,000 taxable Unga, Bisa and Batwa males 'who for many years had

shown [...] very little desire to [...] engage in any kind of work'¹⁰⁶were enrolled as paddlers on the new 'water route'.

The increasing use of compulsion as a legitimate method of labour recruitment in wartime further enabled the authorities to extract labour on a significant scale from the cultivating communities of the north-west. Large numbers of Ila, Tonga and Soka were siphoned off into carrier service during the preparations for Northey's offensive and thereafter, although their geographical remoteness from the north-east border ensured that they were never levied on the mass scale common in the north-east districts. The suspension of the cattle trade further encouraged the male exodus amongst the main cattle-herding groups such as the Ila¹⁰⁷ and southern Tonga, who were forced, like their Lozi counterparts, to serve as war carriers or migrate to Southern Rhodesia to earn tax money. Even the sale of grain as an alternative tax loophole for many was, as we shall see, soon to be negated by the onset of serious famines in the north-west during 1916.

War imperatives and the decline of Colonial Office trusteeship in Northern Rhodesia

The main tenets of Trust labour policy in Northern Rhodesia both originated from and were modelled upon, labour issues arising from the policies of its southern neighbour. This largely reflected Southern Rhodesia's early and far more intensive industrial and agricultural development. Company land and labour abuses revealed to the imperial authorities by enquiries into the 1896–7 rebellions¹⁰⁸ and district *indaba* reports of 1902¹⁰⁹ set important political precedents for Colonial Office intervention into specifically Northern Rhodesian labour issues.¹¹⁰

Despite the political obstacles to imperial scrutiny discussed earlier,¹¹¹ the Colonial Office frequently investigated cases concerning the maltreatment of Northern Rhodesian labour, particularly within Southern Rhodesian mining compounds. As early as 1906, for instance, the Resident Commissioner launched a major enquiry into the abnormally high death rate occurring at the Sabiwa mine in the Gwanda District of Southern Rhodesia where, out of a total of 364 Ngoni, Bemba, Chewa and Nsenga employed, 24 had died and another 33 had deserted.¹¹² Even in cases where impressed labour was permitted for peacetime government work, the imperial authorities maintained a stringent surveillance over labour conditions. Allegations of maltreatment of Northern Rhodesian carriers employed on the Anglo-Portuguese and Anglo-Belgian Boundary Commissions of 1912 to 1914, for instance, resulted in a full-scale enquiry into labour conditions lasting nearly two years.¹¹³

The outbreak of war, however, meant the almost immediate abandonment of Trust concepts towards the porter class of labour. The Colonial Office's position as the official director of war operations within Northern Rhodesia, a role which it retained until after the launching of Northey's offensive in May 1916,¹¹⁴ inevitably severely compromised its role as a protecting influence over the increasingly indiscriminate mass levies of Northern Rhodesian carrier labour, so crucial to the all-important Allied victory. One observation by a Colonial Office official, concerning the Colonial Office's subordinate role in regard to the important issue of war expenditure, summed up the overall weakness of its wartime position in this respect. The procedure whereby the Colonial Office funded the military authorities according to the exigencies of the moment was 'not very satisfactory as it means there will be little control over the naturally extravagant tendencies of the military authorities. The control exercised by the High Commissioner is very slight – except when it is a question of raising fresh troops.'¹¹⁵ By early 1917, however, Northey's offensive into German East Africa had effectively undermined important aspects of even this last imperial safeguard regarding the welfare of war labour. The mass levy of mainly Ngoni carriers in early 1917 to support the Nyasaland forces provides a case in point.

On 26 January 1917 the Administrator received a dramatic telegram from the Governor of Nyasaland to the effect that Northey was 'in urgent need' of fresh carriers to replace those 'worn out' and that the supplies from Nyasaland were 'practically exhausted'. He needed 500 to 1,000 carriers from Northern Rhodesia, *monthly* for the duration of the campaign or for six months, 'whichever is shorter'. Carrier pay would comprise 7s. 0d. per month (including rations) with the proviso that 'they should be recruited as near as possible to the Nyasaland border'.¹¹⁶ Under clause seven of the 1916 Administration of Natives Proclamation, however, it had been affirmed that 'The Administrator may, with the approval of the High Commissioner [...] call upon Chiefs to supply men for the defence of the territory and for the suppression of disorder and rebellion within its borders and may call upon such chiefs personally to render such service'.¹¹⁷ The proposed mass levy, however, involved the deployment of several thousand Ngoni *outside* the Territory and specifically *in defence of Nyasaland*. Moreover, it would involve compulsion on a hitherto unprecedentedly large scale. Wallace confirmed: 'It is not probable that there would be very many wishing to volunteer. All [...] would have to be impressed with the approval of the High Commissioner provided he thinks that these men can be considered to be employed in the defence of this Territory'.¹¹⁸

The High Commissioner's reply revealed inevitable civil subservience to the urgent demands of the military authorities, even in the important matter of the raising of African labour for war purposes outside the Territory, where civil control would clearly be extremely limited. Imperial victory and the preservation of internal social control dictated such subordination. Buxton accordingly telegraphed that, despite having 'carefully considered' the application of clause seven, military needs would have to take precedence. He observed in the crucial sentence: 'It appears to me that any collapse of Northey's operations through lack of carriers if it did not actually lay our northern districts open to invasion might any rate cause uneasiness among our natives and risk of possible disorder.' He approved of Wallace 'calling upon Chiefs to supply men'.¹¹⁹ The Resident Commissioner demonstrated even greater resignation to the inevitable. He argued that a precedent had already been established under the Northern Rhodesian Order-in-Council of 1916, by which 'liability for the service of Northern Rhodesian Police Forces which was previously confined to Rhodesia was extended to any place in South Africa'. This, he observed 'seems to indicate that the Imperial Government recognised that Rhodesian participation in present operations cannot be restricted territorially within watertight compartments'.¹²⁰ Buxton could only offer minor concessions to ameliorate the conditions of several thousand Ngoni thus irrevocably committed to one of the most arduous carrier support roles of the war.¹²¹ He asked that Wallace should 'not contemplate forcible enlistment of natives for this service by your officials but that you will rely upon powers given by Clause 19 of Proclamation to inflict penalties on Chiefs who fail to perform duty imposed under Clause 14 (b)'.¹²² In fact Wallace's earlier proposals had indicated that compulsion would be used, even though indirectly through the Chiefs, and the High Commissioner's ruling was, therefore, of limited significance. Buxton further ruled that Wallace's proposed recommendations, of an increase in carrier rate from 7s. 0d. to 10s. 0d. a month and a recruitment restriction of only 1,000 men in the first instance, be carried out to enable a review of the 'success of initial measures and prospects of maintaining necessary supply without friction'.¹²³ Within a few weeks, however, the latter restriction had been lifted and mass recruitment policies were unleashed.

Colonial Office officials also bowed to the inevitable. They almost unanimously accepted the paramountcy of the military authorities on issues regarding war labour. Only one mildly dissentient voice was heard: 'We should see that Section 7 of the Northern Rhodesian Proclamation of 1916 is being used to obtain carriers for German East Africa',

which 'seems to [...] be a somewhat wide construction of the Section', but even he recognised that 'the step was obviously justified'.¹²⁴ Walter Long, the Colonial Secretary, summed up the stark reality of the situation and the overall perceived irrelevance of 'Trust' principles to issues concerning war labour: 'We need not take any notice even if this was straining the law – it was really justified.'¹²⁵

Other issues illustrated the reluctance of the imperial authorities to intervene in the military sphere. When, for instance, it was revealed in early 1918 that African Police recruits had received whipping sentences handed down by unauthorised officers of other units, including the Commander, Colonel Murray himself, the Resident Commissioner turned a blind eye, since it might be 'expedient to refrain from insistence on technical points of law during the progress of military operations'.¹²⁶ The High Commissioner concurred. He underlined the lack of imperial control over external military operations by observing that

as many of the offences appear to have been committed and the sentences imposed in German East Africa during the course of military operations, I do not think it desirable to question the sentences on the grounds that they may not, in some cases, have been in strict accordance with the Northern Rhodesian law.¹²⁷

The Colonial Office agreed, although one official remained critical:

I think that we may say that we presume that the attention of the Administrator is being called to these irregularities and that the correct procedure will be followed in future. There seems to be no reason why the Officer Commanding the Forces should not have convened Special or Ordinary Boards to deal with such cases.¹²⁸

Even this recommendation was swiftly overruled. The Under-Secretary of State observed: 'I think we may leave the matter where the High Commissioner has left it.'¹²⁹

While 'Trust' principles were therefore tacitly accepted as virtually inapplicable in regard to the control and supervision of specifically war labour, attempts were made to maintain the 'Trust' supervision of civil African labour, particularly in early wartime. Thus, nine months after hostilities commenced the Colonial Office had continued to reassert imperial vigilance in regard to labour excesses arising from the district

reports of 1913–14 which had only arrived in London after considerable delay.¹³⁰

Wartime labour scandal: the sacrifice of Lozi labour

By late 1916, however, war exigencies had severely compromised the exercise of 'Trust' principles even in regard to specifically civil labour issues. The astonishing delay in imperial intervention concerning the serious neglect and resulting huge mortality rate of Northern Rhodesian labour employed by the Katanga mines during the period of late 1916 and early 1917, provided a vivid illustration both of this progressive decline of imperial trusteeship as well as the BSAC's prominent role in provoking this major labour scandal.

Between September 1916 and January 1917 the recorded mortality rate for Northern Rhodesian African labourers employed in Katanga reached unprecedentedly high levels. M. A. B. Thompson, Inspector of Rhodesian Natives, reported that the death rate amongst labourers of all classes employed by Robert Williams and Co. for the twelve months ending 31 December 1916, had reached ninety-four per thousand per annum, a figure which compared 'unfavourably even with the worst years in the Transvaal'.¹³¹ Rhodesian deaths reached a peak during October 1916, described by Thompson as 'the most unfortunate month experienced since the inception of Rhodesian labour at the Katanga Mines'. As a result of a typhoid epidemic, ninety-two out of approximately two to three thousand registered Rhodesians employed on the mines in that month had perished.¹³²

The most significant aspect of this appallingly high mortality rate was the extremely high proportion of Lozi deaths. During the period 31 March 1916 to 31 March 1917, the mortality rate for north-eastern Rhodesian Africans was recorded at 66.15 per cent per thousand per annum; for north-western Rhodesians (mainly Kasempa) over double the percentage at 186.56 per cent per thousand per annum, while the Lozi mortality rate was revealed to have been an 'astonishingly high rate of 254.87 per cent per thousand'.¹³³ Monthly death figures for the Rhodesian labour force employed in Katanga further illustrated the severity of Lozi losses. In December 1916, for instance, out of the 39 deaths recorded for the Rhodesian labour force in Katanga, no less than 29 were Lozi in origin.¹³⁴ In January 1917, also, of the 1,000 registered Lozi labourers employed at the Katanga mines, compared to 820 from north-eastern Rhodesia and 34 from north-western Rhodesia, 31 out of the 36 deaths were of Lozi origin. Thompson confirmed: 'As in previous

months the Barotse natives were chiefly responsible for the high death and sick rate.¹³⁵

The heavy death rate was matched by a rapid escalation of desertion rates, particularly amongst Lozi recruits. Those mines with exceptionally high mortality rates experienced correspondingly high desertion rates, demonstrating keen appreciation of conditions and a rapid system of market intelligence. In March 1917 it was estimated that during the previous year as many as 700 Lozi had deserted from the registered labour force alone.¹³⁶ The Star and Lubumbashi mines, recording the highest death rates, experienced the highest rates of desertion, many of the deserters themselves perishing en route to home. At Lubumbashi mine where 1,755 registered Rhodesians had been employed in October 1916, of whom 44 had died, it was observed: 'The large number of deserters amongst the Barotse is greatly to be regretted in view of the distance which separates them from their homes and the scarcity of food in the bush.'¹³⁷ The 1916–17 Annual Report tragically confirmed that 'many must have died in the bush'.¹³⁸

Desertion rates reached their peak in December 1916, probably as news of the October epidemics reached outlying recruiting areas and Thompson reported: 'All the latest gangs of Barotse have deserted on the roads before reaching Elizabethville.'¹³⁹ The next month, 214 out of 1,000 registered Lozi recruits were repatriated south as medically unfit.¹⁴⁰ The human tragedies arising from this gross neglect of Lozi repatriated sick, not to mention deserters travelling the vast distances home, were occasionally officially reported. One Solwezi official reported his shocking discoveries in early February 1917: 'I was again delayed half a mile on by the unpleasant job of having to bury a native I found dead by the roadside – one of these Barotse who have been going to work at Lubumbashi and get discharged as totally unfit for a six hundred mile walk home.'¹⁴¹

The scandalously high official Lozi death rate, to which must be added unknown hundreds who perished along the routes home, must be seen as a direct consequence of the deliberate, often enforced deployment of raw Lozi labour northwards by the Livingstone authorities, anxious to recoup tax and to compensate Robert Williams and Co. for labour already lost to the military. A Medical Report on the October typhoid epidemic pinpointed Lozi inexperience as the primary factor accounting for their extraordinarily high death rate:

The percentage of Barotse [deaths] [...] is noticeably high and is probably due to the fact that these people are the latest arrivals in

our compound [...] in every epidemic of whatsoever native which we have had in the Katanga, this rule has held good; that races least acclimatised suffer most.¹⁴²

In the absence of any marked improvement in compound conditions, recruiting by Robert Williams and Co. in Northern Rhodesia was belatedly suspended on 23 February 1917, a full three months after the first month of heavy mortality.

The Livingstone authorities predictably blamed the heavy losses upon the Katanga mining authorities. In a BSAC Memorandum, prepared by J. C. C. Coxhead, the Northern Rhodesian Secretary for Native Affairs, much was made of regular warnings given by the Inspector of Rhodesian Natives to the Katanga Mining authorities concerning the improvement of compound working conditions. It included a description of the latter's attitude in the aftermath of the October 1916 epidemic as one of 'criminal apathy'. Observing that uncertainty as to wartime recruitment in Northern Rhodesia had caused Robert Williams and Co. to arrange for labour supplies from Portuguese West Africa, Coxhead concluded: 'This may perhaps account for their failure to carry out their undertaking. They hope, perhaps, to be able to dispense with Northern Rhodesian labour altogether. I can account for their failure in no other manner.'¹⁴³

There is evidence to suggest, however, that the BSAC Livingstone executive was itself equally if not more to blame for the belated intervention, constituting a major wartime scandal. One Robert Williams and Co. official, J. G. Watson, disclosed in a cable to his Company's offices in London that as late as December 1916 the Acting Administrator, H. C. Marshall, had persisted with specifically Lozi labour supplies, despite Watson's own expressed doubts as to the continued advisability of employing this exceptionally vulnerable class of labour. Watson admitted that the high death rate 'was due to the virulent epidemic and the employment of large numbers of Barotse'. More significantly he stressed: 'Barotse labour is not suitable but Acting Administrator in December recommended us to continue with it. We agreed to do so at the same time offered to discharge all the Barotse natives at once provided we could replace them by North-east Rhodesian labour.'¹⁴⁴As the latter labour source was already clearly committed to the 'military market', evidence confirms that the Livingstone authorities, in order to preserve this lucrative labour outlet, persisted with Lozi labour supplies despite its obvious and reported incompatibility with mine employment as revealed by the appalling mortality statistics. A letter from the Robert

Williams & Co. Headquarters in London addressed to 'London Wall' adds considerable credence to the argument. It confirmed again that the high Lozi death rates recorded during late 1916 'prove conclusively that the main cause of the high death rate has been the result of Lozi natives being sent to us instead of North-eastern Rhodesian natives, no doubt through force of circumstance'. The same letter confirmed both the extent of BSAC collusion and cryptically paid tribute to the persistence of the Livingstone authorities in sustaining wartime labour supplies: 'I have no doubt Mr Wallace did his best to supply us with labour under very difficult conditions and I hope you will thank him for his great efforts on our behalf.'¹⁴⁵

The Resident Commissioner also noted the marked reluctance of the BSAC to intervene and halt labour supplies, even after the devastating October epidemic. In a despatch dated 4 January 1917, the Acting Administrator had assured him that the death rate during the aftermath of the October statistics had 'steadily declined'. This, however, was later contradicted by the arrival of the November report from the Inspector of Rhodesian Natives, which, in the words of an angry Resident Commissioner, 'showed a slight decrease in mortality but no such improvement as Mr Marshall's above-quoted remark had led me to hope for'.¹⁴⁶ After this highly misleading report the Resident Commissioner took more decisive action. Following several conversations with both the Administrator and the Secretary for Native Affairs, he intimated that he regarded the November figures as 'very disappointing' and 'made it clear to Mr Wallace that unless the December report showed a marked improvement', he would 'feel it my duty to make strong representations'.¹⁴⁷ In fact, it was only after further strong imperial pressure that a deeply reluctant Wallace agreed to suspend recruitment on 23 February 1917. As Wallace informed his Company superiors at London Wall on 28 February 1917: 'I have been obliged to suspend recruiting by Robert Williams and Company. This was done after an interview with the Resident Commissioner who takes a serious view of the matter.' He claimed that he had done his best 'to avoid this because of the Imperial need for copper'.¹⁴⁸ The Resident Commissioner's own assessment of the BSAC's long prevarication over the Katanga labour crisis was, perhaps, far closer to the truth. He informed the High Commissioner:

Neither Mr Wallace or myself could fail to be alive to the economic significance which the prosperity of the Katanga mines has for Northern Rhodesia [...] I do not, however, think that the extermination

of large numbers of Rhodesian natives is a necessary or permissible condition of the prosperity of the industry.¹⁴⁹

While such selfish commercial considerations undoubtedly played the predominant role in Company neglect, the failure of the imperial authorities to intervene more rapidly stemmed from more immediate *military* imperatives. The Resident Commissioner admitted to the crucial role played by the urgent wartime Allied need for copper products which, combined with the Company's deep private anxiety to protect its Rhodesian commercial assets, thereby accounted for the long period of inaction. Noting the 'military importance' of Katanga copper the Resident Commissioner confessed:

I regret to have to say that, if it were not for the importance attaining to the copper industry of the Katanga, I should be disinclined to regard as entitled to any consideration, any representations made by, or on behalf of, a firm whose attitude in respect of an excessive rate of mortality among its native employees has been such as is disclosed.¹⁵⁰

Nine months later, the same war-inspired consideration was further and severely undermining the application of 'Trust'/welfare principles to civil labour issues elsewhere. The export of raw Northern Rhodesian African labour to Southern Rhodesia seems to have played an important role in regard to unacceptably high mortality rates there. In January 1918, for instance, the mortality rate of black Northern Rhodesian labour employed on the Southern Rhodesian Falcon copper mine had reached a dreadful 88.8 per mille per mensem. Once again, however, the wartime Allied dependence upon copper seriously compromised the effectiveness of the imperial trusteeship role. The Resident Commissioner accordingly informed Lord Buxton, the High Commissioner:

But for the importance of the copper industry, I should be inclined to recommend drastic action such as the imposition of an embargo upon Northern Rhodesian labour, but, having regard to the requirements of the Department of Munitions, I hesitate to advocate this course at the present juncture.

Instead he recommended that 'a very serious warning should be administered and that the Management should be made to understand that unless an improvement is effected, Your Excellency will not be able to

abstain from intervention'.¹⁵¹ Buxton concurred, agreeing that only a warning should suffice.¹⁵² Colonial Office officials in London readily deferred to the men on the spot. One official feebly pointed to the small number of deaths as a reason for departing from previously strict modes of practice. He observed:

The Falcon and Lonely Mines have had mortalities of over 50 per 1000 among their Northern Rhodesian natives during the preceding twelve months and the ordinary rule is that they should not be allowed to recruit further labour in Northern Rhodesia [...] But, in both cases, the number of deaths [...] is small and the Resident Commissioner does not recommend any action beyond a serious warning to the Falcon Mines.¹⁵³

This profound and growing wartime paralysis of the imperial trusteeship role had therefore engendered serious and tragic consequences for the protection and welfare of both military and civil African labour. Indeed, such was the depth of the Colonial Office commitment to the paramountcy of imperial defence that, as we shall see, it was to take a major crisis of colonial control – a direct product of growing African resistance to rapacious military demand – to force it to belatedly intervene in a vain attempt to rescue and restore social order in Northern Rhodesia.

3

Advent of a 'White Man's War': Early Implications for the Survival of White Supremacy

The pre-war social order

As in neighbouring colonial African states, the survival of the ruling white minority in Northern Rhodesia rested upon a complex web of interrelationships between governors and governed. The hub of this network of social relationships was a distinct hierarchy of obedience. African subordination and deference depended upon their own perceptions of the continued credibility of white hegemony.

This philosophy of social order was shared by the ruling BSAC Directors at London Wall, the political guardians, however remote, of white supremacy in a Territory whose commercial viability depended upon the continued export of cheap black labour to the white mines and farms of neighbouring colonial states. In 1911, for instance, Philip Lyttelton Gell, President of the Board of Directors, strongly opposed the use of the Anglican Church in Livingstone by an African congregation, even within a rota system of worship by which the principle of racial separation would be upheld. He stressed:

It would be most undesirable that a congregation of raw natives should alternate with Europeans [...] we are bound to believe that the superiority of the Englishman is the result of Christian civilisation. As Christians we are bound to try and raise the natives as far as they are capable but there can be no Christian virtue in degrading ourselves – still less our Church to Kaffir standards.¹

Such discriminatory attitudes were echoed by leading missionaries, who reinforced concepts of white prestige even within the Christian faith,

and confirmed the importance of mission societies as agents of social control. In a speech designed to allay government and settler fears of the egalitarian potential in Christian doctrine, the President of the 1914 Missionary Conference reaffirmed the role of the Church as a bulwark of colonial order:

It is a common idea [...] that we teach the native that he is as good as the white man. Some think that we spend our time in preaching equality [...] I repudiate it. None of us believes that the native is the social, or should be the political equal of ourselves [...] what [...] we do say is that the white and black are equal before God, by which we mean that they should have equal opportunities of knowing his will. In all other sense we missionaries absolutely repudiate the idea of equality.²

Nevertheless, before 1914 Northern Rhodesia was a society in which the structural base of segregation and control remained embryonic and extremely vulnerable, by contrast to the white settler states to the south. This fragility reflected the BSAC's almost unbroken neglect by which, on the eve of war, barely 2,500 widely scattered white settlers lived in uneasy coexistence with a black population of over 800,000. Only in Fort Jameson and the capital, Livingstone, the two townships with any significant white populations, had a pass system been introduced by 1914.³ The local forces available for protecting white society comprised the few score members of the all-white but part-time Rifle Associations, which were deployed in tiny isolated units across the Territory and the few hundred members of the Northern Rhodesia Police force, led by white officers but predominantly comprised of possibly unreliable black constables.

The cataclysmic news of a major war in Europe, therefore, with all its necessary racial ramifications, could scarcely have been welcome to the Livingstone colonial authorities in August 1914. Faced with a major war on two fronts and hopelessly insufficient local white manpower resources, the successful prosecution of the war clearly demanded the participation of a large proportion of the black population. The problem which confronted the colonial authorities for the next four years was how best to preserve the existing social order whilst making huge logistical demands upon Africans for food supplies and military portage. And it was scarcely reassuring that large numbers of Africans would learn to fight in a 'white man's war'.

Early wartime problems of social control

On the outbreak of war in August 1914, the Company's internal control strategy continued to rest upon the shoulders of the few score white civil servants in the District Service. In fact, their role assumed new significance with direct responsibility for the supply of food and manpower to the military forces. Almost immediately, however, the Service was rocked by a rush of resignations as many district staff left to join their compatriots fighting the 'real war' in Europe. During the early halcyon weeks of the 'border war', officials stationed at remote *bomas* were sceptical of the urgent calls not to desert their posts. One, stationed at Mwinilunga in the far north-west, scribbled home: 'There is perhaps something in their reluctance to let men go – this very scanty white population with the war on its borders. Yet I can't imagine how on earth the war came so close to Northern Rhodesia as to require men situated where I am.'⁴ An anonymous article, however, printed in the *Livingstone Mail* and almost certainly written by a senior member of the Livingstone executive, graphically illustrated the fear which senior Company officials entertained for a continuing white supremacy, if stations were deserted.

It appears that not a few of the officials of the Administration are leaving Rhodesia for the Front [...] It is not a question of getting in hut tax as some people seem to think. Only those who know something of native administration can realise what would happen in some of the outlying districts of the territory if the *bomas* were left empty. The dominant warlike tribes would not be slow to enslave their weaker and more servile brothers. European women and children would have to leave their homes. Chaos would take the place of an order built up by some fourteen years of patient administration.⁵

Such dramatic public appeals failed to halt the exodus. In one extreme case, the Mwingwa official closed the station and left for the army without even telling the Livingstone authorities. His district was left unsupervised and disorganised for several weeks before a replacement arrived.⁶ The deteriorating staff situation seriously alarmed London Wall. In April 1915, observing that the Rhodesian Civil Service was 'seriously [...] understaffed' the Company asked both the Colonial and War Offices to cease forwarding service commissions to district officers until the Administrator had been informed.⁷ The Colonial Office

readily complied, and in a circular addressed to the South African High Commissioner, demonstrated the paramountcy accorded within imperial circles to unimpaired white ground-level presence as a factor in social control. Bonar Law, the Colonial Secretary, described the large number of resignations by District Officers as a 'grave dereliction of duty which cannot be excused [...] the administration cannot be allowed to fall into confusion through lack of officers to carry on the work that is an absolute necessity in the public interest'.⁸

Nevertheless, by the close of 1915 the District Service faced a crippling manpower shortage. The total already undermanned peacetime complement of 102 district officers had fallen to seventy-six, a drop of nearly twenty-five per cent.⁹ No reserves were available for relief. The residue of seventy-six was retained on full-time field work without prospects of leave.¹⁰ Several *bomas* were manned by single officials. Of the seventy-six officials, nineteen were overdue for leave; by March 1916 this had increased to thirty-one, nearly half of the reduced service.¹¹

Wallace warned London Wall that 'a very difficult position' had been created: He stressed the need for 'some suitable probationers to train on to relieve ANC's'.¹² A vigorous recruiting campaign through the medium of leading British newspapers, however, was a dismal failure. Only one of the initial ten places was filled, chiefly because applicants were 'not men of the type and class that we usually engage'.¹³ In order to relieve the extreme pressure on the more critical north-eastern *bomas*, therefore, Wallace was obliged to reinforce them 'at the expense of those more remote from the field of hostilities'.¹⁴ In the far west, even in the turbulent Kasempa District, stations were stripped of manpower and often reduced to lone officials. District work was paralysed. In May 1916 Wallace had to report a staff crisis with 'practically no leave' possible 'except in cases where the Principal Medical Officer recommends leave as essential on the grounds of health'.¹⁵

Control of the black civil population

While the Company struggled to maintain the physical personification of white power and authority, it also strove to centralise African settlement. The twin pre-war policies of suppression of *mitanda* settlements and the amalgamation of African villages received an added urgency in wartime. Escalating military demands required the unprecedented concentration of food and manpower resources, and with a growing shortage of white *boma* officials, closer village settlement facilitated easier tax-collection and census-taking.

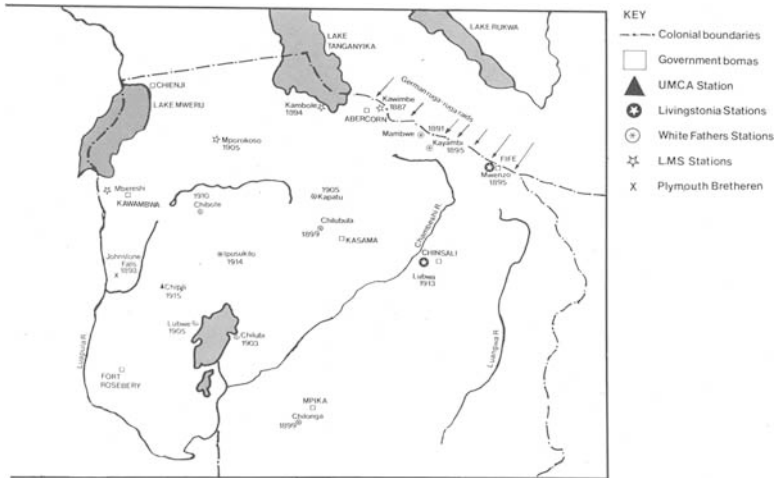
The Administration also maintained strict control over firearms, an obvious precaution against political unrest. Government paranoia was vividly illustrated by its major investigation into the manufacture of gunpowder in the Chilanga sub-district, an area of substantial white settlement, in May 1916. The report was submitted to the Colonial Office even though the investigating official stressed the absence of any political unrest in areas traditionally known for this industry. The powder itself was primitive, 'of no great value', and the people were loyal in 'providing carriers for war transport'; there were 'no grounds whatever for regarding the trades as a sign of native unrest'.¹⁶

The struggle for white prestige: the 'phoney' border war, August 1914 to May 1916

By mid-1915 it was clear that the credibility of such strategies was being seriously undermined by the disastrous military situation along the north-east border. Meagre Company forces, deployed along a more than 200-mile front in a prolonged defensive war, were unable to prevent devastating and demoralising raids on British-protected African villages by the German irregular forces. For both Company and imperial officials, this naturally seemed potentially fatal to the image of white superiority. It was a problem soon made more pressing by the Chilembwe disturbances in Nyasaland. In September 1915 Drummond Chaplin, the Southern Rhodesian Administrator, warned Walter Long that the northern border had become 'a matter which affects the Imperial Government as much as Rhodesia as if our forces were seriously beaten on the northern frontier there would be a devil to pay among the natives in Nyasaland where there is a good deal of unrest'.¹⁷

This perspective was shared on the ground by officials along the north-eastern border. One official, who had been transferred to the north-east *boma* of Mporokoso as part of Wallace's reinforcing strategy, recognised that 'it would become a serious matter (for Rhodesia that is), if our natives did get the idea that we could not or would not protect them'.¹⁸ C. Boyd-Cunningham, the Commander of the Northern Rhodesia Rifles, also identified the war as one of 'native prestige'; two of his chief objectives were 'to hold the British Border inviolate' and 'protect the native population'.¹⁹

During the war of attrition which lasted nearly two years, these objectives proved unattainable not only for the overstretched Company, but also for Belgian troops and, later on in the conflict, imperial



Map 3.1 The north-east border war, 1914–16: The threat to government stations and mission settlements (compiled by E. Yorke, drawn by M. Yorke and K. Yorke)

forces. 'British' villages along the border zone were repeatedly attacked, the population suffering tremendous social dislocation. Huts were burned, crops and livestock plundered and the inhabitants robbed and sometimes killed; British patrols proved helpless to prevent *ruga-ruga* bands striking across the border with impunity.²⁰ In August 1915, for instance, an LMS missionary reported that '*ruga-ruga* [...] who at present abound on the border can come to Kawimbe and return in a night'.²¹ (See Map 3.1 for the threat posed by German *ruga-ruga* raids). Looting around Mwenzo Mission forced 'most of the people to move inland' in March 1915.²² By September 1915, at Kawimbe Mission near Abercorn, it was observed that because of German raids 'all the women and children had left the district'.²³ The most serious social disruption occurred in the Saisi Valley; serious fighting erupted there during June and July 1915, 'driving all natives out of the country around'.²⁴

The failure of British forces to protect border villages had profound implications for the perceptual credibility of white rule. As one eyewitness recalled: 'The local natives began to think this was a peculiar kind of war, distinctly one-sided in fact. Here they were, losing cattle and villages, so why didn't the British, who were supposed to be their protectors, do something about it?'²⁵

Of great concern was the visible devastation of the institutional manifestations of white power along the border. Both *bomas* and mission stations, normally permanent shrines of white authority, had to be evacuated during the first half of 1915. Mission settlements, in particular, had proved favourite targets for roaming *ruga-ruga* bands. Abercorn *boma* had to be evacuated, the level of fortification proving inadequate (see Figure 3.1) and the district was administered from a temporary station some miles from the border.²⁶ More unpropitious for the perceived credibility of white supremacy was the fate of Fife *boma*. This had to be evacuated from two successive sites to avoid German attacks, the first alternative site at Kantango, fourteen-and-a-half miles south of Fife, being designated 'unsafe' and the final site was established amidst administrative confusion in grass shelters at Chunga, a good forty-two miles south of the original Fife border post.²⁷ Not surprisingly, the Fife official recorded that 'owing to the aggressive policy of the enemy' local African communities 'have begun to believe that the Germans are the stronger power and will eventually take this country'.²⁸ Similarly, the two mission stations situated near the border, Kawimbe and Mwenzo, were evacuated south, the former to Kyengwa and the latter to a new site no less than forty miles away.

Just as damaging for white prestige was the often outrageous behaviour of Allied troops themselves, who engaged in indiscriminate attacks upon both British and German villages in equal measure. A force of 150 Bemba irregulars, raised on the outbreak of war, proved a major embarrassment as they attacked villages on both sides of the border. One German observer recorded murderous Bemba attacks on a British section of the Inamwanga tribe, who had briefly crossed over to procure food on the German side.²⁹ The Commandant-General himself came to recognise them as a double-edged weapon after one German attack on Fife: 'I fancy our people brought this upon themselves, as Stennett says his levies, called by us additional police, had been looting in German territory.'³⁰ Soon afterwards the force was disbanded.

The ill-disciplined conduct of white-officered Belgian contingents was also a serious problem. After three companies of Belgian *askari* had passed through Chienji en route to Abercorn in September 1914, serious complaints about their 'misbehaviour' were laid before the Belgian Congo authorities at Pweto. The Chienji official reported a satisfactory outcome. All the local inhabitants 'suffering damage of any kind' were 'awarded compensation and the delinquents tried by court martial and punished'.³¹ T. R. Williams protested against their frequent ill-treatment of Northern Rhodesian carriers. Describing the Belgians as 'licentious



Figure 3.1 The heavily fortified Abercorn *boma* photographed during the disastrous 1914–16 north-east border war (E. Yorke private collection)

Brigands', they were, he observed, 'the cause of nine tenths of the terror of the Rhodesian carriers and the daily trouble we have until I took charge of the carriers and put one messenger over them in place of the 100 or so soldiers that before had been supervising them'. He reported pointedly that 'the last day that Belgian soldiers walked with their carriers' was 'the last day of complaints of "hard ears and buffeting"'.³²

Such misconduct was not confined to black *askari*; some white units could also behave abominably. Missionaries reported cases of theft and immorality. At Chilubula the virtual rape of a fifteen-year-old African girl by a white trooper was reported; her father had made little protest, fearing a serious *mulandu* in front of the Europeans.³³ White columns were often escorted by anxious civil officials. At Chilubula, the White Fathers were thankful that the Native Commissioner accompanied some white troops 'in order to maintain good order in the villages'; they thought it a 'wise precaution and commendable effort by the Administration for the policing of the region'.³⁴ Such precautions no doubt reflected the poor calibre of many white recruits. The Northern Rhodesia Rifles, for instance, were thought to include the dregs of the settler population. One Company official described them as 'an undisciplined and mischievous crew and a pack of hard cases who came up here to knock the hell out of the Germans'.³⁵ A local missionary recorded the detrimental impact of their indiscriminate behaviour on white prestige:

It is a great pity that such raiding is taking place for it means we are fighting with the natives. We told all the border peoples that war was between the Europeans only and their police [...] some officers are wanting a little 'kudos'. What does it matter if a few innocent niggers are killed in the getting of it, I can imagine they think [...] it will not make things easier when the war is over.³⁶

Ironically, it was futile war that might perhaps have been avoided, but for a combination of the Company's fear and greed and the Colonial Office's initial suspicions of Company designs upon German territory. In regard to the former, military strategists in Salisbury had at first doubted the wisdom of defending such a long, vulnerable frontier. After a series of bold German raids, the Commandant-General telegraphed Wallace: 'Is the North Eastern Frontier worth fighting for? My idea had always been to hang on until forced to retire, and then to retire giving as much trouble as possible to the enemy and hold Kasama until reinforced.'³⁷ Wallace vehemently opposed this on the grounds of loss of revenue and possibly devastating shock to social control caused by a

sudden withdrawal. The frontier was 'worth fighting for' as 'much damage there would be felt farther south and we might lose there alone from £8,000 to £10,000 in taxes'.³⁸ Later that month, Wallace estimated the increased cost arising from the added destruction of Fife, Abercorn and Kasama if the northern districts were abandoned. 'Without counting any loss of prestige we risk probably £40,000 and possibly much more'.³⁹ While Company forces were not allowed to retreat to stronger defence lines for such reasons, Colonial Office fears of Company expansionist designs upon German East Africa precluded any early offensive.⁴⁰ The Company's forces were thus initially committed to an impossibly static and inherently unwinnable war.

Tied in this way to a defensive war, border officials were forced to devise a number of strategies to protect the inviolability of British rule. In a bid to defend African villages from German raids and British prestige they created a cordon sanitaire behind the frontier. From March to September 1915, 'in order to prevent the continual harassment of our natives by the enemy's ruga-ruga and askari',⁴¹ scores of Lungu, Mambwe, Iwa and Inamwanga villages were forcibly removed to areas ten miles and, ultimately, as much as thirty miles from the frontier. The policy was sometimes carried out in ruthless fashion. Kayambi missionaries reported in September 1915 that 'by order of the English authorities, the frontier villages had been burned after forcing their inhabitants to withdraw further into the interior'.⁴² Around Kawimbe, as many as fifty-one villages were reported as being moved by such scorched earth methods.⁴³ The resultant social dislocation was undoubtedly as great as that caused by German raiding. Despite government assertions that 'little hardship was entailed through these measures',⁴⁴ there is plenty of evidence to the contrary. The Fife District Notebook alone records some of the severe losses to Mambwe, Iwa and Inamwanga cattle herds occasioned by such forcible removals, a dire situation already exacerbated by the earlier Rinderpest controls (see Tables 3.1 and 3.2). Losses 'owing to removals during the war' amounted to over one hundred head for some individual villages during the period August 1914 to August 1916.⁴⁵ The losses were almost certainly caused, in the words of one Company official, by 'disease, neglect and change of veldt – a large number of native stock-owners having had to move their herds from the border to parts of the District not so suitable for the rearing of stock'.⁴⁶ Crops suffered too, despite *boma* claims that 'sufficient time was allowed to hoe new gardens'.⁴⁷

Other protective measures proved similarly ineffective. To consolidate the front line, both military and political officials sought to win

Table 3.1 Border cattle losses recorded by Fife *boma*, 1914–16 (NAZ, KSL, Fife DNB, I, p. 326)

Cattleowners: Headmen/villages	Cattle losses		
	Male	Female	Total
Tutondwa	18	84	102
Mpansa	83	241	324
Katyetye	6	56	62
Chipokoso	41	217	258
Pangala	6	45	51
Musengakaya	11	50	61
Nteko	9	128	137

Table 3.2 Abercorn sub-district: The wartime decline of African-owned livestock, 1914–17 (NAZ, KTN, Abercorn DNB, I, p. 34)

	Cattle	Sheep	Goats
31 March 1915	2135	5378	5444
31 March 1916	1500	3300	4000
31 March 1917	196 (400)*	158 (450)*	363 (1100)*
31 March 1918	649	826 (Sheep and Goats)	

*1917 figures, due to lack of touring, were 'not the total for the sub-district'. According to the official, the real total was approximately double for cattle and treble for sheep and goats (i.e. figures in brackets).

over German sections of the several tribal polities straddling the border. The authorities focused particularly on the paramounts and chiefs of the Mambwe, Lungu and Inamwanga groups⁴⁸ whose 'German' sections were encouraged to reap their crops before departure, both to deprive the enemy of food and to increase food supplies on the British side. In order to maintain political control, 'a messenger was placed in charge of each village'.⁴⁹ Suspect headmen were imprisoned or exiled to the remote interior. One headman, named Kela, who was strongly suspected of contacting German emissaries and harbouring a 'notorious spy' named Chikote, was accordingly exiled with his family to Lipunga where he remained until permitted to return in February 1917.⁵⁰ Such devices, however, could not guarantee the loyalty of the border tribes; as late as March 1916, several Mambwe headmen were suspected of 'trafficking with the enemy'.⁵¹ Moreover, the German

authorities soon undermined these attempts at creating a political *cordon sanitaire*. One Mambwe group attempting to cross over to the British side was successfully intercepted, their villages were burned and the whole group was exiled into the 'German' interior to the Lake Rukwa area.⁵²

By September 1915 the growing Company and local imperial concern over the deteriorating situation along the north-east border forced the High Commissioner himself to call for a reversal of the defensive posture. 'The continuing passive defence', Buxton asserted, was having 'a demoralising effect'; he feared that 'British prestige among the natives' was being 'impaired'.⁵³ His recommendations for an offensive were accepted on 27 September. It was a move now welcomed in Colonial Office circles. The recent arrival of Bonar Law as Colonial Secretary heralded a new imperial perspective. He wrote:

The most important subject is in regard to East Africa. The whole position has completely changed since there was a consideration of this subject by Mr Harcourt. The position in East Africa and the surrounding districts is of a nature to cause a good deal of anxiety [...] it would be one of the greatest possible advantage to send a large enough force to conquer German East Africa once and for all.⁵⁴

To forestall possible Company territorial ambitions the force was designated 'imperial' and an imperial commander was appointed in the shape of Brigadier General Edward Northey. It was a strategy strongly advocated by a territorially ambitious South Africa, Northern Rhodesia's far more powerful neighbour to the south. As Professor Strachan has recently observed, 'London's short term needs merged with Pretoria's long term ambitions. The implicit agenda in South Africa's Act of Union was its extension to the line of the Zambesi.'⁵⁵

Northey's five-pronged offensive into German East Africa solved the border control crisis (see Map 3.1 on page 69 above); it also raised new problems with the gigantic power vacuum created by the German retreat. This danger had been anticipated by the Livingstone authorities. In March 1916, H. C. Marshall, the Visiting Commissioner, had minuted:

Following a successful British campaign [...] it would perhaps facilitate and hasten the settlement of the native tribes, if experienced officials were [...] to closely follow on the heels of our

troops and assume, if only temporarily, some control of the civil population.

Marshall anticipated recognition from those tribal groups overlapping the border, notably the Lungu, Mambwe and Inamwanga, 'to whom German methods of administration have always been most distasteful'. Even the less reliable *ruga-ruga* elements and Swahili-speaking groups, he thought, would exhibit 'a willing disposition to come to terms'.⁵⁶ Wallace agreed. He anticipated that on the removal of the recognised German authority, 'there may be some inclination towards lawlessness and anarchy which will have a bad effect on our side of the border and possibly create for us many difficulties'. He recognised that the army could not provide the men with the 'necessary knowledge of native affairs'. Despite the fact that the already short-staffed District Service 'would not stand any large call upon it', he recommended that 'one or two experienced officials' should temporarily take control of the German side of the border.⁵⁷ Colonial Office officials, similarly concerned with political stability, welcomed this 'very useful' proposal.⁵⁸

Northey's demand for four Company officials, however, all to be under military control with military rank, was opposed by both the Northern Rhodesian Administrator and London Wall.⁵⁹ Wallace, acutely aware of his staff crisis and the threat to control of the northernmost Tanganyika District, stressed that the demand 'would mean that four out of eight officials in the Tanganyika District would pass over to the military forces and I should have difficulty in replacing them'.⁶⁰ The row ominously signified the first public disagreement between the civil authorities obsessed with internal social control and the military authorities preoccupied with a rapid military victory. The Colonial Office adopted a compromise; four officers would be seconded from BSAC service and without military rank. This elaborate solution also reflected Whitehall's long-standing suspicion of London Wall. If the four officials 'had remained under the direct control of the Company' and were 'also responsible for the administrative work in German East Africa', the Colonial Office feared that the Company would be seen 'to be encroaching upon the administration of parts of German East Africa'; this would clearly be 'most undesirable'.⁶¹

L. P. Chesnaye, the Tanganyika District Commissioner, was appointed head of the new political mission. His proposals for a comprehensive cross-border political buffer zone behind the Allied advance were communicated to Northey. He planned to establish political posts at Kasanga and Mwazye, the latter to control Fipa country and thus cut

off the enemy's food supply. He reported that he had brought 'influential chiefs from our territory who have tribal influence over the border'; he 'felt confident of the submission of the Lungu and Mambwe people to our rule' and was 'anxious to get in touch with the Afipa tribe' who were 'friendly inclined', in an effort to 'win them over to our side without delay'.⁶² He also urged the necessity to extend influence over the Inamwanga and Anyika tribes north of Fife, since they had 'tribal relations in our country'. This would 'obtain control over the country between our country and Rukwa which may ensure the safety of our line of communications unilaterally'.⁶³ Northey gave him unfettered authority to establish this control zone, its boundaries to extend from Kasanga eastwards and from Fife northwards to Lake Rukwa. Chesnaye was allocated substantial coercive forces for this task in the form of three companies of the Northern Rhodesia Police with headquarters at Kasanga, Mwazie and Mbosi.

Northey also gave him a 'free hand [...] to gain influence over natives, get them to bring in food, supply labour and make roads'.⁶⁴ And Chesnaye was chillingly reminded that he was 'administering martial law'.⁶⁵ More significantly, his instructions included two important aspects of political control. First, he was to encourage mission authority in the new zone and protect their property. Second, he was told to win over to the Allied side any captured German *askari*, a defeated black elite. In view of their social and military importance, Chesnaye was told to inform *askari* deserters that they 'must come in with their arms and no harm will be done to them'.⁶⁶

Parallel to these extensive measures to safeguard the external border for socio-political control, internal control inside Northern Rhodesia's north-eastern frontier was further safeguarded by the promulgation of the Tanganyika Public Safety Proclamation in May 1916, which coincided with the launching of Northey's offensive. Designed to preserve 'the public safety in the Tanganyika District', the decree laid down stiff penalties for communicating or giving intelligence to the enemy, assisting or inciting desertion, damaging telegraph lines and so on. Offenders could be tried by special Tribunals made up of the local Magistrate and two members of HM's forces, who could inflict penalties of hard labour for life, or death. Parts of the district could be designated 'prohibited' or 'restricted' areas to curtail population movement.⁶⁷ Notices of the Proclamation were to be communicated to all village headmen in the District 'without delay'.⁶⁸

Such elaborate and stringent political and military precautions designed to solve the intractable problem of a turbulent frontier and

safeguard internal social control undoubtedly enjoyed a degree of success. Wallace, himself, attributed the initial, relative calm of the northern districts to the 'show of strength in European troops which they have for the first time seen, and the advance into German East Africa which has left them confident in British supremacy'.⁶⁹

In early 1917, however, the Livingstone authorities were chillingly reminded of the fickleness of African loyalty when the Native Commissioner at Fife revealed how quickly faith in British supremacy evaporated at the news of a small military reverse. There was a profusion of anti-British songs in local border villages. He offered a rough translation of one currently in vogue, which carried ominous implications for a colonial state still lacking, in early 1917, any prospect of a much-needed imperial victory. 'All the Manjohni [white soldiers] have been killed by the Germans. Come on Bwanas with your Maxim Guns.'⁷⁰

Problems of active black participation and the deployment of armed blacks

For the Company Administration, one of the most urgent and potentially most dangerous problems stemmed from the greatly expanded use of armed African troops. The bulk of these were the Northern Rhodesia Police which nearly doubled in size between 1914 and 1918, from around 800 to approximately 1,500 effectives.⁷¹ In South Africa, the deployment of armed black soldiery in a 'white man's war' was anathema to the broad spectrum of white opinion. Despite protestations of loyalty from leading black figures in the Union, such as S. T. Plaatje, the white establishment remained obdurate on this issue.⁷² This attitude was possibly derived from bitter memories of an earlier 'white man's war' barely a decade past when substantial numbers of armed black irregulars had been deployed by the imperial authorities against white Boer republican units, with consequent disruption to social order.⁷³ The *East Rand Express* outlined the perceived threat to white superiority: 'The Empire must uphold the principle that a coloured man must not raise his hand against a white man if there is to be any law and order in either India, Africa or any part of the Empire where the white man rules over a large concourse of coloured people.' The dangers were inescapable: 'In South Africa it will mean that the natives will secure pictures of whites being chased by coloured men and who knows what harm such pictures may do?'⁷⁴ The 'black peril' permeated the minds of even great imperial statesmen. In 1917 J. C. Smuts observed how the widespread use of black troops in East Africa had demonstrated

their 'military value', a value which, nevertheless, would be 'a serious question for us in the future [...] a menace not only to South African problems but to Europe itself'. He hoped that some future arrangement might be made 'by which the military training of the natives in the area will be absolutely forbidden. Otherwise, armies may be trained so large that properly led by whites and properly equipped they may be a danger to civilisation itself.'⁷⁵ The spectre of deploying armed black troops in a 'white man's war' preoccupied officials from both sides in other African military theatres.

Further north, such fears were ultimately overruled by the more practical consideration that the available white manpower was wholly insufficient to meet the German threat. In both Rhodesias significant numbers of armed blacks were required to support white contingents. In Northern Rhodesia this had meant the immediate use of a greatly expanded Northern Rhodesia Police regiment and in the South the belated recruitment of two African regiments in 1916 and 1917, as white resources in the latter Territory became exhausted. The policy was greeted with not inconsiderable apprehension within Company circles, haunted by memories of the 1896–7 insurrections. One Director observed: 'I suppose the Matabele contingent [...] is a fait accompli. As a matter of *policy* I dread arming so warlike a tribe but no doubt it was urgent and "needs must when the devil drives".'⁷⁶

Within the formation of these predominantly black units, protective strategies could nevertheless be introduced. Thus, within the organisation of the Northern Rhodesia Police, as in its two more recent counterparts south of the Zambesi, the existing social hierarchy was inculcated, safeguarded and perpetuated by means of clear distinctions of pay, uniform and rank between the all-white officer corps and the all-black privates and NCO's.

At a cruder level, black disunity was encouraged by recruiting mainly from those tribal groupings perceived as 'martial' and therefore more reliable in action. Two senior Company officials described the apparent differences between two adjacent tribal polities, the Bemba and the Mambwe, in ways which revealed the persistence of martial race perspectives derived largely from the early explorers. The Bemba were portrayed as a 'strong, intelligent and adventurous race, fond of travelling and especially adapted to *machila* and load-carrying. Formerly turbulent and a menace to all the weaker tribes, they have long since shown that wisely administered they are amenable to discipline. They constitute the aristocracy of the country.'⁷⁷ By contrast, the neighbouring Mambwe were identified as 'pre-eminently peaceable

agriculturalists and husbandmen, possessing sound intelligence [...] but their physique is not of the first order and their character somewhat unstable'.⁷⁸

Such perspectives underpinned a relatively unsophisticated but effective strategy of *divide et impera*. Just as the Ndebele-speaking peoples of Southern Rhodesia were incorporated as a collaborative arm of the state after the 1896–7 rebellions⁷⁹ and formed the recruiting base for the two wartime African regiments,⁸⁰ so the Ngoni, Bemba and, to a lesser extent, the 'fierce Mashulukumbwe' or Ila, occupied an elevated role in Company control strategies. In peacetime, the Fort Jameson Ngoni had been specially selected for the role of compound police on the Southern Rhodesian Mines;⁸¹ in peace and war, they, along with the Bemba and to a lesser extent the Ila, dominated the membership of the Northern Rhodesia Police. At times of unrest such a force could be used effectively against the mass of smaller, 'weaker' tribes, whilst within the Police ranks old animosities between, for example, the Ngoni and Bemba would, it was hoped, preclude any internally united disaffection. With the outbreak of hostilities military recruiters drew their expanded manpower almost solely from Ngoni, Bemba and Ila villages. Many recruits were ex-police, but these collaborators could exact a price for their return to duty. The Police recruiters found it necessary to increase the rates of pay to overcome an early poor response from the Bemba and Ngoni, who seem therefore to have been well aware of their elevated status on the military recruiting market.⁸² Certainly, KAR recruiters from Nyasaland in 1916 and 1917 concentrated their campaign solely on Bemba villages.⁸³ Military returns for the year ending December 1917 illustrated the importance of these tribal groups. Of the total roll of 1,260 African recruits in the Police companies, 420 were listed as Ngoni, 377 as Bemba and 66 of Ila origin, these three peoples constituting over two-thirds of the membership.⁸⁴

White mutiny: racial conflict on the north-east border

Such strategies could to some extent obviate the perceived threats to the existing socio-political order arising from the use of armed black troops. But little could be done to alleviate the serious social implications arising from the close deployment of white settler and black units together, often with common conditions of service. During the long border war, serious racial friction arose when the numerically weaker all-white unit of the local settler population, the Northern Rhodesia Rifles, found itself split up and used to stiffen the larger Police units. In February 1915, at a secret meeting of members of the NRR, Colonel

Hodson, the border Commander, was presented with an 'extraordinary' resolution which deprecated the social stigma of their enforced subordination to the predominantly black Police contingents, and called for the restoration of their elite status. The resolution demanded that 'as Premier Corps engaged in operations on the Northern Border, we want the Officers, NCO's and men to be complimented to seniority over Officers, NCO's and men of the Native forces of similar grade engaged on the same operations'.⁸⁵

This sudden backlash from white settler opinion came as a profound shock to senior border commanders, the military authorities in Salisbury and the Company authorities in Livingstone. It showed a marked divergence of opinion between the remote military and Company authorities on the one hand, more concerned with the need to preserve imperial unity in a critical defensive war and, on the other, local white settler opinion, for which the preservation of white supremacy was the paramount priority. In short, the urgent military imperatives of the moment had caused the local political and military authorities to overlook the niceties of social control, thus antagonising a white social elite which was suddenly deprived of social protection from their black counterparts.

The next ten months witnessed a growing conflict between C. Boyd-Cunningham, Commander of the Northern Rhodesia Rifles (see Figure 3.2) and the local politico-military authorities. In mid-February, Rifle representatives told Hodson that they considered that they had been hoodwinked into defending Company possessions, in a war in which the all-white contingent had been made 'subordinate' to the Northern Rhodesia Police and Belgian 'native' police.⁸⁶ The serious discontent was communicated to the Commandant-General himself, Brigadier General Edwards. Boyd-Cunningham explained his men's viewpoint at length. He stressed that, on their initial march to the border, the question 'constantly' put to him had been, 'Are we to mix and soldier with the Police?' Describing his men as 'highly charged' he stressed: 'The idea of serving with the police and losing their identity as a white volunteer force, is repugnant to them.'⁸⁷

In a distinctly more strongly-worded letter to Wallace, the Administrator, Boyd-Cunningham attacked the use of the NRR column 'as a stiffening leaven [...] to the Native Troops on the border'. He applied political pressure, reminding Wallace that the officers and NCO's 'were [...] carefully selected [...] from the ranks of those holding permanent positions and interests in Northern Rhodesia', and that the 'Mobile Column represent, in their volunteer ranks, the influential civil population of Northern Rhodesia'.⁸⁸



Figure 3.2 Officers of the NRR pictured at Lusaka railhead/station in 1914. On the left facing is Surgeon Captain Standish-White. On the right is Major C. Boyd-Cunningham, Commander of the NRR (E. Yorke private collection)

Defensive needs, however, continued to dictate the mixing together of Police and Rifle contingents. Matters came to a head during the defence of the Saisi military border post. Both units had to share the same trenches for long periods of time and tensions mounted. In one astonishing move in March 1915, Hodson, rather than 'go against white opinion as regards the Northern Rhodesia Rifles', reluctantly permitted the latter unit to shift camp away from the main Police position, even though this jeopardised the whole defensive fortification.⁸⁹

The mutinous behaviour of the NRR was again referred to the Commandant-General.⁹⁰ Seeing the grave threat to the defence of the whole north-east border, he delivered a stinging rebuke to Boyd-Cunningham. He deplored the fact that 'such a question should have been raised at such a time when the forces of Empire are fighting shoulder to shoulder, irrespective of class and colour for its existence'. The demand for segregated white NRR fighting formations was firmly rejected and the unit was publicly warned 'that any Officers or privates of the NRR [...] not prepared to accept this ruling are to be granted their discharge without delay'.⁹¹ Wallace supported this position and emphasised the subordination of the political authorities in such military matters.⁹²

At the end of March 1915, in a final attempt to defuse this 'racial crisis' and to safeguard border operations, Edwards agreed to the discharge of thirty-two NRR members, approximately thirty per cent of its total effective strength. In a confidential letter to Boyd-Cunningham, Edwards explained the ulterior political motive. He wished to avoid a major imperial scandal: 'It was the only thing to do, unless we wanted to wash our dirty linen in public.' To 'let the malcontents take their discharge', was, Edwards stressed, 'infinitely preferable to bringing the matter to the notice of the Imperial Authorities under whose orders the force is serving'.⁹³

This drastic action failed to solve the problem. In early May 1915 Boyd-Cunningham again reported: 'The morale of the British Native troops on the border render them undesirable to brigade with white troops.'⁹⁴ Bitter exchanges continued between Boyd-Cunningham and Hodson, this time over the issue of racially-mixed border patrols. In June 1915 Boyd-Cunningham was again severely reprimanded by the Salisbury military authorities:

You clearly undervalue the importance of the duty allotted to you which are prescribed not by myself, or by the High Commissioner of South Africa, but the Imperial Military authorities through the

Colonial Office [...] in wartime there can be no such thing as picking and choosing one's sphere of action or consulting one's likes and dislikes.⁹⁵

Three months later, the authorities began the removal of what had become a huge political embarrassment. They decided to condemn the NRR to a slow death by refusing to supply replacements for sickness or death. Wallace bluntly informed Boyd-Cunningham that same month: 'I don't think the Commandant-General intends to renew your wastage.'⁹⁶ By January 1916 the demobilisation of the unit was complete, the survivors being redeployed to the larger, all-white special companies of the BSAP.

Black non-combatants: the control of the carrier corps

By contrast to the threats to the social hierarchy revealed in the racial friction between local, white settler troops and the predominantly black, armed Police elite, the carrier corps posed a far less potent challenge to the ruling white minority. The carriers were obviously inferior in equipment, dress, pay and function. The carriers moreover, especially in their exclusion from the right to bear arms, were in every way inferior to black *askari*. This social division itself further encouraged black disunity and thereby aided the perpetuation of white supremacy. Elsewhere, military officials were well aware of the social conflicts often arising from these differences,⁹⁷ and the frequent cases of ill-treatment of Northern Rhodesian carriers by Belgian *askari* deployed along the north-east border testifies, perhaps, to this potential antagonism between *askari* and *tenga-tenga*.⁹⁸

Moreover, even within the carrier formations themselves, social divisions were clearly defined. R. W. M. Langham recalled the functional hierarchy construction, signified by distinct differences in dress, pay and conditions. At the pinnacle of an elaborate social pyramid were 'the elite, the machine-gun porters who wore khaki shorts and jumpers, and were paid fifteen shillings a month with rations [...] the most highly paid of all the porters'. Below these 'were the hospital porters or "blue boys" who carried the hospital stores in the field. They were dressed in blue calico uniforms and were paid 12s. 6d. a month and rations.' This class of porter was, however, 'quite distinct from the hospital orderlies and stretcher bearers, who were trained *askari*'. At a lower, graduated level, were 'the first line porters who accompanied the troops in the field when on the march, but did not [...] go into action. They wore their own clothing and were paid 10s. 0d. a month.' Finally, at the very



Figure 3.3 A rare image taken near a war carrier depot (probably Fife, Kasama or Abercorn) with a contingent of heavily burdened war carriers or *tenga-tenga* commencing their arduous march to the GEA front. Note the close supervision provided by African overseers/*capitaos* and European officers (E. Yorke private collection)

bottom of the scale were the porters employed on 'lines of communication', engaged to bring up convoys of stores and paid 7s. 6d. a month with food.⁹⁹ (Figure 3.3 is a rare image depicting a contingent of war carriers on the march).

'Martial race' perspectives even played a significant role in the selection of the more crucial carrier-support recruits. On the eve of his May 1916 offensive, Northey had emphasised the need for recruits from those tribal groups thought to be more martial and consequently more reliable: 'It is imperative that first line transport carriers should be of good physique and not belong to the timid races and on no account should their homes be near the frontier.'¹⁰⁰ The Officer commanding the border troops complied;¹⁰¹ the Bemba and Ngoni heartlands of the north-east provided an unusually high proportion of carrier recruits for Northey's five columns. When the Nyasaland Government appealed for additional *tenga-tenga* in January 1917, it was the Ngoni heartland around Fort Jameson which again provided the several thousand reinforcements.¹⁰² It is no exaggeration to say that Northey's victories and the Company's wartime control as a whole rested largely upon the

continuing loyalty of these tribal polities, whose manpower provided the bulk of both first-line carriers and troops.

Finally, to minimise socio-political discontent at village level, great care had to be employed during carrier recruitment. At Luwingu, for instance, the Native Commissioner reported that in order to avoid complaints of unequal distribution, he had 'to keep a list of villages, the number of able-bodied males in each and to ask for a fixed proportion from each village at each call for labour'.¹⁰³ T. R. Williams, recruiting in the Mporokoso area, described his rota system involving the division of the able-bodied of each village into three sections. In this way, on one tour, he 'wrote on 2,160 A.B's [able-bodied]' so that 'if an urgent call for labour comes, a messenger going round could raise immediately 720 by calling in merely one list – leaving two thirds of the A.B's still with their families'. Pointing out that 'a native likes to know what he is in for', he continued: 'Now the men written on list No. 1 know that they are going to be the first to be called on for long absences from their homes, and those on the other lists know that their tasks won't come till after the No.1's have come home!'¹⁰⁴

En route to the front, social order was maintained within carrier groups by supervisors who were generally *boma* messengers, *capitaos* and, less frequently, soldiers. On the northern border several local white farmers, some of whom had suffered losses from German raids, frequently acted as carrier conductors. The military emphasis upon their employment possibly reflected the recruitment value resulting from their close economic links with the border peoples.¹⁰⁵

The spectre of a second Chilembwe: the wartime control of black mission-educated elites

A high degree of social control could be exercised over African military elites through institutionalised segregation within disciplined formations. The regulation of non-military black elites outside such inherently authoritarian structures was a much more difficult matter. Chilembwe's insurrection in January 1915 alerted the Livingstone authorities to the potential danger to white supremacy posed by one such elite, the mission-educated teachers. Three months later the threat appeared to assume very real proportions, with a flood of reports from the East Luangwa District regarding the nefarious and anti-war activities of African teachers employed by the Dutch Reformed Church. The problem focused on the complaints made by several prominent Ngoni chiefs in May 1915, concerning the apparent usurpation of their moral and

political authority by these men of a 'new dance, unknown to the Angoni tribe' called *chipe* which had led to 'considerable immorality'.¹⁰⁶ The chiefs also complained of schools being established within their villages and against their will.

The problem reflected the weakness of the Company's pre-war educational control which had allowed an anarchic mission rivalry in which, as the Magistrate of East Luangwa put it, the Dutch Reformed Mission raced 'to pre-occupy every place to which the White Fathers might otherwise come'. The result had been a proliferation of schools and teachers whose qualifications appeared to be 'very slight'; the elder's opposition to their influx was 'always overborne' by the mass of young people (boys and girls of fifteen to twenty-five) with whom the mission schools were 'extraordinarily popular'. This popularity stemmed from 'the emancipation from control' conferred by joining a *Gulasa* (class) headed by one or more teachers. Such classes had for some years exhibited a 'distinct tendency' towards 'a kind of secret society or Freemasonry', encouraging 'adultery between class members'. Alongside this development, 'but rather different' was 'the banding together of youths and young men attending the mission schools in gangs of the "Hooligan type"' which 'had been the cause of serious trouble on some occasions'.¹⁰⁷

The Magistrate regarded the situation as 'most serious and dangerous to Europeans as well as natives'. The 'root of the trouble', he thought, was twofold. Firstly, 'the hostility of the mission to the whole native social system – the authority of the Chief, Induna, Headman, Father. They have vigorously undermined all this [...] and in its place have tried to set up themselves for Chiefs and their young teachers for Indunas headmen'. Secondly, he highlighted the 'very inadequate standard and training and morals required for the position of teacher' and 'the hopelessly insufficient supervision given'. Finally, he called for an Enquiry and Report 'into the whole working of the Mission in this District'.¹⁰⁸

Wallace reported all this both to Stanley, the Resident Commissioner, and Buxton, the High Commissioner in Cape Town. He also referred to the post-Chilembwe enquiry into mission work in Nyasaland, cryptically observing that the 'Dutch Reformed Church operate in Nyasaland as well as in Northern Rhodesia'.¹⁰⁹ In a despatch to Buxton, Stanley described the allegations as 'grave', and thought that remedial action was urgently needed. He stressed

That missionary enterprise should be allowed to fall so far short of its proper purpose as to become an agency for the demoralisation of

the natives among whom it is conducted, would be an evil of very great magnitude, not only in its immediate consequences, but also in its ultimate effect upon the relations of the white and coloured races.¹¹⁰

He recommended a speedy enquiry, to include, significantly, an investigation into links between the East Luangwa and Union branches of the Dutch Reformed Church.

Buxton's reply to Wallace incorporated a lengthy extract from a secret despatch from the Governor of Nyasaland enclosing his observations on the causes of the Chilembwe rebellion. The Governor stressed the 'extent to which the principles inculcated by John Chilembwe have been spread and accepted by the Christian-educated section of the native community'. Ominously, he further disclosed that several of the police had been 'contaminated'; he thought it 'not improbable that some at least of the native troops may be similarly affected'. The report also intimated the role of the Watchtower sect, 'whose prediction of the end of the white man's rule in October 1914 did much to disturb the native mind', and which had been 'active in the West Nyasa District whence are recruited the Atonga companies of the KAR'.¹¹¹ On the basis of this, Buxton spurred Wallace to rapid investigation of the East Luangwa reports.¹¹² Wallace, himself, focused imperial attention on the perhaps more serious subversive role of the teachers acting independently, rather than a conspiratorial mother-church: 'I do not think that the influence of any particular Mission in the East Luangwa District is responsible for the trouble but that it is rather the effect of educated native teachers attempting to create themselves a class above the Chiefs.'¹¹³

Official fears were massively reinforced by the reports of their juniors on the spot who now spoke of apparent interference with military recruitment by mission teachers and of anti-war preachings and thinly-veiled direct threats against white authority. A tour by the Native Commissioner for Fort Jameson stimulated a flood of complaints from Ngoni chiefs of flagrant violation of their authority by local teachers. One chief, Madzimawe, provided a list of six teachers who had committed adultery with wives of absent husbands, one of whom was away on active service at Abercorn. In a more serious reference to the undermining of military recruitment, the official reported that the teachers 'do the reverse of assisting messengers when recruiting labour, generally for transport'.¹¹⁴

A recruiting tour of Ngoni villages around Fort Jameson on behalf of the Police seemed to reinforce Administrative fears. At one village,

Chief Sayiri, spokesman for the assembled Ngoni chiefs, reiterated their loyalty: 'it is not only our duty but our interest to support the Administration'.¹¹⁵ Nevertheless, he explained that they could only recruit successfully if given 'authority to use press-gang methods', since at present they were 'helpless'. 'Our authority has passed to the teachers. Our young men will not listen to us.' He claimed that teachers tried to keep this sway over the young men by circulating rumours to the effect that 'all able-bodied men found are to be arrested'; secondly, that 'to leave the schools and churches will be to leave God' and thirdly, that 'this is the white man's war. Let the white men fight it themselves.'¹¹⁶ Reporting these views of his chiefs, the tour official concluded as had his colleagues that 'a hierarchy has been set up in the village which is rapidly undermining the tribal system and trying to arrogate to itself the authority of the Chiefs'.¹¹⁷

The emergence of the African mission-educated elite as the principle *bête noire* for the colonial authorities undoubtedly reflected the continuing fears caused by the nearby and recent Chilembwe rebellion, in which a section of the mission-educated elite had played a leading part. It was a perceived threat magnified by the pressures of war, under which traditional elites had been designated as the chief means for the extraction of the labour and food needed for victory, a victory upon which the survival of white supremacy in the territory ultimately depended.¹¹⁸ These white preoccupations explain some of the prominence given in tour reports to the interference by African teachers in the processes of war recruitment and their alleged rejection of the concept of a 'white man's war'. But one ought not to discount a possible opportunism on the part of the Ngoni chiefs, well aware of their enhanced wartime importance in the eyes of the authorities and the known antipathy of the latter towards African teachers. They may have sought to use the issue to restore authority already lost to them. This is most clearly suggested by the official tour report of September 1915, in which the Ngoni chiefs sought and won the 'definite support from the boma' needed for 'the struggle against the influence of the teachers'; Cartmel-Robinson assured them that 'the Administration would always help the chiefs to preserve their influence'.¹¹⁹ Chief Sayiri himself could not have put it more clearly: 'It is not only our duty but our interest to support the Administration.'¹²⁰ The resounding success of the chiefs in this respect was illustrated by Administration backing for the extensive coercive powers required for specifically war labour recruitment.¹²¹

Nevertheless, such a policy of massive unequivocal support for the Ngoni chiefly elite was not accomplished without some misgiving within the Administration. The Native Commissioner of Fort

Jameson, for instance, emphasised 'the difficulties inherent in providing uncivilised chiefs with the support which they deserve and often cannot do without'.¹²² This continuation of the pre-war policy of working through traditional elites, despite all the attendant problems such as abuse of power, was nevertheless considered infinitely preferable to relying upon the newer untried and untested mission-educated elite, which, despite its growing influence, had so recently become tainted with rebellion and political subversion. The local Fort Jameson Magistrate thus immediately rejected one colleague's suggestion to co-opt and neutralise the teachers as partners of the chiefs in securing war carrier and police recruits as 'most unwise'.¹²³

From October 1915, therefore, the Livingstone authorities conducted a determined campaign to control and contain the activities of African mission teachers, not only within the disaffected East Luangwa District but throughout the Territory. The Dutch Reformed Church leadership came under direct official pressure to discipline its teachers, with threats of unspecified retribution if they continued to obstruct war time recruitment or carried on establishing schools in defiance of the chiefs' wishes.¹²⁴ Earlier in the year a warning from the Magistrate at Mzimba, Nyasaland, of a suspected Chilembwe adherent named Domingo running schools in the Lundazi sub-district, had resulted in the arrest of the man in question and several of his teachers, although subsequent investigations proved 'no evidence against them'.¹²⁵

Outside the East Luangwa District, African teachers were subjected to similarly close supervision by local *boma* officials, especially in the north-east districts closest to the war zone. One effective way to alleviate the 'problem' was to call up teachers for military service. Very many were. To some extent this reflected their obvious value to the war effort with their literacy skills making them useful as interpreters, clerks or *capitaos*. But there is also clear and compelling evidence that African mission teachers were deliberately inducted into the military in order to secure their closer supervision. Moreover, a high proportion of them were conscripted into the socially inferior carrier contingents, a significant levelling exercise which undermined any elite status they might claim. As early as October 1914, before even the East Luangwa crisis had emerged, *boma* officials had routinely refused to exempt teachers from service with the 'common herd' of the carrier corps. Thus, at Kapatu Mission, several catechists forcibly recruited as war carriers were said to have felt humiliated at being subjected to such menial forced labour. 'To be lined up in front of everyone, what shame', the local missionary observed.¹²⁶ Three years later, after complaints from a local

village located near the same mission about the violent behaviour of two catechists, the latter were arrested: the *boma* informed their missionaries in writing that 'violence would not be tolerated in the preaching of religion'.¹²⁷ Six days later a second letter arrived, calling up twelve teachers for war service.¹²⁸

More significantly, at Chilonga Mission near Mpika, the African teachers were levied virtually en masse. The *boma* explained to the resident White Fathers that not only was there 'a growing need for porters', but also expressed official concern lest their 'mass exemption might introduce a pernicious idea of independence into the minds of our catechists', or, in the official's own words, 'otherwise they might get big ideas into their heads'.¹²⁹

Other denominations also suffered. Kawimbe LMS Mission reported in December 1916 that 'owing to the demands of the military [...] very few of our teachers and preachers are left'.¹³⁰ At Kambole the shocked teachers were warned that as many as sixty per cent of their number might be needed for military service.¹³¹ At Mbereshi, African teachers were forced to carry flour for the troops at Abercorn.¹³² At Mporokoso Mission fourteen teachers had been called up by December 1917.¹³³

The diversion of so many African teachers into the secure bosom of military service, intentional or otherwise, was accompanied by a policy explicitly designed to halt the expansion of mission activities in wartime; it was particularly directed against the politically suspect Dutch Reformed Church. In May 1917 Wallace explained to the High Commissioner why he was so inflexibly opposed to the repeated requests from this Church for permission to expand their schools into the Mkushi sub-district. He 'could not consent to opening up new mission stations until the war was over', whether by the DRC or indeed any other mission. His reasons for this extraordinary and unprecedented measure were

that there is heavy pressure on natives of this and the Northern districts for war carriers, and I do not wish them to be distracted from this special work. Also, I have not wanted to sanction other native mission schools until there is some Proclamation for regulating them, as, under the present conditions, I do not consider it quite safe to bring our natives under the influence of strange teachers over which we have no control.¹³⁴

All the weaknesses of wartime Company control and its fears for its subversion by the mission-educated elite were thereby stunningly revealed.

Political legislation for the control of mission teachers was soon forthcoming in the shape of the 1918 Native Schools Proclamation. The various mission bodies were forewarned of the measure by means of an official Circular and the draft regulations reflected the more important recommendations of officials involved in the East Luangwa 'crisis' of three years earlier. To uphold *boma* and chiefly authority it was ruled that the establishment of schools and appointment of teachers required the sanction of both. Teachers would require minimum educational qualifications, undoubtedly to reduce the danger from ignorant unsupervised teaching. Also, to prevent disruption to the village social order and protect the chief's moral authority, teachers were required to be married and always accompanied by their wives on tour. Other regulations included the prohibition of the raising of crops for sale by teachers, aside from their own immediate needs, a measure presumably designed to prevent teachers assuming any economic independence, or perhaps political ascendancy in their villages.¹³⁵

The Proclamation was promulgated six months later, in April 1918. Educational and marriage qualifications for teachers were rigidly enforced with the requirement that certificates of both had to be deposited at the local *boma* before teaching appointments were confirmed. In a crucial clause, it was laid down that an enquiry could be held by either a Native or District Commissioner, leading to possible dismissal and territorial ban of a teacher 'if complaint is made of any teacher imputing to him misconduct or alleging that he has attempted in any way to subvert or interfere with the tribal control of the chief or headman or with the duties and work of the district officials, messengers or police'. Strict penalties were laid down for 'unqualified teachers' teaching in any school; for any person 'opening or carrying on' a school 'without the consent prescribed'; and for teaching at one already closed by the Administrator. These offences, or incitement to them, involved imprisonment with or without hard labour, or fines of at least twenty-five pounds.¹³⁶

The Proclamation predictably aroused vehement missionary opposition. The regulations implied severe disruption to the most important aspect of missionary endeavour, that of education and, more significantly, represented a distinct triumph of '*boma* power' over 'mission power'. One LMS missionary forecast, on the basis of the circular, that increased powers would be given to District Commissioners, 'enabling them to greatly hinder our work if they are not sympathetic'.¹³⁷ The Chilonga White Fathers similarly observed that 'the control exercised by a Native Commissioner, vis-à-vis the mission,

appears somewhat exaggerated'.¹³⁸ By all, it was regarded as a transgression upon their authority and independence. One Chipili missionary thus scribbled in his logbook: 'I protested against this order as *ultra vires*'.¹³⁹

The London Missionary Society was a persistent critic and played a leading role in marshalling missionary opposition. Missionaries took strong exception to such restrictions on their work given the Company's previous lack of political interest and, indeed, its almost total lack of grant support for African education. One LMS critic stressed that 'it is impossible for a Native Commissioner to know as much about the teachers as those who employ and train them; also [...] teachers are private servants of the Mission which pay their entire salaries'. The requirement of a Magistrate's permission before teaching could commence meant that 'considerable delay will be unavoidable and the education of the people be made considerably more difficult'. The LMS, it was stressed, ran nearly 200 schools in the Abercorn district alone. His other criticisms were levelled at the Circular's requirements for enclosed school buildings, in view of cost and health dangers, while restrictions on teachers raising crops for sale were seen as unjustified.¹⁴⁰

Other missions voiced similar criticisms. Livingstonia spokesmen apparently regarded the Proclamation as 'contrary in many details to the terms of the Berlin Treaty'.¹⁴¹ The White Fathers were less outspoken, possibly reflecting their more insecure position as a foreign mission. Nevertheless, Bishop Larue, head of the Bangweulu Vicariate, made plain his disapproval, arguing that 'the legislation, as at present framed, might have an effect very different from that intended'. Larue maintained that 'the effect upon native opinion would be to give an impression that schools and chapels are discouraged or that the attitude of the Government towards religion is unsympathetic and that some definite precaution will have to be adopted in order to avoid this'.¹⁴² The Kasama Magistrate confirmed: 'All the *Les Pères Blancs* seemed to look on the proposed Mission Regulations with suspicion', despite his assurances that the Proclamation would be administered sympathetically, with convictions only being sought 'for some grave or repeated offence'. The Magistrate did, nonetheless, see the measure as a justified curb on mission power; in recent court cases, for instance, the White Fathers had presumed to think that their teachers 'should have been released because they were Christian teachers'.¹⁴³

Protest letters were despatched to both the Administrator and High Commissioner by the London Missionary Society. The mission told the Administrator that it 'regarded with grave concern any legislation for

control of schools towards which the Government gives no financial aid'. In a direct reference to the suspicions of the DRC and other mission sects which had been inspired by the Chilembwe affair, the writer observed: 'We consider that the upheaval and dislocation caused to our work are not justified by the faults of any one Mission or the propaganda of any one sect.' He submitted that it was not consistent with the British government to legislate or attempt to control the evangelistic efforts of any Christian Church. Where these Regulations dealt with purely religious work, they were 'absolutely ultra vires'. He reaffirmed the mission's loyalty and its common interests with the Company in social order by requesting that the Regulations be recast in a form 'that will assure the good conduct and order aimed at both by the Administration and ourselves'.¹⁴⁴

In a similar, more detailed letter of protest to the High Commissioner, the LMS District Secretary doubted whether 'such drastic legislation for unaided schools exists elsewhere within the British Empire'. He claimed that the Proclamation deprived the mission of 'at least 50% of our teachers by, for instance, placing a premium on the evil of early marriage and, by limiting the choice of teachers to residents of the village in which the school is situated [...] and so preventing all extension [of educational activity]'. Widowers, he pointed out, would be 'entirely debarred' from employment as teachers and married men whose wives were temporarily unable to travel 'cannot be sent to schools'. No individual teacher could teach in one village in the morning and in another in the afternoon. The whole measure was a 'manifest injustice'.¹⁴⁵

In other ways, the authorities continued to discourage wartime mission activities. A proposal to implement tax exemptions for African mission pupils was opposed on the grounds that 'it may lead to natives entering schools merely to avoid taxation' and, in a more dubious argument, that there was 'no real hardship in pupils paying tax as they have ample opportunities of earning money'. Such political discouragement was accompanied by a predictable financial motive. Wallace estimated that 'approximately £2,250 per annum would be lost in revenue by granting exemption to mission pupils'.¹⁴⁶

The opening salvos of what was to become a bitter and protracted imperial war had thus exposed the first inherent weaknesses underpinning the structure of colonial control in Northern Rhodesia. The feeble defence of the north-east frontier, epitomised by the government retreat from major administrative centres and exacerbated by racial friction between black and white Company troops, was complemented by the post-Chilembwe official fears over the apparently subversive activities

of a few mission teachers in East Luangwa District. The 1916 offensive, principally motivated by a desperate need to restore declining white prestige was, ironically, by virtue of its fresh and more indiscriminate demands on African food and manpower resources, now destined to deal a far more devastating blow to social order in Northern Rhodesia.

4

Colonial Dependence and African Opportunity: The Indigenous Response to War Exigencies

Military labour extraction: initial voluntarism and the growth of resistance

Early African response to war labour demands greatly varied and was by no means wholly negative. Initially, many actually volunteered for war service. The relatively high wage scale provided a clear incentive to enlistment not merely as a means of meeting colonial tribute obligations such as poll tax, but as a means of purchasing 'luxury' goods with the surplus cash.¹ Thus, one Ngoni remembered the response of some men in his village: 'They were happy because they were going to work and were going to be paid.'² Such financial incentives even attracted a few mission teachers. At St Paul's Anglican Church, Fort Jameson, one missionary scribbled in his log book: 'Fined a teacher, no school, earning money as tenga-tenga.'³ Furthermore, until the May 1916 offensive, carrying distances remained relatively short and were conducted along established routes in conditions akin to peacetime carrier work. During early wartime, therefore, Company officials were surprised by the enthusiastic response to labour calls in some areas. At Abercorn, an official noted the keen response to early war carrier work⁴ and likewise at Mporokoso.⁵

Where resistance occurred in villages to early labour levies, volunteers would invariably come forward. As one Ngoni eyewitness recalled: 'Some were willing, those who joined freely, but some were forced.'⁶ Among the Tumbuka 'some were forced [...] those who were a bit young and those who were old enough at the normal stage of things [able-bodied] were volunteers'.⁷ In consideration of overall response to war labour demands, moreover, it is possible, as in peacetime, to broadly differentiate between those tribal polities more decisively integrated into

the colonial labour system by the time of the outbreak of war and others who had retained a degree of independence for political or economic reasons and, consequently, had remained on the periphery.

The Ngoni and Bemba, for instance, responded more positively to war labour calls, even after the Northey offensive, than neighbouring peoples. This undoubtedly reflected, as we have seen, their higher degree of assimilation into the pre-war labour economy.⁸ Local missionaries thus observed the strikingly high degree of Bemba compliancy to war carrier levies. 'Our negroes have lent themselves to these requisitions with a good spirit and have carried most of it on their backs to Abercorn [...] One might have feared at first that these requisitions might finish up by awaking the warlike spirit of our Babembas; it has had no effect.'⁹

By contrast, peasant producer areas, such as the Ila districts of the north-west, often skilful evaders of pre-war colonial labour demands, proved far less accommodating. At Serenje, one observer described Ila war carriers as 'the least fitted for carrier work',¹⁰ probably reflecting their relative lack of experience of this form of labour demand. Similarly, at least one voluntary carrier recruiting tour proved disastrous when Ila recruits demanded 'a definite statement that they would not be taken right up to the war'.¹¹ Only thirty-two recruits were obtained for the Northern Rhodesia Police, even when Ila Police regulars were brought up from Livingstone 'for encouragement'.¹²

Similarly, those tribal groups who had retained a degree of independence through the stubbornness of their resistance or the remoteness of their home areas, or both, generally proved recalcitrant recruits to the imperial cause. The Unga, Bisa and Batwa inhabiting the Bangweulu swamp region, largely inaccessible until the inauguration of the water route, often proved elusive as carrier recruits. Thus one official reported that the early response to war labour and food demands had been 'good [...] except for the Watwa inhabiting the Bangweulu swamps'.¹³ The remote southern Lunda and Kaonde areas also often maintained their pre-war intractability. In 1916 one Kasempa official admitted that war transport was 'not [...] a very popular occupation'.¹⁴ The long distances travelled to the war zone and the fear of involvement in actual hostilities were cited as the chief reasons, despite large bonus payments offered for the return trip to Broken Hill.

If there was any discernible turning point in general attitudes to war labour recruitment, however, it was provided by the Northey offensive. The offensive demanded not only the forcible recruitment of thousands more carriers, but also involved a rapid multiplication of carrying distances in hostile environments, with an associated deterioration of

portage conditions. From May 1916 onwards, an irrevocable tide of resistance increasingly characterised African attitudes to military requisitions. Such a deterioration largely reflected Company neglect of carrier service conditions, a neglect admitted to in one post-war report. Not without a pang of guilty conscience, the Secretary for Native Affairs recalled the inadequate protection afforded for long route marches in the extreme climates of German and Portuguese East Africa. As he explained, 'the work of the carrier is a very arduous one. There is the cold. Of course we gave each man a blanket whenever we could but some blankets were unprocurable.'¹⁵

Food shortages aggravated the suffering and added to the growing disillusionment. 'Then there was sometimes lack of food', Coxhead admitted. 'A carrier may be carrying a load of food but he can't touch that, and very often the troops and carriers had to go short.'¹⁶ Hunger, perhaps, represented the most potent memory of war survivors. One Chewa ex-carrier recalled: 'They had not sufficient food [...] at times they had to go without food'.¹⁷ Another remembered that carriers 'had to face some troubles, hunger [...] people were short on the way'.¹⁸ The problem, usually the result of administrative blunders, received official confirmation. On the Lundazi to Fife route, for instance, during the first two months of 1916 'war transport was very unpopular [...] owing to the conditions amounting to famine that prevailed on the road to Fife'. The situation was only remedied 'by sacrificing a sixth part of the native flour sent from Fort Jameson for the Northern Forces'. During that period 'considerable pressure' had to be exerted to produce carriers.¹⁹ Lozi carriers engaged on the tortuously long route from Lealui to Ndola for deployment on the land section of the water route were less fortunate. Starving Africans frequently broke formation to raid standing green mealie crops along the route.²⁰ A 1918 report on the Ngoni response to carrier employment revealed that although food allocated 'varied considerably with different gangs', many had complained that they 'were starved and a considerable shortage of rations experienced'.²¹

The extreme, continuous strain formed another focus of grievance. One ex-carrier remembered that war carriers on his route were travelling 'six to eight miles a day, then spend a night, but not enough rest, no good rest'.²² Ngoni complaints stressed that the work was 'very hard', that it was 'distant from their homes and people [...] and [...] that it lasts six months (which with the journey there and back is prolonged to eight or nine)'.²³ The continuous work was tellingly expressed in the words: 'There are no Sundays. They all complain that they have no time for rest.'²⁴ There is little doubt, too, that carriers were frequently

overloaded beyond the standard 55 lbs to 60 lbs payload. Indeed, officials had protested in peacetime about such malpractices.²⁵ In wartime, the urgency of demand made this inevitable. One eye-witness recalled: 'They were carrying very heavy loads, you know [...] they weren't happy then'.²⁶ Another remembered how 'the loads were too heavy for those who were a bit young but for those who were grown up it wasn't too much'.²⁷

There is little doubt, also, that deliberate ill-treatment of carriers occurred. The ruthless indifference shown by Belgian columns towards their carriers was notorious. Thus, an official observed how, on one occasion, meat shot by a Belgian column was distributed amongst themselves 'while their unfortunate carriers, who had to go miles and return late last night fetching it, got no more than they could steal'.²⁸ The official himself was forced to hunt to feed the 390 starving carriers.

The often liberal use of both the *chikote* and *sjambok* was a major source of resentment. E. Lane-Poole reported this as 'a very general complaint, though some gangs have been better treated than others'. Their treatment was 'harsher than they have been accustomed to and more talked about than any other hardship'.²⁹ One Chewa survivor, who served with the mainly Ngoni first-line porters in Nyasaland and German East Africa, vividly remembered the frequent use of the *sjambok*. The carriers 'had to complain because when they were tired they were to get beaten', but the *capitaos* 'didn't listen, instead they were beaten after complaining'. The blows were recalled dramatically: 'they had to get a whip [...] one, two, four, six'.³⁰ One official who accompanied Ngoni carriers northwards beyond Nyasaland, later recalled the brutal treatment of carriers by Northey's troops, including a scathing indictment of General Northey himself. He stressed:

What intense suffering mere thoughtlessness can produce and how supremely ignorant of all natives are all South Africans and most Central Africans [...] after hearing from General Northey's own lips how little interested he was in the welfare of his carriers, the admitted main-stay of his force, I was much surprised to see of his East African appointment.³¹

Aware of these conditions, the Company authorities did deploy two Native Commissioners to supervise Northey's carriers but, as J. C. C. Coxhead admitted: 'to look after their welfare it would have taken many more than that'.³² Coxhead commented on the helpless alienation experienced by carriers:

There was no one near them who understood them and could talk their language [...] their immediate white superiors were in so many cases, men from the south, who are absolutely unsympathetic as far as the native is concerned – men who think that the native was intended by nature to be a beast of burden only.³³

The result of such neglect, deliberate or otherwise, was reflected in the rapidly escalating carrier mortality rate. Statistics for specific districts are virtually non-existent. Individual *boma* officials were, perhaps, reluctant to publicise them. A Mweru-Luapula report, however, provided a rare set of figures. It was observed that, 'though no details are given by Fort Rosebery and Chienji, this has been done at Kawambwa and the rate is rising'.³⁴ The Kawambwa figures showed that the percentage of deaths had doubled from 1.56 per cent for the period May–June 1916, to 3.06 per cent for the period May–June 1917.³⁵ The District Commissioner commented that although these figures 'may not be considered particularly high [...] the death rate amongst porters sent up between August and November last is bound to be higher by the time all are back'.³⁶ Coxhead himself hinted darkly at the potential size of the final death toll: 'The death rate was large [...] I haven't figures but [...] what with the cold and lack of food there was a good deal of sickness, and it is very difficult to look after the physical welfare of thousands of natives when they are spread over hundreds of miles'.³⁷ From the military perspective, as early as May 1916, barely a month into the Northey offensive, huge losses of first-line porters (many of them Bemba and Ngoni) were being observed: 'Grand country but killing work marching. Bitterly cold. Long after sunset before we made camp. Struggling through deep dongas with the guns. Everyone dead beat. The tenga boys dropping out all along the line. Many of them made their last journey this time.'³⁸ (See Figure 4.1 for a more fortunate African soldier receiving treatment).

Certainly BSAC official figures of 2,300 or 4.1 per cent carrier dead for the whole of the war period were patently unrealistic.³⁹ From the Fort Jameson sub-district alone an estimated 1,000 dead from the Ngoni tribe alone officially perished, nearly 50 per cent of that national total.⁴⁰ This latter figure was obtained from a probable 10,000–12,000 Ngoni who served and it is therefore highly likely that the total national death toll was as high as 10 per cent, that is 10,000–15,000 deaths out of the earlier estimated 100,000–150,000 carriers recruited from all districts of Northern Rhodesia. Certainly a figure of 10 per cent is comparable to estimates for parts of British East Africa.⁴¹



Figure 4.1 An extremely rare image of an un-named wounded Northern Rhodesian *askari* sergeant (either NRP or KAR) receiving medical attention from Dr Harold of the NRR Medical Corps, a common situation as casualties massively escalated after the 1916 Northey offensive. Sick or wounded war carriers, however, would rarely benefit from this level of care; most were left to die on the road or were hurriedly buried in remote locations far from their home villages (E. Yorke private collection)

A tragically high death rate is strongly suggested by surviving mission records. The paucity of the eternally cost-conscious BSAC medical arrangements meant that the care of the sick and dying *tenga-tenga* largely devolved upon the north-east mission stations. Indeed, missionaries had reported war carrier deaths on the road as early as January 1915. At Kapatu, for instance, the death of two military porters was reported that month, 'abandoned by their companions'. One was buried by a catechist; 'the other must have been the prey of hyenas and vultures'.⁴² By late 1917, such was the heavy death toll that the Government was forced to use most of the mission stations as medical centres and set up primitive hospitals on the north-east border. The volunteer White Fathers, deployed to Fife military hospital and tending mostly returning first-line porters, precisely recorded the heavy influx of sick carriers during just the first half of 1918. Their extremely rare statistics again challenged official records and stunningly revealed that in January, 241 sick war carriers were admitted; in February, 163; in March, 238; in April, 190; in May, 161 and in June, the astonishingly high figure of 324.⁴³ It was accordingly observed: 'Many of these poor blacks come to us completely exhausted, and it wasn't long before they died of dysentery or pneumonia. Since the beginning of the war we have buried 700 of them.'⁴⁴ Figures for other 'military hospitals' set up at Abercorn (see Figure 4.2 for a depiction of medical staff there), Mwenzo and Fort Hill are, frustratingly, not available. At the latter, LMS missionaries were employed to tend the sick at the rate of 10s. 6d. a day.⁴⁵ At Kawimbe Mission, transformed into a temporary wartime medical centre, 1,100 cases were admitted in 1918 alone, suffering from various types of fever, ancylostomiasis and dysentery for example. Among these were 'over 100 military porters, most of them being sent in by the District Commissioner who gave us medicines, surgical dressings, food etc'.⁴⁶ Such figures omitted the hundreds who perished on the roads all over German and Portuguese Africa as Northey's columns desperately tried to pin down the German forces led by the elusive von Lettow-Vorbeck. One veteran survivor recalled the heavy death rate amongst first-line military porters. He had seen 'many men die' and they had 'to bury them on the road, just a matter of a heap of bushes and off they go'.⁴⁷ Death rates could be high even amongst war carriers employed along internal lines of communication. 'Large numbers' of Lozi second-line carriers died from pneumonia and dysentery on the Lealui to Broken Hill route 'probably as a result of being packed together on the Kalomo to Broken Hill train'.⁴⁸

The rising mortality rate naturally represented the most potent deterrent to war carrier service. 'They were in fear [...] of the name of war.



Figure 4.2 A wartime photograph depicting medical officer Dr Murray with two French Fathers (*Pères Blancs*) taken at Abercorn in October 1915. The White Fathers and other missionaries played a vital collaborative role in both the wartime recruitment and welfare supervision of African carriers (E. Yorke private collection)

They had to think and say, if I go this way I will die,⁴⁹ observed one veteran. The BSAC's paltry death gratuity of £2 for relatives of dead carriers probably only increased the odium attached to military portage. Desertion emerged as the most widespread form of evasion. As government recruiters approached, significant numbers of young males would disappear into the surrounding bush. 'Some were running in the bush, because they knew they were going to die, just because they went to war,' confirmed one Chewa veteran.⁵⁰ To evade recruitment some Tumbuka men 'were hidden in caves and some were to make rough houses',⁵¹ the former representing an old local tactic of evading rampant Ngoni *impis* in pre-colonial times.⁵²

It was a strategy which severely disrupted military operations as early as March 1915. Boyd-Cunningham reported from Saisi post that desertion had made it 'impossible to get any carriers here locally now and also no food'.⁵³ He stressed rather unrealistically: 'Carriers [...] are to be a source of trouble before long unless we can devise some other means of transport'.⁵⁴ BSAP Private Walker recalled the escalating burden thrown upon other war carriers due to rising desertion: 'My own

boy deserted in the night so had to in-span one of the other carriers with extra load.⁵⁵

Deaths of *tenga-tenga* in action, although less common, virtually guaranteed mass desertion. 'The first shot fired', wrote Boyd-Cunningham, 'would see the disappearance into the long grass of the whole of the carrier train and a mile of dumped rations and ammunition boxes strewn in one long line on a narrow native path.'⁵⁶ The death of five carriers in one border skirmish was, in the words of one border commander, 'to be quietly regretted [...] [I] fear there may be trouble to get them to go out in future [...] one cannot blame the poor devils'.⁵⁷ Boyd-Cunningham's desperate solution of employing armed messengers with carrier convoys was however ridiculed, as 'nothing will prevent these natives bolting if there is any shooting'.⁵⁸

The greatest antipathy was understandably reserved for Belgian columns, renowned for their cruelty. In Chienji District, Native Commissioner T. R. Williams could only raise four men from one village to act as *machila* carriers for a Belgian sick column, 'the rest having a pressing engagement in the bush'. On this occasion, however, the tactic failed and 'their wives, not liking to be "agin the government", went and fetched them back and they got ten of the best apiece, after which no trouble in villages'.⁵⁹

Even amongst the generally more reliable Bemba villages, a growing negative response to war carrier levies became evident after the mass call-ups of the Northey offensive. In July 1916, at Ipusukilo, it was recorded that 'although voluntary enlistment had been called for, it has not experienced great enthusiasm'.⁶⁰ Around Chilubula, *boma* messengers were seen to 'scour the villages [...] and the mitanda in order to recruit by guile some male and female carriers. They run away before them as from a lion'.⁶¹ Returning from a visit to one village, Father Barbier witnessed the organised evasion of Kasama *boma* messengers conducting recruiting *olendoes*: 'the men are escaping and hiding themselves in the undergrowth until the moment they are signalled' and the messengers 'have all the trouble in the world to find some carriers'.⁶² At Kayambi, the beating of the *boma* drum to summon men for war work at Abercorn was deliberately ignored, provoking the poetic comment: 'The people haven't the air of wanting to leave their mitanda [...] Ears they have and do not hear, feet they have and do not walk!'⁶³

Employment on European farms, despite the relatively low wages paid, provided a welcome, more permanent refuge from war labour levies. Around Fort Jameson, for instance, the liberal 'ticket system', by virtue of which the normal twenty-eight to thirty days farm labour

commitment could be spread over several months, provided a popular means of evasion. Consequently, in 1915, the Fort Jameson official recorded the 'very plentiful supply of labour' on the plantations which was due, 'to the unpopularity of transport work in the wet season through a strange country and with no food [...] as a result of which some few died'.⁶⁴ In 1918 E. Lane-Poole observed that the liberal use of the *chikote* on war carriers 'no doubt acted as a deterrent to the young man coming forward and sent him to the farm instead'.⁶⁵

Even mine work, despite the attendant dangers, proved a popular long-term means of avoiding the hated carrier work. From the north-eastern districts, in particular, increasingly large numbers of able-bodied males flocked to the Katanga and Southern Rhodesia mines, rather than engage on war service, a movement accelerated by the higher wages offered. At Chilonga, for instance, it was reported that, of the 2,580 Christians registered, while most of the men had been recruited for the military for ten months, 'others, 137 of them, have left for the Congo, maybe for the Transvaal, to look for their fortunes or flown from the fatigue parties of war'.⁶⁶

A less secure refuge, perhaps, was provided by participation in essential or 'favoured industries', such as salt-workings, where labourers were generally exempted from carrier work. At Chilonga, near the Mpika salt pans, the White Fathers observed an early clampdown on this strategy by the local *boma*. 'Some messengers have gone to Chibwa and have taken away to the boma all those who were working at the salt without a permit'. 'Most of them', the missionaries noted, 'have been freed, the others are Khaki'.⁶⁷

Adherence to missions or enrolment as mission workers represented a further strategy or evasion. Thus at Chilonga, in 1918, the White Fathers noted with surprise: 'There is a lot of people for our small Chilonga, above all in this time of war and government recruitment'.⁶⁸ Returning carriers noticeably flocked to the missions, 'eager to come and re-immense themselves at the mission', as one White father put it.⁶⁹ Indeed, such tactics were fraught with risks, especially in view of the wartime collaborative role of some missions.⁷⁰ At Chilubula, for instance, the White Fathers soon saw through this strategy and cooperated fully in the weeding out of such evaders 'strutting about while all the others are in harness'. They agreed to a system of passes whereby it would be possible to guard against those 'not doing the work ordered from Kasama'.⁷¹

For some, even service in the regular army was preferable to military portage. Enrolment as an *askari* offered superior social status

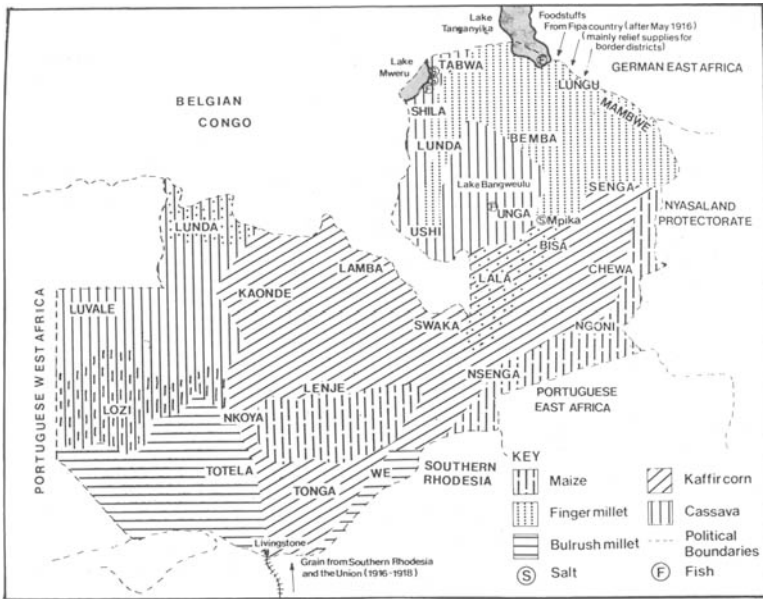
and serving conditions. Thus five men from Chilonga mission village 'in order to escape the forced labour of carrying, to which they have been called [...] enlisted in the army'.⁷² Individual acts of defiance were also often recorded. Thus at Chilubi in February 1916, a messenger arrived 'wounded in the arm with a knife blow', inflicted by a local swamp inhabitant 'refusing to march'. 'Not accommodating our Babisa', the local missionary wryly commented.⁷³ At a time of mass labour levies in 1918, the headman's house in one village, containing the Native Commissioner's gun and cartridges and all the headman's possessions, mysteriously caught fire and the contents were consumed. The Chilubula missionaries were intensely suspicious: 'An accident or planned by some ill-wishers, who will know?'⁷⁴ Similarly, at Fort Rosebery, Isaac Mayuni, described as a 'mission-educated native and a clever rogue', was whipped and imprisoned for six months in 1916 for burning down the post office and, more significantly, a military grain store.⁷⁵

Military food demands and African enterprise

The north-east plateau

The enormous quantities of foodstuffs necessitated to supply the expanding military market immediately demanded the large-scale participation of the African agricultural sector. The embryonic European farming community, even at maximum production, could only provide a small proportion of total military food requirements. Furthermore, European farmers maintained a heavy export commitment to the expanding Katanga market throughout the war period.⁷⁶ Owing to its close geographical proximity to the war zone, the Plateau inevitably became a major military food supply source. For a cost-conscious Livingstone executive it represented a logical economic strategy. Thus, in February 1916, Wallace observed that 'native food' needed on the border was 'probably not less than three tons per day, the bulk of which should be bought on the Plateau'.⁷⁷ As long as there was 'sufficient food on the roads to feed the carriers', it was 'the best and cheapest method'.⁷⁸

The commercial implications for thousands of African cultivators on the Plateau were obvious. For over four years, military food requirements created an unprecedented market opportunity for the staple crops of the region (as shown in Map 4.1), notably finger millet, cassava, Kaffir corn and, to a lesser extent, maize mealies and rice. From miles around carrier and food depots, African villagers brought in large quantities of such produce, usually as cash sales, but often in exchange for valued



Map 4.1 Wartime food supply regions with selected tribal associations (compiled by E. Yorke, drawn by M. Yorke and K. Yorke)

commodities such as salt or sugar and, above all, the highly prized calico. The hum of economic activity was witnessed by local missionaries. From Chibote ‘a continual procession of women and young girls’ was observed ‘coming to greet us and to go to Kawambwa to sell the flour that is demanded’.⁷⁹ Wallace himself described the methods and process of provisioning, including the somewhat primitive precautions adopted against excessive sales:

To prevent over-selling near the depots and spread the demand evenly over villages, grain bins were built in the more distant villages into which the village quota was placed. When these bins were full the corn was brought to the nearest depot by the villagers themselves, principally women and children, and the corn was paid for with an extra allowance according to the distance it had been brought.⁸⁰

Such a description was misleading. Although food was mostly paid for, sales were frequently forced. At one 1915 Mpika *indaba*, for instance, it was laid down that ‘everyone will have to take flour into one of [...]

three depots, Mapika, Chikwanda and Nswima', the price being fixed at 'six pence for 15 lbs'.⁸¹ At mainly Bemba villages around Kapatu, the inhabitants were informed that they 'must supply 10 lbs of flour a head'.⁸² Shila villages around Mbereshi, although 'over 200 miles from the fighting', nevertheless 'had to supply their share of foodstuffs from the gardens for the support of the native soldiers'.⁸³ Such food levies were not always paid for. One African eye-witness recalled that 'Sandeforo came and asked the villagers to put maize in little bags for the soldiers [...] It was free food, no charge'.⁸⁴ Sometimes coercion and voluntarism co-existed. From the mainly Lungu and Mambwe villages surrounding Abercorn, 12 lbs of food per head of population was 'commandeered for the troops, besides the large quantities which the tempting prices obtainable led them to dispose of voluntarily'.⁸⁵

Whether voluntary or forced, the huge quantities of food accumulated were dramatically revealed in 1916 (see Table 4.1). During the period March 1915 to March 1916, no less than 2 million lbs of food was handled in the Tanganyika District alone, 'of which 1.5 million lbs was stored and issued by troops at Abercorn and half a million lbs was stored in various depots on the lines of communications'.⁸⁶ Demand was insatiable. While nearly 2.4 million lbs of foodstuffs were delivered to the border depots up to July 1916, it was estimated that a further 2.1 million lbs would be required, merely for the period July to October 1916 (the initial phase of the Northey offensive).⁸⁷

The productivity and response of different areas was, of course, dictated not purely by environmental factors such as climate and fertility of soils. Socio-historical factors played an important role.⁸⁸ Thus the Bemba tribal polity, with a strongly centralised political system, no longer able to obtain its food supply through raiding and dependent upon a weak subsistence mode of agriculture in an area of poor soils, proved a stark contrast to, for instance, the Lunda, cultivating an area of more fertile soils under a more flexible hoe system, and yielding substantial surplus under the security of Pax Britannica.

Indeed, it was particularly the northern Lunda, in company with the Shila and Chishinga peoples, who provided the great bulk of the Plateau army food supplies. The substantial cassava crops, based on the rich Chipya soils of the Luapula Valley, Bangweulu, and lower Chambezi basin, found a ready 'doorstep' market on the outbreak of war.⁸⁹ The Kawambwa sub-district accordingly supplied some 250,000 lbs of food to the Border.⁹⁰ The Mofwe Lagoon region, the 'engine-house' of *manioc* production, was significantly singled out as 'particularly good for food'.⁹¹ Owing to the drought-resistant qualities of cassava, its ability

Table 4.1 Government and military food purchases, 1914-18 (lbs) in N. E. Rhodesia (by district and sub-district) (NAZ, ZA 7/1/1-ZA 7/1/5, BS3/416 and BS3/425, District Annual Reports 1914-19)

	1914-15	1915-16	1916-17	1917-18	1918-19
<i>Tanganyika</i>					
Abercorn	400,000	2,000,000 handled	-	-	-
Fife	-	222,500	55,000	-	-
Mporokoso	264,000 10 lbs per hut	219,512 + 3,009 lbs rice	300,000 (264,000 for war use + 6,000 lb rice from Batwa & Swahili areas)	est: 80,000	-
<i>Mweru-Luangwa</i>					
Ft. Rosebery	500,000	-	-	-	-
Kawambwa	90,700 grain+flour	415,035	611,760	403,920	-
Nsumbu Island	-	250,000	800,000 (cassava & katundwe)	-	-
Chienji	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Awemba</i>					
Kasama	-	156,800	-	-	-
Chinsali	-	-	220,000 (20 lbs per hut)	-	-
Luwingu	150,000	-	100,000	-	-
Mpika	-	-	-	68,000 (Luangwa valley only)	60,670
<i>East Luangwa</i>					
Ft. Jameson	-	-	185,700	184,263	-
Lundazi	60,480 lbs	-	83,806 (72,317 mealie meal, 9337 beans and G. nuts, and 2,152 lbs rice)	70,500	-
Petauke	-	-	220,000	-	12,000 grain famine relief to Serenje
Serenje	-	-	147,486 + 1,000 lbs of beans	-	-

to give good yields even on poor soils, its resistance to pests, especially locusts, and its ability to remain in the soil as a famine reserve, the crop proved the most reliable and consistent of foodstuffs supplied to the army. At Chienji it was the cassava-producing Kalungwisi River area and neighbourhood which was alluded to as 'the most productive part of the division as regards food'.⁹² The importance of cassava was graphically illustrated in Luwingu sub-district, where the grain crop of the *citimene*-practising Bemba and Mukulu had largely failed in 1914. As a result, towards the end of 1914 'few villages were left in which there was much grain'. By contrast, *manioc* was 'planted by all the mainland villages in the division, and it was due to this fact that there has been no famine during the rains and that a very large amount of food was available for the forces at Abercorn and Mporokoso'. The main crop, *eleusine*, 'would not have lasted beyond December or January'.⁹³ Significantly, too, where the Bisa and Unga cultivated, their main crop was *manioc* and there was 'plenty of food in their villages'.⁹⁴ During 1914–15 this district produced 150,000 lbs of foodstuffs for defence purposes alone.⁹⁵

Elsewhere within the Mweru and Luapula food nexus, maize mealies assumed an unexpectedly elevated position of importance in the Fort Rosebery sub-district: 'over 170,000 lbs of mealies [...] were brought to the Boma for sale' during 1915 and early 1916.⁹⁶ Such a high production level reflected the skill and enterprise of local cultivators, mainly Ushi, Lunda and Chishinga, who had capitalised on pre-war imports of mealie seed to produce for the military market. A local district official confirmed that, three years earlier, mealies had been 'rarely seen', the large output was, 'quite unprecedented', and was 'largely due to the importation of seed mealies during the famine of 1912 to 1913'.⁹⁷

The importance of the Mweru and Luapula region for military food supplies for the first two years of the war was illustrated by Government statistics. By the end of July 1916, out of nearly 2.4 million lbs of foodstuffs actually delivered to the north-east border area, the Mweru and Luapula region supplied 554,000 lbs, nearly twenty-five per cent of the whole. This compared to a mere 200,000 lbs supplied from the East Luangwa District, incorporating a weak agricultural producer such as the Ngoni and 260,000 lbs from the Kasama area, in the heartland of the similarly agriculturally weak Bemba country.⁹⁸ Not surprisingly, during the projected period July to October 1916, the Mweru and Luapula region was expected to increase production by over a third, supplying 746,000 lbs, compared again to a mere 129,000 lbs anticipated from the East Luangwa District.⁹⁹

In the Mweru-Luapula District the Bemba section was predictably singled out as the weakest producers. 'Wherever you meet the Awemba element you are certain to find a shortage', recorded one frustrated official; 'they are not agriculturalists [...] the usual excuse is "we don't know how to hoe"'.¹⁰⁰ In some districts in early wartime, however, even the Bemba surpassed other tribal groups. Around Mporokoso, the Tabwa and Swahili groups, numbering an estimated 3,700, could only supply 13,054 lbs of 'native food' and 3,009 lbs of rice for the military in 1915, approximately 4 1/2 lbs per head. By stark contrast, for the same period, adjoining Bemba and Lungu groups numbering approximately 19,500, sold 278,458 lbs of food, working out at a substantial 14 lbs a head.¹⁰¹ In the Kasama sub-district, too, the government purchased an estimated seventy tons of food from the Bemba, which, in the words of the local official, was 'great for a tribe like the Bemba, who are poor agriculturalists'.¹⁰² For such exceptional food sales, however, the Bemba, were, as we shall see, to pay a heavy price.¹⁰³

As well as staple crops, the military market also absorbed most of the few cattle which had survived the decimation of their numbers caused by the earlier border removals to unsuitable pastures. In Abercorn, by March 1916, approximately 1,000 out of total estimated herds of 1,500 had been 'used up as slaughter stock for the troops', although Mambwe and Lungu stockowners, it was claimed, were 'not [...] allowed to dispose of their breeding stock'.¹⁰⁴ For the few white cattle-owners based in the fly-free triangle of Abercorn, Fife and Kasama it represented a brief but significant period of prosperity.¹⁰⁵ Other livestock, chiefly sheep, goats and fowls were purchased in vast quantities provoking one observation that fowls alone had become 'as rare as the Great Auk'.¹⁰⁶

Military bases also provided a market for fresh vegetables. During the prolonged border war of 1914-16, 'some hundreds of Europeans were supplied with fresh vegetables [...] obtained locally and from outlying districts'.¹⁰⁷ A Produce Department was established to regulate supplies and approximately £360 was paid out to African growers during 1915-16.¹⁰⁸ Even after the 1916 Northey offensive, 'native grown' European potatoes sold to the Abercorn garrison found a 'very ready market'.¹⁰⁹

Other indigenous commodities were also in great demand. Salt represented an essential item of supply for both troops and carriers and resulted in an enormous expansion of the Plateau salt trade which had flourished in pre-colonial times.¹¹⁰ Salt from the extensive salt pans located around Chienji and Mpika was transported by Bwila and Tabwa producers to local *bomas* or military supply bases and sold at

anything from seven to ten shillings a bag. The importance attached to this industry was illustrated by the pass system introduced, exempting salt labourers from war carrier work.¹¹¹ Thus, in 1915, Chienji was described as 'a great salt factory [...] supplying all the north of north-east Rhodesia [...] On the highway to the salt pans from a radius of 150 miles, one meets strings of natives going for or carrying salt every day'.¹¹² During the first eight months of war over 1,000 bags of salt were supplied to Belgian army units alone.¹¹³

The water route: the wartime expansion of food supplies from the north-west

Until the opening up of the water route in January 1916, foodstuffs from the main north-western farming and peasant producer districts could only be transported via a tortuous land carrier route, extending from the huge supply base at Broken Hill via Mkushi, Serenje, Mpika and Kasama to the military posts at Abercorn, Fife and Saisi. While large amounts of food were transported along this main route, great difficulties were being experienced as demand intensified during the latter months of 1915. Enormous food stocks were required for the Northey offensive.

The timely and successful inauguration of the new water route in January 1916 undoubtedly transformed the food supply situation. Vast amounts of foodstuffs, chiefly maize mealies, could be transported far more rapidly and efficiently from the Ndola railhead, across a relatively short land carrier route to Kabunda and from there by canoe across more than 300 miles of Chambezi waterways to Chiwutu depot, less than thirty miles from Kasama. The importance of this route was graphically illustrated by the government supply statistics. From January to July 1916, 1.5 million lbs of food was delivered by canoe, over half the total amount of nearly 2.4 million lbs transported by all routes combined.¹¹⁴

The opening of the water route had significant consequences for the local economy of the Unga and Batwa peoples, then located only on the periphery of the colonial economy. The influx of thousands of war carriers and troops into the Bangweulu Swamp area led to significant expansion of the main trade in fish. W. V. Brelsford observed that 'foreigners did not begin to come into Unga area to fish until the war years, and, with the development of a market, fishing became more than a subsistence and barter activity. It became an economic proposition.'¹¹⁵ For their Lungu counterparts further north, the military hospital at Abercorn also provided an important market for fish products, 230 lbs to 300 lbs of fresh fish being sold during 1915 at 2½d. per lb.¹¹⁶

During 1916–17 a further 1,050 lbs of fresh fish was supplied from Lake Tanganyika.¹¹⁷

The small north-western white farming sector was a major beneficiary of the increased food demands. Along with the re-opening of the Katanga mine market in September 1915, the internal military food market helped lift European farming out of the depression period of late 1914 and early 1915. It was a recovery enhanced by direct political encouragement from the Company authorities, reflecting the early wartime commitment to the promotion of white settlement in Northern Rhodesia. Wallace, the Administrator, maintained close links with the powerful North-West Farmers Association and government tenders for mealies for the military were negotiated at highly favourable prices.

Maize mealies, the staple crop of the white farming sector, achieved abnormally high price levels in response to intensive mining and military demand from late 1915 onwards. The average price of a 200 lb bag of mealies ranged from 8s. 0d. to 14s. 0d. during the period from 1 April 1914 to 31 March 1915.¹¹⁸ By early 1916, mealie prices had rocketed from 17s. 3d. to 18s. 6d. per bag in some districts, rising as high as 25s. 0d. per bag in February 1916.¹¹⁹ In 1916 grain was reported 'practically 100% dearer than last year and thus many farmers with only half a crop are in as good a position as they were last season'.¹²⁰

In response to this unprecedented demand, white farmers rapidly expanded their acreage and overall production. Maize cultivation rose from 16,606 acres in the years 1914–15¹²¹ to 21,695 acres during 1915–16,¹²² reaching 24,577 acres in 1918–19.¹²³ This was despite the loss of a significant number of the more efficient farmers on active service. In 1916 'a record crop' of 85,000 bags was produced, much of this being sold to the military.¹²⁴ Wheat, very much the secondary crop, also enjoyed a substantial expansion in acreage and production. This was largely a result of a major government incentive designed to expand wartime production. Of the predicted wheat crop for 1917 of 3,600 bags, the Administration promised 'by way of encouragement' to purchase 1,500 bags at the elevated price of 25s. 0d. per bag.¹²⁵ Wheat acreage doubled within a year and requests were made for similar government incentives in respect of the 1918 crop. Most of this was grown in the Chilongolo, Changwa and Mulendema areas of the Lusaka district.¹²⁶

Even the depressed European beef sector, ostensibly paralysed by the 1915 pleuropneumonia quarantine regulations, was afforded some relief by virtue of direct government assistance. The Livingstone authorities released some of the trapped cattle through purchase for military use. In 1916 'a considerable number of bullocks for the Northern border'

were purchased which 'helped farmers very much';¹²⁷ in Chilanga also, 'a number of spans of oxen' was sold for war transport during 1916.¹²⁸ Later, Wallace, under pressure from the newly constituted Advisory Council, even broke strict quarantine regulations to afford relief, while African herds remained bottled up. In 1918 Wallace reported that 'some of the most influential men had cattle locked up in the Barotse and they saw no chance of getting them out'. Despite confirming the risks of re-opening the Barotse District, Wallace nevertheless confessed that he 'had agreed' earlier to release some of the European cattle 'gradually by stages, under strict supervision of our own Stock Inspectors'.¹²⁹ Three herds were permitted to break the cattle cordon, although all contracted the disease before reaching the Livingstone market and were either returned or destroyed.

By stark contrast, African herds were kept under rigid quarantine control. When permission was finally given for selected areas to resume trading in 1918, African stock-owners were invariably forced to sell at artificially low prices. Thus, at one 1918 *indaba*, held in the rich cattle-rearing district of Magoye, Sialondo, a Tonga leader referring to the recent relaxation of trading restrictions 'complained of the low price offered by the Europeans'. In a cryptic reply, the Visiting Commissioner observed that 'you have very large herds of cattle and have been unable to sell for a long time', and stressed that 'it would be nice to turn some of your animals into cash'. Predictably, however, he added: 'I can say nothing about the price.'¹³⁰

African enterprise on the north-western grain market

If the African beef sector remained severely depressed, the mealie sector responded enthusiastically to exceptional wartime demand, particularly during the offensive build-up. White production of maize mealies could not meet all the substantial military requirements of 1915 and 1916, as well as maintain export commitments to the expanding Congo market. With exports of 'native grown' mealies banned, scores of African cultivators close to the line of the railway, chiefly Lenje, Lima, Sala, Swaka, Soli, Ila and Tonga, sold vast quantities of both mealies and Kaffir corn, either direct to the *boma* or to European grain merchants and farmers for the war-expanded domestic market. In the Chilanga sub-district, Lenje and Soli growers disposed of exceptionally large quantities of mealies and Kaffir corn between July and October 1915.¹³¹ As in peacetime, however, European, mainly 'low Dutch' traders, paid extremely low prices and resold mealies at substantial profit to the government. Indeed at Ndola *boma*, a major war food storage depot, it was soon realised that traders'

prices of 16s. 6d. to 20s. 0d. a bag could be avoided by buying direct from African producers at 'an average price of 8s. 4d. or less'.¹³²

Despite such low prices, cash benefits remained substantial. Moreover, African peasant-producers were by no means always pliant tools of either itinerant European traders or local *bomas*. At Ndola, African producers successfully demanded 'exorbitant prices' until the *boma* belatedly intervened to fix prices.¹³³ In the same district, African growers skilfully exploited the military-expanded mealie market. It was reported that African cultivators 'in the neighbourhood of the railway seem, to some extent, to have developed a quasi-commercial spirit' and 'encouraged by the demand for their grain in 1914, had planted a larger surplus than before'. Although the 1915 demand proved 'disappointing' it was recorded as 'worthy of note [...] that those who found themselves towards the end of 1915 with a surplus on their hands, which they could not sell at the price offered earlier in the year, deliberately [...] allowed their grain to rot un-reaped rather than accept a lower figure'. This strategy was officially described as 'a useful measure of the natives' real need for money'.¹³⁴

Changing wartime trading patterns

The huge amount of cash generated through both military wage labour and produce sale, dramatically altered the pre-war structure of colonial trade. In September 1916 a Livingstone Treasury report had revealed the large amount of cash transferred into African hands as payment for war goods and services. The Chief Accountant reported that 'our drawings of silver have been so great that the Standard Bank has had to send home to the Royal Mint for fresh supplies, as little or none of the silver sent north has returned to the banks in the Union'.¹³⁵

Trading opportunities were, indeed, enormous, particularly within the north-eastern war zone. As one official observed in 1916: 'A well-stocked native store would be, at the moment, a very paying business'.¹³⁶ The mainly Scotch- and Irish-owned trading triumvirate, RNP Creed, E. Booth and the African Lakes Company (ALC), which virtually monopolised Plateau trade, were not slow to exploit the opportunities. Despite an initial drop in wartime 'European trade' reflecting a decline of the white civil population and resulting in the closure of some stores, these companies greatly expanded their trade in African consumer goods, such as (often poorly manufactured) pots, pans, hoes, cloth, soap and so on. From Mweru-Luapula it was reported that 'native goods show a quicker turnover than European goods and traders, generally speaking, do not keep a large stock of the latter'.¹³⁷ At Fort Rosebery, the

European traders invested in seven new brick stores, six significantly for African trade.¹³⁸ Over 5,000 hoes were sold there, suggesting a substantial agricultural investment by local African cultivators in this major military food supply region.¹³⁹ War carrier bases were especially inviting trade targets. At Kawambwa, it was observed in 1916 that 'with a large amount of money being paid out in connection with war transport, native stores have done a brisk trade'.¹⁴⁰ European traders also expanded into the lucrative salt business. A new store was constructed by the ALC at Kaputa near Chienji, 'chiefly concerned with the purchase of salt from the natives as are RNP Creed's stores and E. Booth's store'.¹⁴¹

Military demand inevitably resulted in grossly exaggerated prices. At Fife, on the eve of the Northey offensive, it was reported that 'prices, owing to the presence of troops (white and black) in the District', had become 'considerably inflated'. Troops were paying, for instance, 6*d.* to 1*s.* 0*d.* for fowls which cost only 3*d.* before the war and 1*d.* for a single egg, a price at which four eggs could be purchased in peacetime.¹⁴² It was an opportunity for blatant profiteering by some unscrupulous white storekeepers, usually at the expense of returning carriers, the value of whose real wages inevitably declined. One outraged official protested that such high prices for 'inferior native trade goods' was 'deplorable', it really meant that it was 'the storekeeper and not the native' who was 'reaping the benefit of high wages ruling at the present, and which the native does indeed earn by the sweat of his brow'.¹⁴³

Black entrepreneurs: African hawkers and storekeepers

The European trading boom did not exclude the enhanced wartime activities of many highly mobile African traders or hawkers, particularly on the Plateau where, later in the war, the more static European trading companies often faced transport, labour and stock shortages. Licensed African hawkers sprang up around war carrier and food bases such as Abercorn, Kawambwa and Fort Rosebery, taking advantage of the vast cash sums in circulation. In March 1916 it was reported that 'The increase in Hawkers' Licences was considerable' and was 'due no doubt to the fact that the more intelligent natives realise a large amount of money is being paid out daily (in consequence of the increased demand for labour and increased wages paid to military porters etc.), and wish to take advantage of it'.¹⁴⁴ The majority of these licences were 'taken out during the last three months' and continued to be issued throughout the war.¹⁴⁵ For example, in 1916 Kawambwa *boma* issued six, while in 1917 Abercorn issued as many as fifteen.¹⁴⁶ More significantly,

large numbers of unlicensed hawkers undoubtedly operated in the more remote villages.

Just as significant was the marked increase of independent African-owned stores, again usually established well away from the more permanent trading centres. Generally one-man ventures, selling cheap trade goods such as soap, matches, cloth and so on, many flourished during the war period.¹⁴⁷ Missions were a favourite centre for these small businesses and many storekeepers and hawkers appear to have been mission staff (particularly teachers¹⁴⁸) or *boma* staff (clerks, messengers and *capi-taos*) using their cash wages or livestock ownership as capital or a credit source.¹⁴⁹ At the 1917 annual meeting of the LMS District Committee, for instance, it was decided to exploit their highly profitable activities. It was 'agreed that natives holding stores on our estates pay an annual rent of 5s. 0d. and that we obtain as much cash as possible from them free of commission, and that they be subject to the same conditions as apply to European stores on our estates'.¹⁵⁰

African Christians: wartime resilience and opportunity

Just as the war created unprecedented opportunity for many African cultivators, so African Christian enterprise expanded as European mission work was disrupted. During the war virtually all the thirteen mission societies in Northern Rhodesia experienced a crippling shortage of finance and white staff. It was a problem experienced in other parts of Africa.¹⁵¹ The already weakly-funded Primitive Methodists, for instance, were confronted by severe financial cuts.¹⁵² Missions in remote areas faced enormous difficulties in securing imported supplies, particularly medical provisions. Chilubi and Chibote Missions, for example, lost a whole year's stock of supplies which failed to reach them from Europe after the outbreak of war.¹⁵³ Similarly, many white mission staff were absorbed into the forces, usually as chaplains and medical staff. War conditions virtually halted staff replacements from Europe. Consequently, far fewer tours of African 'parishes' could be undertaken and, during the later years of the war, remoter villages were hardly visited. By 1918 the UMCA was seriously understaffed at every station except for Chipili.¹⁵⁴ Similarly, Wesleyan Methodist ministers were 'bearing the burden of two circuits', in at least three instances.¹⁵⁵

The most severely disrupted missions were predictably those situated in the north-east border zone. The ravages of the border campaign caused severe disruption to their formal educational work. A Kawimbe missionary, for instance, reported in 1915 that he was 'closing all the

border schools as the people have been told to move inland'.¹⁵⁶ Such was the scale of disruption that by December 1916, even eight months after the Northey offensive, only half the people of the district had returned to their old villages.¹⁵⁷

The problem of labour supply soon became acute as war demands massively escalated. Missionaries were inherently incapable of competing with the military; their wages rarely rose above three or four shillings a month, if paid at all, and bore no comparison to army wage rates averaging ten shillings or more. It was a particularly serious problem for the larger mission stations, such as Chilubula, which, for example, employed a casual labour force of some 3,000 young men, boys and women during 1914–15.¹⁵⁸ Located in Bembaland, an area of intense military recruitment, they were, by 1918, reduced to the plaintive cry:

Where are we going to find workers? All the men, even some of our catechists have been recruited for carrier work [...] when our porters come back they have money, how they smile – they have just worked for us for five francs a month, when they have earned twelve francs in the services of the military authorities.¹⁵⁹

Similarly, Kapatu missionaries observed the return of their young males with 'six shillings of materials' after three months absence on military service 'and those same adolescents have to work for us for four weeks duration and procure for themselves their food in order to earn eventually – how much? – a little more than three shillings'.¹⁶⁰ Without labour, missionaries were unable to conduct tours. Thus, as early as January 1915, one Mbereshi missionary noted that the transport question was 'becoming more serious' with the government 'exerting very heavy drain on the district in order to send huge quantities of foodstuffs to [...] Abercorn'.¹⁶¹ At Chipili, situated over 200 miles from the border, another missionary reported: 'The war is affecting us even here – all our free boys are commandeered for war loads.'¹⁶²

The missions adopted various strategies to circumvent this dilemma. One obvious tactic was to raise wage rates to compete with the military. In June 1915, for instance, the LMS decided 'to bring the pay and posho of the carriers up to the standard amount paid by the Boma'.¹⁶³ Declining funds, however, combined with rising military wage levels, ensured that such strategies proved abortive. A second alternative was to use voluntary labour. Forced labour, although resorted to at times of great stress,¹⁶⁴ was impractical in terms of long-term mission policy for fear of alienating the surrounding populations. Thus, at

Chilonga, for instance, missionaries appealed to women of the three mission villages for aid in building work and '100 [...] responded to our appeal'.¹⁶⁵ As war demands intensified, however, such enthusiastic responses rapidly diminished. The restoration of the war-ravaged Kawimbe Mission in November 1916, for instance, posed great difficulties. Amongst the mixed labour force of women, children and a few able-bodied men, the men in particular needed 'constant supervision', since 'most, if not all the men in the district have worked for the government, and as it was hard work they were given, they were not anxious to work again so soon'.¹⁶⁶

The result was, that by the time of the Northey offensive, most of the Plateau missions were relying upon local *bomas* for either part or the whole of their labour needs. As one missionary put it, 'one can only obtain men through the government as so many men have been required for the army [...] and [...] transport for the forces'.¹⁶⁷ The London Missionary Society and the White Fathers were particularly dependent. When, at Kyengwa, a mission *ulendo* was effectively sabotaged by a sudden military levy, it was the *boma* which supplied the ten men required.¹⁶⁸ For the return to Kawimbe Mission in late 1916, the local *boma* again lent fifty carriers.¹⁶⁹

Labour shortages were paralleled by food shortages. Normally, most mission settlements were relatively self-sufficient, growing their own foodstuffs and, sometimes, rearing sizeable herds of cattle and small livestock. In Luwingu sub-district in 1915, for example, Chibote and Chilubi Missions owned 50 of the 104 European-owned cattle.¹⁷⁰ During early wartime individual missions even sold meat and garden produce to the military, providing a useful supplement to low finances. In September 1915, for instance, Kayambi Mission sold fifteen head of beef to a passing military buyer.¹⁷¹ Nevertheless, sizeable quantities of African-produced foodstuffs were required to feed African mission staff and labourers. As with labour, however, African food was a declining commodity. From Mporokoso Mission it was reported by 1916 that 'it was impossible to buy food in the neighbourhood, every village having to supply large quantities to the government for war purposes'.¹⁷² Food shortages increased during 1917 and 1918, exacerbated by a strict government ban on food purchase except for personal needs. At Kawimbe, this caused a closure of Normal School,¹⁷³ and at Kambole Mission, a closure of Teachers School.¹⁷⁴

The combined impact of the food and labour shortages upon formal mission activity was most vividly illustrated by the unprecedented government intervention in 1917, which caused the postponement of the

annual LMS district meeting. The extra food and labour required was considered excessive. The District Commissioner stressed that 'every ounce of native foodstuffs and [...] the services of every able-bodied man' were required for 'the prosecution of the war'.¹⁷⁵ The meeting was accordingly abandoned.

This acute economic dependence upon Government resources undoubtedly largely explains the highly collaborative role of some missions during wartime. Many missionaries, for instance, actively cooperated with the Administration in war labour recruitment. The White Fathers even worked as carrier-conductors, supervising thousands of their 'poor, abandoned Babemba'¹⁷⁶ throughout the German East African campaign or, as on one of many occasions, enrolling all seventy-seven men of Chilonga Mission village for war transport duties at Serenje.¹⁷⁷ For a few missionaries there seemed at least to be moral justification for collaborating in such hated policies; the war could be conveniently portrayed as a crusade for Christian civilisation against the 'barbaric Hun' (a view reinforced by numerous reports of serious maltreatment of British and mission staff in German East Africa), a war for which Africans as well as Englishmen should be prepared to make the supreme sacrifice. In the words of one UMCA writer: 'Death of a carrier: wastage of war, perhaps, but [...] all this obedient, patient endurance [...] will be accepted by the Great Sufferer and will go to fill up the measure of the suffering that is to redeem Africa'.¹⁷⁸ For most, however, it was simply a question of political and economic survival under acute wartime pressures, for which, in the words of one LMS missionary involved in hunting food for starving war carriers, the maintenance of 'cordial relations between the [...] Government and ourselves' was 'exceedingly desirable'.¹⁷⁹ Nevertheless, for some border missions at the end of the war, this apparent 'betrayal' of African interests was, as we shall see, to have serious political consequences.¹⁸⁰

In any event, the predominant picture of mission activity during wartime would appear to be one of stagnation if not inexorable decline, with missions paralysed by shortages of white staff, finance, food and labour supplies. In fact, even near the north-east border most mission enterprise stabilised, if not expanded. It was a situation largely achieved through the work of African evangelists, to whom European missionaries increasingly delegated responsibility. Their role was particularly prominent in regard to Anglican and Catholic missions, the two denominations which had made significant attempts to promote the establishment of an indigenous ministry during the pre-war period.¹⁸¹

Although military levies made deep inroads into the African teaching staff of many missions, those lucky enough to escape assumed the new mantle of responsibility with exceptional enthusiasm. Individual black evangelists proved spectacular successes. From Kawimbe it was reported that during the first year of the war, contrary to expectation, 'more evangelistic work' was done 'than ever before'.¹⁸² One evangelist named Maliwanda proved outstanding. Employed by the Kawimbe Church Members, Maliwanda preached in ninety-four villages, 'in many of them more than once', conducted several classes for catechumens and hearers, addressing a total of 11,931 people apart from those in the classes.¹⁸³ His work extended even to mobile war carrier columns. A convoy of 102 men carrying munitions to Abercorn through a forest was intercepted by Maliwanda, who 'told them to put down their loads and have a rest and listen while he preached to them the Gospel of Jesus Christ. This they did, and he said it was a good service and they went away rejoicing.'¹⁸⁴ Two similar services were conducted with war carrier groups returning empty-handed from the *boma*. Described as 'an original preacher' who was 'greatly respected', his work moved his superior to wish he had 'a dozen men of his character and influence'.¹⁸⁵

Kambole Mission also experienced a spectacular expansion of evangelistic activity. Stressing that 'competent evangelists are our clamant need [...] six youths are styled Teacher Inspectors' and were 'constantly employed visiting the schools and holding services'. It was observed that with 'the new experiment of Evangelist Schools' twenty teachers were able to hold schools in forty-seven villages.¹⁸⁶

Similarly, in 1915 it was reported that Kayambi Christians were, 'without doubt, scattered, but not abandoned as one might believe [...] since the beginning of the war the mission has progressed as it had never done previously'. The wartime number of baptised, for instance, passed 280, a number that had 'never been attained since the mission was founded'.¹⁸⁷ Black mission teachers had 'enormously contributed to this formation [...] In the districts where the best catechists are found, are likewise the best Christians and catechumens'.¹⁸⁸ At Chibote, those teachers excused from military service, 'thanks to the kindness of the administration [...] continued their teaching since they will discover again in their villagers, their best listeners'.¹⁸⁹

The 'white supremacist' Wesleyan Methodists were more begrudging. White supervision was 'necessary' as 'even the best evangelists tend to get slack if they are not stimulated and helped in their efforts by periodic visitation'. Nevertheless they confessed that 'things have flourished at a few [...] places e.g. Lusebele'.¹⁹⁰

The enthusiasm of many African evangelists for their new wartime responsibilities was reflected by the willingness of some to work without pay, or even *posho*. When, as part of the war economy drive, Chilubula missionaries requested their teachers to tour without wages or *posho*, they received universal acceptance of the proposal and were 'deeply moved by the spontaneous decision of our catechists'.¹⁹¹ The seventy-two teachers at Chilubula were followed by their compatriots at Kayambi, who also agreed to tour 'almost without payment'.¹⁹²

African evangelists, however, were by no means pliant tools of their missionary employers. Others, aware of their enhanced wartime importance, successfully won concessions on pay and *posho* allowances as wartime inflation and shortages increased. In June 1917, for instance, after a presentation of a petition, Bishop Alston May revised wage levels of UMCA teachers and conceded holidays for garden work of two months, one of which would be granted on full pay.¹⁹³ In September 1918, 'as a result of various hints which have been dropped', the mission further agreed to give cloth for *posho* (six yards a month), and provide shirts and some good cloth for new clothing, to meet the twin difficulties 'of the rise in the price of cloth and impossibility of buying food with money'.¹⁹⁴ To further reduce 'an undercurrent of discontent', teachers were also granted higher wages, to include, to their great delight, payment of *boma* tax!¹⁹⁵

For one missionary, at least, the wartime successes of African evangelists led to calls for a radical reorientation of policy. In November 1916, J. A. Ross declared that the 'greatest need' was 'more adequate training for native evangelists'. Noting that the district had not been visited 'more than once a year' by a European missionary, he argued that 'the regular and systematic visitation of the villages by trained native evangelists would be of far more value; the rapid multiplication of men' was 'one of the greatest needs of our Mission'.¹⁹⁶ Appreciation of wartime black evangelistic work was reflected in the high salaries paid to some of the best teachers, despite financial shortages. The salary of Timothy Kandeke, for instance, a preacher trained by the African ministry at Tiger Kloof, was raised from 35s. 0d. in October 1917 to £2. 10s. 0d. in September 1918, because 'his work in the Chienji district together with his preaching and whole behaviour at the present District Committee meetings, have given every satisfaction'.¹⁹⁷ Renewed recognition of their importance was afforded in January 1918 with a call for a rapid increase in the number of evangelists by the Kawimbe missionary, who launched his own policy initiative: 'I am going to increase our staff of evangelists', he wrote, 'and keep in constant touch with our large numbers of church

members, catechumens and hearers. Even in the furthest villages, I hope to have fortnightly seminars and classes by evangelists but little has been done. I am going to use them trained or untrained.' It was 'the most important work at present'.¹⁹⁸

The presence of black evangelists and teachers, however, was not always a crucial deciding factor in the survival of some African Christian communities. The resilience of unsupervised Christian groups in wartime was most decisively illustrated among the stable and prosperous Lunda and Shila settlements around the Mofwe Lagoon. From nearby Mbereshi it was observed how 'in the villages where our preachers cannot preach each week, someone or other has shouldered the responsibility for this work, usually a catechumen and services have been regularly held among themselves'. In most preaching centres a mid-week service was held and also a prayer meeting on Saturday. The meetings were 'quite spontaneously held on the part of the Christians living in the villages concerned'.¹⁹⁹

It was not merely a case of Christian survival but also one of Christian initiative. The same missionary reported that 'from the out-villages where Christians reside, little groups of local preachers go out regularly on Sundays to the villages they can reach, villages which cannot be reached from Mbereshi itself'. He continued: 'It has been a joy to me, when sometimes going to a distant centre along the miles of Mofwe villages, to find in one village after another the people already assembled and worship in progress and others either on their way thither or returning. And so thus early, the Church has become self-propagating'.²⁰⁰ Similarly, at Fort Rosebery, over 100 miles from Mbereshi, the Christian community founded by a Nicholas Mittochi and other LMS African Christians was reported 'still in growing condition'. The gatherings were 'so large' that a building was 'urgently needed'.²⁰¹ Even at Kawimbe Mission, evacuated during the border crisis, pockets of Christianity flourished. The local missionary was 'much surprised' to discover the continuation of day services and regular classes in his absence, 'the village headman, Kabatwe, being regularly responsible for organising all of this, assisted by the teachers and church members'.²⁰²

In these widely varied ways the war had demonstrated, in unprecedented fashion, the acute dependence of the colonial state upon African skills and resources. In many areas mission survival had been totally reliant upon the work and enterprise of their African staff and, although for some, as wartime conditions deteriorated, mission employment presented a welcome, although by no means secure refuge from carrier impressment or even starvation, for others such as Maliwanda, the new

responsibilities of wartime clearly provided an opportunity to express a sense of independence outside formal control. Colonial dependence was exemplified in many other significant ways. African cultivators were supplying the bulk of military foodstuffs and a weakening colonial state clearly benefited from the initial voluntary response of Africans to war work. Nevertheless, it was an exploitative relationship which, ultimately, rested upon the credibility of the state's coercive power and, as war conditions rapidly deteriorated and as African resistance grew after the 1916 offensive, coercive power itself was to become, as we shall see, a rapidly declining asset.

5

Crumbling Foundations of the Colonial Edifice: Chiefs and Headmen at War

The wartime control of traditional elites and their military role

The advent of war in August 1918 greatly magnified the politico-economic role of chiefs and headmen within Northern Rhodesia's colonial framework. Traditional elites were seen as cheap and convenient intermediaries for the extraction of military food and manpower supplies. It was a role accentuated by the serious wartime shortage of white district staff. Furthermore, from the early wartime perspective of many remaining district officials, chiefs, and especially headmen, were intrinsically well-suited to such onerous tasks in view of their intimate local knowledge. As one Kasama official put it:

It has been the practice so far as possible to leave the recruiting of labour in the hands of chiefs and headmen [...] the actual recruiting itself being left to the Heads of villages as they naturally know who are the 'shirkers' and who are not better than either the officials or the messengers.¹

Government acknowledgment of their vital wartime role was soon publicly demonstrated. At *indabas* held in virtually every sub-district following the outbreak of war, chiefs and headmen were informed of their expanded responsibilities and assured of *bomas'* support in carrying them out. To encourage wartime cooperation, chiefs and headmen were often told the dire consequences for them of a German victory. In this context, the wartime creation, in early 1915, of a new political officer entitled 'Visiting Commissioner' was highly significant. The brief of the appointee, H. C. Marshall, selected for his long administrative service and close familiarity with the border tribes, included the maintenance

of a close political relationship between chiefs and headmen, Company and ultimately, imperial authorities through the medium of regular 'war indabas'.² He was to become the effective ground-level troubleshooter or crisis manager for the hard-pressed Livingstone authorities.

Early in the war, *boma* officials commented upon the enthusiastic response of some individual chiefs. The zeal of one Lundazi chief was reported, who 'stored the 600 odd bags of grain sent to his village to await carriers from Fife in special huts built by himself for the purpose and also put aside various huts for the use of war carriers passing through'.³ Such active collaboration was undoubtedly facilitated by the prevailing popular and voluntary responses which characterised early wartime. At Chinsali, 'chiefs and headmen, when informed of the war and when 150 volunteers were asked for to proceed to the Border, were all keen on going'.⁴ The Administration was also delighted by the early demonstrations of loyalty by several Ngoni chiefs who combined to collect the not inconsiderable sum of over £32 towards the war effort.⁵ In November 1916 it was reported that Mpeseni, the Ngoni paramount chief, had personally recruited 'the greater portion of 750 men required as military porters at Fife'.⁶ Other leading Ngoni chiefs supplied high percentages of their male population for early war work (see Table 5.1), three of them, Chinunda, Rukuzie and Mafuta, collecting 68 per cent, 60 per cent and 60 per cent respectively.⁷ The Administration also received the active cooperation of both the Bemba and Lozi traditional elites. Lewanika, the Lozi paramount chief, presented over 2,000 of his men as war carriers⁸ while the relatively centralised authoritarian network of both these favoured 'martial' tribes facilitated efficient recruitment. The raising of the first contingent of approximately 2,300 Lozi war carriers was accordingly described as, 'not a difficult matter [...] for they had an excellent system for calling out men in emergency or when required for large communal work such as digging canals'.⁹ The potency of, for instance, existing Bemba politico-religious institutions was even exploited. From Chinsali it was observed that the Bemba chief, Mwarule, had 'considerable power. His position as [...] High Priest and guardian of the chief's tombs gives him additional prestige [...] his influence is used in the interests of the Administration'.¹⁰

Such early demonstrations of loyalty and even active collaboration were, however, often deceptive. Chiefs and headmen, like their people, existed under the coercive umbrella of the *bomas*. Refusal or failure to supply food or manpower quotas invited fines, imprisonment, withdrawal of subsidy, or ultimately, deposition. Such realities were impressed early on upon chiefs and headmen. In Mweru-Luapula

Table 5.1 Fort Jameson sub-district: percentages of able-bodied manpower supplied as war carriers 1915–16 (NAZ, ZA 1/9/27/10, NC Ft Jameson to DM Ft Jameson, 13 November 1916)

District	%	Chief	Messenger
Chinunda	68	Chinunda	Vinchetu
Rukuzie	60	–	Nyanda
Mafuta	60	Mafuta	Saidi
Nsadzu	55	–	Kamunda
Mwangala	47	Mwangala	Shelleni
Zingalume	45	Zingalume	Sitoro
Maguya	44	Maguya	Mbayimbayi
Mpangwe	44	–	Kachubwa
Madzimawe	43	Madzimawe	Chambakuka
Vubwe	43	–	Mgabi
Kapoche	43	–	Manjolo
Zamani	42	Zamani	Zuzi
Msandili	40	–	Chimuti
Mishoro	40	Mbany'ombe (Deputy Chief)	Mshawa
Sayiri	38	Sayiri	Ndawambi
Nyongo	36	Nyongo	Tom Tayani
Luangeni	34	Mpeseni	Chimleka
Boma	24	Kapatamoyo & Mnu kwa	Mililika
Lutembwe	22	Mkanda	Matola
Farms	8	–	–

District chiefs were accordingly warned that they would be 'liable to punishment if they do not provide food and carriers for the troops now on the frontier'.¹¹ When Chief Mpepo's response to food and carrier levies was considered 'very unsatisfactory', the Mpika official, 'with the DC's approval [...] stopped one quarter of his subsidy'.¹² Even the favoured Ngoni and Bemba elite chiefs were not exempt. In September 1915, the Chitimukulu himself faced a humiliating reprimand for failing to prevent his villages from dispersing and thereby undermining war recruitment drives. Summoned to Kasama, he was directly threatened with deposition, 'to take back his *m'fume* in order to give it to Ponde' (the heir apparent to the Bemba paramountcy). Under this threat the Chitimukulu, described by one local White Father missionary as 'the tyrant', was 'extremely concerned' and on his return he became 'very zealous and has recruited in the village through which he has passed [...] everyone is recruited in the village'. Chilubula Mission villagers were reported 'frightened by the seven cuts of the *chikote* for which he has the authority to punish recalcitrants'.¹³ Other

local chiefs experienced similar pressure from the Company authorities. When the people of Chilubula failed to turn out for yet another recruitment drive, Chamua, the village headman was 'held responsible for it; he will make two journeys to Abercorn without being paid'.¹⁴ As the local White Fathers underlined, 'The life of a village chief isn't all rosy.'¹⁵

Ngoni chiefs and headmen were also not exempt from similar pressures regarding their wartime loyalty. During the paranoia surrounding the immediate aftermath of the Chilembwe insurrection, even they had been sharply warned 'not to conspire with German agents from Nyasaland [...] as any of you [...] found doing so would be most severely punished, deposed from your chieftainship if not hanged'.¹⁶ Concerning the most sensitive issue of *tenga-tenga* or war labour supply, chiefs were ominously reminded: 'remember that if it is necessary to do so the Government will make you do this work'.¹⁷ Although Ngoni chiefs generally responded well to food and labour levies, individual exceptions still arose. It was noted, for example, that Magodi, the Ngoni-Tumbuka chief, only supplied a large proportion of his young men 'under a certain amount of pressure'.¹⁸

L. A. Wallace, the Administrator, had taken early steps to confirm and strengthen Company control over traditional elites in wartime. In February 1915 (significantly coinciding with the Chilembwe insurrection), he applied for the High Commissioner's consent to the possible use of Rules 3 and 4 (8) of the King's Regulations of 1908, providing for punishment or the threat of punishment for disloyal chiefs. Indicating the occurrence of 'a very few cases' of disloyalty by this early time, he stressed that pressure was not needed generally 'except in cases where small sections are inclined to shirk their share of the work to be done. If this be passed over unnoticed', he warned, 'it may create disaffection among the rest'.¹⁹ In this context, any description of the wartime chiefly role as one of 'collaboration' must clearly be used with considerable qualification.

The 1916 Administration of Natives Proclamation: the political enhancement of traditional elites

The stark realities of Company power, therefore, ensured that most chiefs and headmen adopted a passive, albeit at times, later in the war, sullen acquiescence to *boma* demands. In Northern Rhodesia there was no violent challenge to Company war demands by *traditional* elites. Indeed, the war in many ways offered positive enhancement to their

authority. From the outbreak of war, chiefs and headmen were reassured of their extensive coercive powers in specific regard to military food and labour extraction.²⁰

Their elevated political position was exemplified through the major legal enactment of the war, the Administration of Natives Proclamation, promulgated in July 1916. This was designed to replace and clarify the outdated 1908 Regulations for north-eastern Rhodesia and conferred sweeping powers upon chiefs and headmen over their subjects. While Clause Seven specifically affirmed the personal obligation of chiefs 'to supply men for the defence of the Territory', heavy penalties were laid down for those 'natives' who disobeyed the 'lawful' orders of their headman or chief.²¹ Individual officials noted the boost afforded to the wartime powers of their chiefs and headmen which was directly provided by this legislation. From Kawambwa, for instance, it was reported: 'If there has been any hindrance at all to war work it has come from the commoner who has refused to obey the order of his chief or headman but, with the promulgation of the Administration of Natives Proclamation of 1916, which, for many such purposes has superseded the somewhat vague "Native Customary Law", severe punishment has been meted out to such delinquents.' He continued: 'The chiefs and headmen thus realise that in all lawful orders given to them, they will have the utmost support of the Administration, and this tends to co-operation of action.'²²

Chiefly opportunism, enterprise and prosperity

Such extensive wartime administrative support for chiefs and headmen undoubtedly provided unrivalled opportunities for chiefs to enhance their own political positions. As one *boma* official succinctly observed: 'there has been a noticeable improvement in the assistance and help afforded by the chiefs and headmen who now begin to realise that, by working with the officials, they are likely to regain their lost influence and prestige'.²³ Motives of self-interest undoubtedly partly explained apparent protestations of loyalty, and even spontaneous collaboration recorded soon after the outbreak of war.

For chiefs whose domains existed on or across sensitive border areas, the advantages were manifold. Along the critical north-east border, while some chiefs and headmen inevitably suffered immense material losses, others successfully wooed one or even both sides, extracting important political and territorial concessions. The activities of

Mukoma, an Inamwanga chief, resident on the German side of the border and his sister, Chieftainess Waitwika, resident on the British side, are illustrative of this point. Mukoma's domain, which included the agriculturally rich Nkana Valley, was a crucial area of contest, the Valley being recognised by the British as 'the main source depended upon by the enemy for their basic food supplies'.²⁴ Initially, both chiefs were suspected of collaboration with the Germans and, consequently, Waitwika was moved away from the border as part of the general policy of political isolation of suspected chiefs.²⁵ During early 1915, however, in collaboration with Waitwika, Mukoma began making overtures to the British authorities and, on 19 March 1915, aided by her messengers, he formally requested permission to cross the border and settle in British territory.²⁶ For the British his defection was a major diplomatic coup. As one British officer earlier observed, 'should Mukoma [...] and, I understand, 12 other chiefs [...] be permitted to enter British territory, a severe blow would be dealt to German Native Prestige. The *ruga-ruga* element would be pushed 25 miles back from the border.'²⁷ For Mukoma, it was a successful bid to secure British protection, but for Waitwika, as the crucial intermediary, it resulted in major political aggrandisement. Donald Siwale, then a clerk at Fife *boma*, recalls her dramatic elevation by the British. He recalled that 'the District Commissioner was troubled in what way he could make Waitwika happy'.²⁸ Apparently at Siwale's suggestion, Waitwika was reinstated in charge of the section of a recently deposed chief, Muzengakaya. Her new rank equalled that of her brother Mukoma and she became 'an important person in the area and she became like Mukoma was on the other side. She could call people to work in the "mulaza" [*sic*] gardens and store the grain for public ceremonies, provide hospitality to strangers and seed in time of famine. To call out people for "mulaza" [*sic*] work, had before been Mukoma's right alone.'²⁹ Her political reward was confirmed officially in July 1918, when she was listed as the paramount 'British' Inamwanga chief.³⁰

Others sought to profit from the early success of the Northey offensive. At an Abercorn *indaba*, Chief Landula sought to reassert lost sovereignty in the wake of the German retreat by requesting that a small section of his country, cut off when the Anglo-German boundary was delineated, could now be 'returned to him [...] and [...] the people living there acknowledge him and pay taxes at Abercorn'.³¹ His request received the favourable attention of the Administration. On the extreme north-western border, an area of Administrative weakness accentuated by staff transfers to the north-east, Musokantanda, the southern Lunda paramount, was persuaded to reside on the Northern Rhodesian side

by the offer of substantial concessions. It was hoped that his presence would help stabilise a nomadic population notorious for crossing and re-crossing the Congo border in order to evade tax and, more recently, war labour demands. At the negotiations, the Visiting Commissioner 'hinted that the Government would [...] grant him a good subsidy' and 'when he had proved himself loyal and helpful to the Government, he would undoubtedly take his place as a chief of not little importance'. In justifying these concessions, Marshall reminded his Livingstone superiors that 'the presence of the recognised Chief of the Lunda in the District would seem to be a good asset'.³²

The diversion of Government attention and resources to the north-east frontier undoubtedly played a significant role in the resurgence of the old expansionist ambitions of the Lozi Court. After the death of Lewanika, the Company's closest collaborator, in February 1916, Kafue officials reported a massive intensification of the yearly activities of illegal Lozi hunting parties, with associated burning of grazing lands and slaughter of game. The Magistrate reported that, during 1917 'the slaughter and burning [...] seems to have been more systematic than hitherto'. One *induna* even attempted to set up a market at the railway in order to sell game meat. In Magoye 'very serious damage was done to valuable grazing lands' as a result of these illegal activities outside the Barotseland boundary. It indicated, in the words of the Magistrate, 'the manner in which the Barotse influence may develop in an undesirable direction'.³³ More serious was the enhanced 'interference by the Barotse Court in local politics'. Much of this occurred in the Ila villages around the Kafue river, reflecting old Lozi claims of suzerainty over their old raiding areas and continued dissatisfaction with the eastern boundary of Barotseland, as fixed under the 1909 agreement. The most extreme case had been 'the deliberate attempt of Yeta III to annul the Administration's appointment of the successor to the local chief Mumba'.³⁴

More ominous for the authorities, such extravagant behaviour by Lewanika's successor, Yeta III, was directly ascribed to the influence of his educated brothers and advisors, including the attempted revival of Lozi royal symbols, addresses and so on. Most of these had been educated at the Cape and, by 1918, according to the Resident Magistrate, dominated the Lozi Court circles, 'appearing at Yeta's councils [...] in place of the older Indunas'.³⁵ It reflected and reaffirmed wartime Administrative concern regarding the nefarious activities of educated elites.³⁶ In the event, this resurgence of Lozi 'nationalism' was short-lived and such political 'incursions' largely ceased after the termination

of hostilities, as the Administration slowly reimposed full internal control.³⁷

While the war offered opportunities for political aggrandisement, albeit temporary as in the Lozi case, for other chiefs and headmen it was also invariably a period of unprecedented personal prosperity. During 1915, in most north-eastern districts, subsidies for senior chiefs had been promptly raised to compensate for the imposition of the new 1914 tax.³⁸ While the elevated economic position of these 'big' chiefs continued to be guaranteed by these standard emoluments, many also received generous payments for their war work. Those resident in areas of intense labour pressure benefited the most. Anxious to meet military supply quotas, *boma* officials often dispensed exceedingly generous payments to chiefs in cash and sometimes in kind. A water route official was accordingly instructed: 'About presents to chiefs for canoes and labour supplied [...] don't spare money or trouble about sentiment if you can increase your output of canoes'.³⁹ Bisa, Batwa and Unga chiefs were paid at the rate of 1s. 0d. for every batch of ten men recruited for service on the water route, the sum 'in most instances' having 'been divided between the village headman and the chief, 6d. to each per ten men'.⁴⁰ Although these payments were sometimes delayed, individual chiefs earned spectacular amounts of money (see Table 5.2). For supplying 4,295 men, mostly paddlers for the water route, Chief Matipa, for instance, received £10 4s. 9d., while Chief Kasoma received £3 9s. 3d. for providing 1,586 men.⁴¹ Such war payments, combined with enhanced subsidies, placed a considerable amount of wealth into the hands of individual chiefs.

Chiefs controlling rich agricultural, fish and salt-bearing regions also benefited handsomely from military purchases. On the north-east border, for instance, mobile troop columns often made cash payments to local chiefs for food supplies. In March 1915 it was 'found necessary to take supplies from Mkoma's village to feed the troops and carriers' and 'payment of 60/- was forwarded to him through the agency of his sister Waitwika'.⁴² Shila, northern Lunda and Chishinga chiefs controlling the rich cassava gardens of the Luapula, the effective 'granary of the north', achieved unparalleled affluence from military sales. Lunda chiefs in particular were complimented by the Visiting Commissioner for their 'style of cultivation and large gardens', with 'large acreages [...] planted with cassava'.⁴³ Marshall expressed 'pleasure that they were able to supply such large quantities of meal'.⁴⁴ Early government drives to increase indigenous food production often received the enthusiastic support of chiefs, aware of the concomitant increase in personal tribute payments.

Table 5.2 Recruiting presents dispensed to Bisa, Unga and Batwa chiefs and headmen (up to 9 December 1917) and to Mpika (mainly Bemba) chiefs and headmen during the period October 1915 to 14 September 1916 (NAZ, KTA, 1/3/1, H. B. Goodall to Miller, undated, December 1917). Cash Payments made to Mpika Chiefs for war carriers supplied during the period October 1915 to September 1916 (NAZ ZA 1/9/27/10, NC Mpika to DC Kasama, 14 September 1916)

Chiefs/Heads of Division	Rate of payment	Total Manpower supplied	Cash paid		
			£	s.	d.
Chief Chawula	6d per 10 men	408	1	0	6
" Chitunkubwe	" " " "	227		11	3
" Mlongwe	" " " "	1141	2	17	0
D. headman Mwanakasawe	" " " "	920	2	6	0
Chief Matipa	" " " "	4295	10	14	9
D. headman Chimembe	" " " "	344	1	14	6
" " Chiwinangala	" " " "	431	1	1	6
" " Fuwe	" " " "	525	1	6	3
Chief Kambala	" " " "	365	0	18	3
" Kasoma	" " " "	1586	3	19	3
" Kalimankonde	" " " "	195	0	9	9
" Milambo	" " " "	136	0	6	9
" Mweshe	" " " "	487	1	4	3

Chief	Cash sums paid			Chief	Cash sums paid		
	£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.
Mutupa	1	12	0	Kopa	2	16	6
Luchembe	5	7	6	Mpianawalia		10	0
Chikwanda	4	7	5	Luenshi	1	3	6
Mpepo	2	1	3	Masongo	1	18	6
Nsamba	3	1	0	Saidi		16	6
Lukaka	2	6	0	Mkuka	2	7	6
Kawinga	1	3	0	Nawalia	1	12	6
Kapoko	1	0	9	Chitala	1	2	0
Kazembe	1	8	0				

Rate of payment: 1s. 0d. per 10 men recruited.

The commercial 'invasion' along the water route in January 1916 acted as a profound stimulus to the tribute position of Unga and Batwa chiefs. W. V. Brelsford observes that, for the first time, foreigners 'began to come in and to fish themselves instead of trading on the outskirts, and so long

as they paid tribute, the Unga chiefs made no attempt to restrict fishing along their boundary areas'.⁴⁵

An effective measure of chiefly prosperity and enterprise was the willingness of some to expand the wartime productive and marketing capacities of their areas without government prompting. At a 1917 *indaba* held at Kawambwa *boma*, Kazembe, the northern Lunda paramount, sought permission to extend his gardens to the bank of the Luapula in order to create 'more room to cultivate and fish from the river'.⁴⁶ Near Chienji, Chieftainess Kalembwe similarly sought official consent for a scheme 'to build a camp between her village and Lake Mweru for salt-making'.⁴⁷ Although some of these proposals were officially vetoed because they transgressed strict Sleeping Sickness controls, others won significant labour concessions. Also at Chienji, the headmen 'who control the salt villages' secured exemption for their labourers from war work. It was agreed by government officials that the salt industry was 'very important' and that they would 'not expect the salt workers to leave the villages for other work'.⁴⁸ At one *indaba*, Kazembe, the Lunda paramount had 'scathingly' deprecated the Bemba cultivation⁴⁹ performance but in August 1917, however, the Chitimukulu himself secured official permission to 'open a market for the sale of meat, fish and produce'.⁵⁰ Although the law prohibited 'the sale of meat in the way you mean', H. C. Marshall assured him of 'government help for this enterprise'.⁵¹ As a major war supply and carrier base the market potential of adjacent Kasama was enormous.

Chiefs energetically defended their privileged wartime status and displayed an acute awareness of war market conditions. At Mpika the question of the chiefs receiving more money for their war work was urgently raised, 'as those joining the King's African Rifles got such high pay and the chiefs did not get pay in proportion'.⁵² When some wartime subsidies in Serenje and Mpika were reduced to realign them with those of Kasama, strident chiefly protest resulted in their partial restoration.⁵³

Chiefly awareness of their wartime importance also encouraged attempts to extract new concessions from local *bomas*. District officials were besieged by frequent requests for firearms, tax and game concessions. Possession and control of firearms and extended hunting rights endowed chiefs with considerable social prestige and enhanced powers of patronage.⁵⁴ The form of some requests, moreover, often indicated their value for redistribution to personal followers, elderly retainers and others. At Chinsali, for instance, the Bemba chief, Nkula thus stressed:

'we have been working for a long time and we shall continue to do so but [...] may we not have the meat of the country? Also should not the elderly men pay one tax only?'⁵⁵ Similarly, Ponde, heir to the Bemba paramountcy, clearly acting on behalf of other lesser chiefs, pointed out that chiefs 'wish to purchase rifles'.⁵⁶ Although many of these concessions were granted, particularly in the matter of hunting game at a time of increasingly grave wartime food shortages, the Administration remained generally obdurate on the sensitive issue of large-scale firearm distribution. Only a few chiefs were given or allowed to purchase rifles, undoubtedly because of the understandable fears of social unrest, but also simply because guns were in short supply.

Problems of mediation and control: chiefs as oppressors

The exceptional wartime powers and status accorded to chiefs in general inevitably encouraged some to abuse their authority. The expressed hope of the Bemba Chitimukulu in September 1914 that the war would provide an opportunity to exterminate the Mambwe across the German border,⁵⁷ was, perhaps, an ominous portent of things to come. Indeed, wishful expressions of a return to the old order were unwittingly encouraged by *boma* officials themselves. In April 1915, when Mpika chiefs and headmen were informed of their powers of punishment over those refusing war service, 'all expressed pleasure at this'. One Bemba chief, Luchembe, 'asked for examples to be made to begin with, then it would be as in the old days. It was promised that this should be done.'⁵⁸

The unusual number of acts of oppression committed by individual chiefs and headmen in wartime was commented upon by both missionaries and Company officials. *Boma* records reveal the large number of cases involving misuse of judicial powers and, in particular, the frequent *mulandus* involving the reassertion of old boundary, *citemene* and *mulasa* rights. Much of this was not merely a reflection of inter-chief rivalry but involved considerable social unrest and disturbance as villagers were forced to comply with the resurrection of old, often pre-colonial rights and obligations.

Concerted attempts by individual chiefs to revive or reassert *mulasa* rights, constituted an important focus of grievance. Under Proclamation 8 of 1916 chiefs not only enjoyed extensive powers for government or war labour recruitment but, more significantly, they were 'able to exercise a considerable amount of control in exacting customary free labour in their gardens'.⁵⁹ At Chilonga Mission the White Fathers observed the

repressive activities of Chikwanda, a leading Bemba chief. The news of the forwarding of a *boma* labour list to Chikwanda filled the mission villagers with fear 'at the prospect of being forced to fulfil *mulasa* obligations to him'. A faction broke away from the village in order to evade this work. Soon afterwards a note arrived from Chikwanda demanding *mulasa* from the *whole* village which the missionaries considered 'extraordinary; never before had the m'fume made an appeal to our people for his work'.⁶⁰ The complaint was forwarded to the *boma* but Chikwanda's right to free labour was later upheld, although the mission villagers were permitted to pay him one shilling in lieu of labour. Those who worked in the salt deposits were similarly ordered to pay a salt tribute to Chikwanda.⁶¹

The government dilemma in such cases was well illustrated by the marked conflict of opinion which occurred in 1916 between the District Commissioner of Awemba, anxious to uphold the political position of local chiefs in wartime, and his subordinate Luwingu sub-district official who had complained that chiefs 'entertain too great an idea of their powers'. He reported 'several instances' where a chief charged each man returning from work a fee of one shilling and other cases where the same fee was charged for removals to other villages. Chiefs were also reportedly demanding large payments from outsiders for woodcutting rights within their boundaries. Such behaviour, he warned, 'only tend to dissatisfaction and a sense of oppression'.⁶² The Administration's staunch commitment to upholding chiefly authority nevertheless remained impervious to such criticism. The Native Commissioner's views were dismissed by his superior who considered labour payments in particular 'to be one of the rights of the chiefs'.⁶³

On occasions mission authority was itself undermined by freshly aggrandised chiefs. At the newly-founded Ipusikilo Mission, the local Bemba chief, Tungati, already engaged in a bitter long-running dispute over the former's usurpation of his sovereignty, used a *boma* war carrier recruitment order to conduct a *levee en masse* in the mission village itself, much to the chagrin of the incensed White Fathers.⁶⁴

In this sense, the wartime enhancement of traditional elites created as many problems as it solved. During the latter stages of the war, colonial control over the extravagant and repressive actions of many chiefs became even more problematical, particularly as white staff levels drastically declined. Cases of corruption and the abuse of judicial power reached abnormal levels. Those convicted were normally fined, imprisoned or both. By September 1917 the escalating problem was brought to the attention of the High Commissioner himself by the Administrator.

Wallace reported, 'several cases of failure by chiefs or headmen to report serious crimes have come to light recently'. At least two of these were 'aggravated by the acceptance of a bribe'.⁶⁵

Deposition of chiefs was rarely resorted to except in extreme cases, probably because of the formal adherence of the colonial authorities to the maintenance of stable, recognised chiefly authority in wartime, but also especially in view of their primary role as war carrier recruiters. In addition, deposition often involved hard-oppressed *bomas* in acrimonious succession disputes and even faction fighting. In cases of extreme public abuses, however, the BSAC Administration was forced to act if only to preserve the credibility of its own authority. A notable example was the 1918 'turning out of Chief Mwarule', the leading Bemba *bakabilo*, found guilty of 'assault and abuse of power'.⁶⁶ That the government was prepared to depose such an important war collaborator, one reported as 'most useful in getting carriers and native food for war purposes' was, perhaps, indicative of the depth of the control problem in this specific context.⁶⁷

Acephalous societies: the problems of wartime food and labour extraction

To the problem of controlling the exorbitant powers of traditional elites was added the more deep-rooted question posed by mediating war demands through essentially acephalous or chief-less societies. It was a problem particularly associated with the north-western districts where the Livingstone executive's continued insistence upon a centralised administrative model violently conflicted with the existence of numerous acephalous tribal groups. A series of district circulars issued in 1916 and 1917, reaffirming the Administration's commitment to a rigid centralised model based upon chiefs, sub-chiefs and headmen, highlighted the almost farcical absurdity of the scheme when applied to such politically diffuse societies. Local official response was revealing. In regard to the Ila polity, for instance, a Kafue district official argued that their 'so-called chiefs or sub-chiefs' corresponded 'much more nearly to the headmen of the District Administration Proclamation than to the chief in the sense in which the word has been commonly used when speaking of other tribes or, it is submitted, in the sense contemplated in the Proclamation'. The test of chieftainship being non-subjection to any higher chief 'could hardly bear examination'.⁶⁸ Similarly, a Livingstone official questioned the idea of appointing chiefs to the Toka and Leya tribal groups, as 'there are no

chiefs in this sub-district in the same way that Mwenemitanda is the chief of the Mantoya or Sindi of the Balunda'.⁶⁹ The District Commissioner of Batoka replied in similar vein. Criticising the introduction of the term 'sub-chief', he stressed: 'The fewer nominal heads under whom we group the various native communities the better. I say "nominal" because the large majority of even so-called chiefs have no power but what they derive from the Administration.'⁷⁰ In the north-east also, where the generally more centralised tribal polities related more directly to the Administrative model, problems were still encountered. The Serenje official postulated that 'we can hardly call anyone in the district a chief [...] evidence as to borders is always conflicting and unreliable and my belief is that chiefship in the Walala is purely personal and spreads or recedes on this side or that with the movement of the villages'.⁷¹

To extract war requisitions through such irrelevant mediators endowed with little or minimal legitimacy and, consequently, little real power, posed severe difficulties. In Kafue, for instance, 'recognised' chiefs and headmen of acephalous societies such as the Lamba, Sala and Ila proved hopelessly ineffective. When the first demand for war carriers was issued, the gist of their reply was, reportedly, 'we can do nothing unless you send out messengers from the office to catch the people'.⁷² When the last appeal was made, 'several chiefs came in and asked that the police might be sent to their villages to make the people obey'.⁷³ It was a problem recognised by the imperial authorities. Even the remote Colonial Office in London noted the problems of Kafue, 'where the chiefs seem to have little power'.⁷⁴ Similarly, whilst reviewing war reports the Resident Commissioner observed that the efforts made to assist chiefs and headmen 'to regain some of their lost influence over their people' was 'not without success'. In other districts, he admitted, 'they are stated to have little influence with their people'.⁷⁵

Chiefly resistance and non-collaboration

More serious for the colonial authorities was the problem of extracting war labour and food from societies with little or no established basis of mediation. The widening scale of military activities had suddenly incorporated untried chiefly systems into the colonial network. Unga, Batwa and some Bisa chiefs and headmen who, until the outbreak of war, had remained virtually independent of local BSAC authority, understandably proved unreliable collaborators. Chiefs and headmen in these areas were frequently punished for failure to meet war demands.

Travelling to the Bisa village of Chibula, the Chilubi missionary, Father Legendre, encountered a group of individuals being forcibly taken to the local Luwingu *boma*. Among them were, significantly, 'two chiefs of the villages of Sambwa and Nkulimba who had [...] been seized because their people refused to march'.⁷⁶ Often, the 'water' chiefs and headmen actively collaborated with their peoples against local *bomas* and engaged in organised 'criminal' activities, notably 'large-scale theft from war carrier loads'.⁷⁷

Bisa chiefs resident in remote areas of the Luangwa Valley, an area notorious for tax default, could also prove intractable. As early as 1915 the Bisa chief, Kambwiri, when called upon to provide grain and carriers for Fife garrison, 'failed to send either until he was well aware that no more was needed'. Not surprisingly, he and his people were pinpointed as the worst tax payers for that particular year, less than fifty per cent of their taxes having been paid.⁷⁸

By contrast, the 'turbulent' Lunda and Kaonde chiefs and headmen seem to have remained relatively passive in the face of war demands. This was almost certainly the result of a continuation of the Administration's pre-war 'soft' labour policies and the geographical remoteness of the Kasempa District from the war zone. The area rarely experienced the intense war labour levies applied to the north-eastern chieftaincies. The bulk of Kasempa labour, like their Lozi counterparts, was channelled eastwards to the nearer, more lucrative, and more popular, Katanga mines.⁷⁹

The Northey offensive: the strain of 'total war' upon indigenous authority

With the mass manpower and food levies of 1916 and 1917, those actively collaborationist chiefs and especially headmen as primary recruiters, became increasingly identified by their peoples with a purely exploitative role. It was a role attracting increasing vilification and was undoubtedly reinforced, as we have seen, by the personal opportunism and repressive stance of some chiefs.⁸⁰ Again, the consequences for the chiefly position appear to have been most severe within the acephalous societies of the north-west, which also enjoyed a strong and successful peasant base. Tensions between Ila peasant cultivators and their *boma*-appointed chiefs were frequently remarked upon. 'Supplying carriers is the greatest strain on their authority', wrote one Namwala official, 'as the work of carrying [...] is extremely unpopular among their people'. Astonishingly, cases were recorded in which Ila 'chiefs' had 'had

to pay their people to go',⁸¹ a succinct comment on the weakness of their authoritarian base. In the hard-pressed far north-east war zone, where 'compulsory labour for war purposes' was 'distasteful [...] to the ordinary native', it was observed: 'In this direction all chiefs have personally exerted themselves to keep up the supply of manpower [...] such zeal in the interests of the Government does not tend to increase their popularity amongst the rank and file'.⁸² In some recruiting areas, particularly the north-east border, chiefs and headmen were openly vilified as puppets of the *boma*. At Abercorn, for example, the influence of Lungu, Mambwe and Inamwanga chiefs, many active as military recruiters, was described as 'in almost every case a reflected influence due to support from the Administration'. The same official recalled hearing remarks such as, 'the boma is our chief, we do not want two chiefs', which, he postulated, 'tends to show the commoner's side of the question'.⁸³

Discontent was fuelled by the often distinct lack of rewards dispensed for these extraordinary wartime services. Under colonial rule the onus for this former major chiefly function seems to have devolved upon the *boma*. Ngoni and Chewa veterans, for instance, recall that wartime rewards were invariably given to chiefs but rarely redistributed below elderly retainers.⁸⁴ Beyond bonus rates directly paid for certain arduous carrier routes later in the war, *boma* officials provided no wartime rewards for the common people. This undoubtedly encouraged the recorded popular antagonism in some areas towards both traditional elites and the *boma*, the former for their exposed, purely exploitative and, sometimes openly, repressive role.

In this respect, a most significant piece of documentary evidence was an extremely abusive letter addressed to Mpeseni, the paramount chief of the Ngoni, violently attacking him for his prominent role in war carrier recruitment. Mpeseni and fellow Ngoni chiefs had played an unusually direct and personal role in war carrier levies, particularly the call-up of Ngoni males for first-line portage in early 1917. Written in late 1917 and riddled with obscenities, the anonymous author accused Mpeseni of both direct culpability for war carrier deaths; 'and the men have all finished (dead) [...] and you must bear many children on account of these men you caught', and even of cohabitation with wives of absent police recruits. 'God knows', the author accused him, 'and the blood of these men who have died in the war will cry.' Mpeseni's alleged servility to the colonial authorities and his *boma* war payments were portrayed in a particularly vivid and vitriolic manner, culminating in a blunt accusation of the abject betrayal of his people.

'Does you not know Judas?', the author exclaimed: 'How did he do? And how he died? Judas gave Jesus because of his loving the money – oh you Judas [...] you are a very bad chief indeed'.⁸⁵

The extreme response of the colonial authorities to this semi-illiterate letter, described as, 'constituting about as grave an insult as any native could offer his chief',⁸⁶ was indicative of the strength of *boma* support for, and reliance upon, chiefly authority in wartime. Significantly, the letter was legally identified as 'undoubtedly an offence under Proclamation 8/1916', while it could 'hardly be called an offence under common law',⁸⁷ underlining the vital importance of the former legislation as a prop for the chiefs and as an additional instrument of coercion during the war years. To protect this principal collaborator, an official additionally stressed that, 'specifically because [...] Chief Mpeseni has been insulted in this way on account of his efforts to raise military porters [...] every endeavour should be made to trace the writer'.⁸⁸ The matter was even referred to the Criminal Investigation Department of Southern Rhodesia.

At least one chief, Tungati, his predecessor having been directly involved in war carrier recruitment, sought to placate the 'young military'. During the closing months of the war, the Ipusukilo missionaries were both fascinated and amused when the newly acceded Tungati, 'finding that the old manner of salutation' was 'no longer in fashion with the young' decided that the 'manner of meeting should be by military salute'. By stark contrast, elderly retainers continued to adhere to the old customary greeting involving prostration on their backs. Later on, the missionaries admitted that this 'small innovation' which at first had seemed 'ridiculous', had given 'great pleasure to the young' and had rendered him considerable popularity.⁸⁹

Internal critics of the wartime chiefly role

The increasingly severe problems of ruling through indigenous authoritarian systems under the extreme pressures of wartime received the critical attention of several district officials. One Solwezi official lambasted a system whereby an important chief 'gets about £4 a year or rather less [...] is backed by the boma in all reasonable demands upon his people for work or homage – but runs enormous risks of punishment or neglect of duty'. He likened the chiefly position to that of 'a prefect at school with perhaps rather less in the way of prerequisites [...] the people cannot help hating their chief as a tool of the boma and despising him for his dirty intermediary position'.⁹⁰

The most important critique, however, was delivered in 1918 by E. S. B. Tagart, the Kafue Magistrate and a future Secretary for Native Affairs. Although mainly directed at the chiefs and headmen of the largely acephalous tribal groups of the Kafue District, where, in his two years office there he had severely criticised their war labour performance, his review extended across the whole system. 'The plain fact', he argued, was that 'while we seek constantly to substitute some effective counter-support for the ancient foundations on which the power of the chiefs was based, and which have inevitably been undermined by a civilised administration, we have so far been unsuccessful'. The granting of subsidies and recognition of the chiefs as a superior class, he postulated, 'preserves the shadow of their ancient power but so soon as we strive to make use of that power for Administrative purposes, we find that it lacks the necessary substance'. On the question of chiefly rewards to their followers, Tagart stressed: 'He has nothing to give them today and, on the other hand, they can make it very uncomfortable for him if they wish.'⁹¹

More significant was his direct reference to the debilitating burden of war services. The present tendency, Tagart warned, was 'to put too heavy a strain upon the top of the edifice which we are erecting by imposing onerous duties upon the chiefs while too little is being done to strengthen the foundations by educating the lower orders of people'. He stressed: 'It would be wrong [...] to deceive ourselves and others with the belief that we can rely upon the chiefs and their influence for more than a passive acquiescence in our methods of government'.⁹²

Tagart's long critique provoked little reaction from either the hard-pressed Livingstone authorities or the Directors at the BSAC London Wall offices. For an acutely economy-conscious Company Administration, his ideas, especially those for 'educating the lower orders' rather than relying upon 'ignorant' traditional authorities, predicated considerable expense and were clearly impractical in wartime. Moreover, they were of little relevance to a commercial company for whom, by 1918, the political future of Northern Rhodesia was seriously in doubt and which, moreover, had spent little or no money on African education since the advent of its rule. In addition, his ideas came at a time when contemporary political theory remained firmly committed to rule through indigenous authority. As the Resident Commissioner in Salisbury himself observed: 'There is no doubt a great deal of truth in what Mr Tagart writes, but if the tribal system is to be maintained, the authority of the chiefs and headmen must receive encouragement and support.'⁹³ Nevertheless, his critique remained highly significant in

the context of growing official disillusionment with the chiefly system under the extraordinary pressures of wartime.

Chiefs and headmen: inequalities of war duties and rewards

Tagart's use of the term 'passive acquiescence' was instructive. In fact, the elevated role of many chiefs, particularly the 'Big Men', in the physical task of war labour recruitment and food requisition undoubtedly often or partly protected them from any direct and unpleasant consequences for their immediate prestige. Cocooned in relative affluence under the secure protection of the *boma*, responsibility for the actual delivery of war quotas was increasingly devolved upon lesser functionaries such as sub-chiefs, *capitaos* or messengers, or on particular village headmen. In this way, the chiefly position could be preserved virtually intact. Moreover, as important figureheads in the eyes of the colonial authorities, they continued to reap the 'lion's share' of the rewards; many village headmen received virtually nothing for their war services. As war pressures increased from 1916 onwards many chiefs thus chose a simple but effective strategy of remaining inactive beyond standard protestations of loyalty and forwarding *boma* lists and orders to the appropriate lesser functionaries. As Tagart himself succinctly observed: 'It is not [...] to be wondered at that when it comes to the parting of the ways and it is a question of offending his people and carrying out the wishes of the Government, or, showing himself the friend of the people by remaining inactive when vigorous action is demanded of him, he chooses the latter course'.⁹⁴

For village headmen, such evasion was far more problematical. Their plight as primary recruiters was officially observed. One District Commissioner complained to Livingstone: 'If the headman fails to bring in the required number (of men)', it was he who was 'held responsible, and is told to arrest those who have refused work or else a messenger is sent out to do the arresting'.⁹⁵ Consequently, headmen often bore the brunt of local hostility against compulsory recruitment. Moreover, such heavy responsibility rarely received commensurate reward. In contrast to recognised chiefs, many headmen, particularly the lesser headmen, received no compensatory tax allowances in 1915 and were either not subsidised, or lost their subsidies with the advent of stringent war economies.⁹⁶ The same official protested: 'Considering [...] the responsibility attached to the headman in regard to labour alone besides all his other duties, it is most disappointing that the 5/- a year asked for

these men and passed last year for those who have villages with 36 taxable adults, is to be disallowed'.⁹⁷ He called for reconsideration of the whole policy. In some areas, lesser chiefs controlling small groups of villages suffered accordingly. The strain became evident after the Northey offensive. Of course, the pressure of military imperatives varied from area to area, but those resident along the north-east border or adjacent to the main carrier routes were exceptionally pressurised. At Chilubi Mission village, situated on the major water carrier route (supervised by Native Commissioner, H. B. Goodall), missionaries were approached by a delegation comprising the village chief and elderly retainers. They complained that they 'cannot serve two masters; to serve the Mission that is reasonable, but to serve the Mission and Mr Goodall, it was too much'. The mission recognised the protest as justified: 'In the villages one is sent only to the boats, here it would be necessary to go to the boats, to the gardens, and to the work of the Missionaries.'⁹⁸ For failure to meet war demands, moreover, headmen faced, like chiefs, not only fines, imprisonment or even deposition, but were, in addition, sometimes forced to carry war loads themselves. Also at Chilubi, the plight of a village chief and messenger, arriving from neighbouring villages that had refused to carry, was recorded. It was observed that 'the simple old man is worried because he is forced to march if his people don't march'.⁹⁹

During late 1917, a year of intense labour levies, in Fife sub-district, there appears to have been at least one major turnover of traditional headmanships amongst Tambo, Fungwe and Wandya villages. Of seven changeovers, only three were by natural inheritance. One was deposed for incapacity described as being in his 'second childhood', another was serving 'six months hard labour'. More significantly, two were removed for deserting their villages. Of the latter two, one had 'moved to Nyasaland', the other 'deserted with his villagers to avoid recruitment as Military Porters'.¹⁰⁰

Seeds of crisis: the wartime enhancement of other mediators

Chiefs' *capitaos* as wartime collaborators

Chiefs' *capitaos* or messengers assumed an increasingly important role in the war labour recruiting process, as that of chiefs and headmen declined or became less efficient. Generally appointed and paid by chiefs, they were vital intermediaries between the former and their village headmen, on occasions even replacing headmen and acting

as recruiters themselves. A Kawambwa official described their escalating role:

The village *capitaos* assist the messengers and chiefs in every possible way and on the whole they do their duty well, sometimes such duty being an unenviable sort. They are men of standing in the community in which they live [...] and in cases where the headman is old virtually look after the village for him. They are appointed by the chiefs and are fairly hard-working.¹⁰¹

Many were selected from the younger male relatives of chiefs and provided a further opportunity for chiefs to delegate unpleasant war duties. Aware of their value, many *boma* officials encouraged a rapid expansion of their numbers. At Mpika, chiefs were accordingly told 'to select *capitaos* to recruit labour, who would receive presents later on according to results'.¹⁰² Like chiefs and village headmen, *capitaos* were invested with enhanced coercive powers in wartime. At a Kasama *indaba*, Chief Mwamba's *capitaos* informed the Visiting Commissioner: 'Some of the people are difficult, may we arrest those who refuse to obey the chief's orders regarding war work?' H. C. Marshall's reply stressed that war work was 'very important' and 'those who refuse should be reported to the *boma*'.¹⁰³ Their recruiting role was often perceived as vital: 'The chiefs' *capitaos* really do all the recruiting work', an official asserted; 'I know they are not officially recognised but I do not know how we should have got on without some of them: the chiefs could not personally recruit all the men.'¹⁰⁴ In at least one area, these men, aware of their wartime importance, pressed for bonus payments. Thus, at Kawambwa, 'a number of chiefs' *capitaos* said they had worked hard in enrolling men for transport work and asked for remuneration'. They were informed that 'the District Commissioner would enquire into their claims'.¹⁰⁵

New communicators: the wartime expansion of divisional headmen

The declining wartime role of traditional elites during and after the Northey offensive resulted in the widespread deployment of a relatively new and more effective type of mediator, namely divisional or district headmen.¹⁰⁶ Though not involving a radical departure from the sacrosanct standard traditional model, being more of a major attempt to physically rejuvenate or buttress traditional elites, the injection of these 'new men' nevertheless represented a decisive innovation in existing Administrative strategy. To undertake their often onerous wartime

duties these new 'communicators' were, by contrast to chiefs' *captiaos*, placed under direct *boma* control. Though nominated wherever possible by traditional authorities, their pay, designated duties, authority and power emanated from, and irrevocably resided with, the *boma*. E. S. P. Tagart commented upon this new phenomenon:

The district headman, selected more for his general efficiency than for any hereditary claim he may have for the position, is much more closely identified with the *boma*, and the chief is only too glad to leave any unpleasant duties to him. He becomes [...] as much of a constable as is the *boma* messenger. In name he is the chief's man but in fact he is the *boma* man.¹⁰⁷

Administrative sanction for this new concept of mediator was provided by District Circular No. 2 of 1916, in which Livingstone's strict insistence on the paramountcy of efficiency clearly emerged. A Divisional Headman had to be, for instance, a respected, leading figure and relatively young and energetic.¹⁰⁸ Like *boma* messengers, he was expected to enjoy close intimacy with the people and district.¹⁰⁹ Where possible his position should be sanctioned by local traditional elites, thus obviating the risk of dispute and misunderstanding. A Divisional Headman should therefore 'be nominated by the chief' and 'where there is no chief, the opportunity should be given to the heads of villages and elders to elect them'. Ultimately, however, to ensure efficiency and guard against patronage and corruption, control over selection rested with the *boma*. Where traditional elites 'failed' to nominate or elect a candidate, or 'where they elected someone obviously unfitted for the post', the Native Commissioner could 'forward his own recommendation to the Magistrate'.¹¹⁰

The role of Divisional Headman was not to be confused with that of other functionaries. The term 'District Messenger' was therefore strictly forbidden as in many cases these men 'fulfilled the ordinary requirements for the post of Divisional Headmen'. Furthermore, it was to be 'distinctly understood' that no messenger, 'merely because he has shown ability as a messenger at the *boma*, can be appointed a Divisional Headman [...] unless the other qualifications necessary for the post exist'.¹¹¹ Concern over this stipulation caused at least one official to withdraw four *boma* messengers drafted out to remote areas of his district as Divisional Headmen.¹¹²

The pay of Divisional Headmen would vary according to, firstly, the size of the village division or group and, secondly, according to the

usefulness of the person selected. In regard to pay it was stressed that the work performed was 'generally far less than that performed by, e.g. a messenger at the boma'.¹¹³

From 1916 onwards, the numbers of Divisional Headmen rapidly mushroomed. They were appointed for the first time in many districts, a stark contrast to their extremely limited deployment before the outbreak of war. Not surprisingly, these new colonial mediators were most welcomed and cherished by district officials controlling largely acephalous societies. In Namwala, for instance, where it was reported in March 1916 that Divisional Headmen had 'never been employed', the official asserted that 'control [...] by chiefs assisted if necessary by Divisional Headmen will be carefully studied and put upon a systematic basis'.¹¹⁴ By 1917 the three Divisional Headmen appointed in Mwengwa were reported as 'answering well'.¹¹⁵ Similarly, by March 1917, neighbouring Mumbwa sub-district reported that 'all the [...] districts [...] have now Divisional Headmen' who were 'exceedingly useful'.¹¹⁶

For the increasingly heavy burden of war work they were often perceived as crucial. At Petauke, Divisional Headmen were described as having rendered 'very good service in connection with the supply of carriers and food for the north'. The same official deprecated their pay of 4s. 0d. per month as 'hardly adequate [...] considering the amount of work they have done'.¹¹⁷ They provided a major buttress to the hard-pressed chiefs and headmen of the north-east border war zone. Mporokoso *boma*, for example, employed no less than twenty-seven Divisional Headmen by March 1917, the majority 'of real assistance [...] in carrying messages [...] recruiting, assisting the messengers and supplying food [...] for war purposes, these Divisional Headmen have been of the greatest value and assistance'.¹¹⁸ At Fort Rosebery, twenty were employed 'to assist the larger chiefs'.¹¹⁹ In Awemba District, a huge war labour reservoir, Divisional Headmen were even portrayed as corresponding to 'sub-chiefs. They perform much the same duties as chiefs but do not have so much or so wide an influence'.¹²⁰

At Abercorn *boma*, the District Commissioner even proposed the drastic solution of the partial removal of established agencies following Livingstone's refusal to increase subsidy payments to traditional elites and to allow the appointment of the district's first Divisional Headmen needed for 'a more effective system of control'. Divisional Headmen, he explained, could be appointed 'at the expense of the minor chiefs, many of whom are too old [...] to do the work of Divisional Headmen themselves'.¹²¹

For many of those fortunate enough to be appointed Divisional Headmen, it represented a major political elevation. Many, possibly the majority, were male relatives of the chiefs, often younger sons, who under some tribal traditions would not have succeeded to such influential political positions. On occasions exceptional village headmen were promoted; in one case even a mission village headman. Thus, the delighted Kambole missionaries reported that their Christian headman, Maluti, had been asked by the local Magistrate 'to act as headman for a large tract of border country, having proved himself more reliable and helpful than even the paramount chiefs'.¹²² Aware of their wartime importance, these men, like chiefs' *capitaos*, sought rewards for their extra military duties. At Fort Rosebery, for instance, a group of Divisional Headmen, 'who under normal conditions receive small subsidies, suggested that having been working very hard since the outbreak of war, they had earned something extra'. The authorities swiftly acquiesced.¹²³

In a few areas the change was not without 'teething problems'. In two districts where Divisional or District Headmen had been employed on a significant scale in the pre-war period, namely Fort Jameson and Fort Rosebery, and where, on the eve of war they were being replaced in a bid to restore traditional elites, a 'reversal of a reversal' occurred. In the case of Fort Jameson, however, this volte-face was vehemently opposed by T. F. Sandford, the local Native Commissioner, who for three years had been conscientiously 'endeavouring to re-establish the original tribal system'.¹²⁴ The problem arose largely due to the peculiar structure of Ngoni authority and its rapid disintegration and reorganisation after the disastrous 1897–8 war with the Company authorities. Before 1898 the Ngoni system in the words of Sandford 'was for the chief to have certain hereditary *indunas* who [...] controlled the district through "manyunsa" who were selected for general physical fitness', the post being 'not hereditary'.¹²⁵ During the confused post-conquest period a significant number of *manyunsa* appear to have successfully infiltrated the traditional hierarchy and achieved colonial recognition.¹²⁶ Consequently, the system for some years had been 'for the chief to receive some superficial recognition, the *indunas* being ignored and the young active men appointed as "manyunsa" and paid'.¹²⁷ Sandford gave instances when the messenger had 'almost assumed the position of the chief, who has receded into obscurity and sometimes has not even been recognised'.¹²⁸ The process of weeding out these 'usurpers' had been lengthy, due mainly to their deep entrenchment and the difficulties of restoring *indunas* and chiefs to their rightful place. The new wartime regulations, however, had reversed this painstaking process, restoring the

young, more able District Messengers endowed with the new provocative title of Divisional Headmen. 'To call them Divisional Headmen, to be approved by [...] the Administrator is to perpetuate an error and is to set up a very serious counter influence to that of the chiefs' argued Sandford.¹²⁹ He suggested that it was the *indunas* who should be recognised as Divisional Headmen, not the present District Messengers, who should be only 'appointed in the same way as the ordinary Native Commissioner's messenger'.¹³⁰ On his return from war carrier escort duty six months later, Sandford again deprecated the progress of the enforced new changes which continued to reverse his previous policy. The policy of converting District Messengers into Divisional Headmen, he reiterated, was 'granting some of them e.g. Ndawambi [...] and [...] Bayimbye, authority to which under native custom they have no title whatsoever'.¹³¹

Sandford's argument was predictably overruled by the Secretary of Native Affairs in Livingstone. The youthful, more active and reliable District Messengers, he ruled, were to be reinstated as Divisional Headmen as long as they continued to meet the 1916 Circular qualifications. The affair demonstrated the potency of the Livingstone executive's commitment to these new, more effective mediators in wartime. The old order was nevertheless still to be preserved alongside the new. 'It should be clearly explained to chiefs, headmen and the people', Secretary Coxhead stressed, 'that the Divisional Headman on appointment does not assume or usurp the rank, duties or rights of a chief or induna, but he has certain "duties" to perform for which duties an hereditary induna might be quite unsuitable'.¹³²

In some districts the wartime integration of Divisional Headmen was apparently delayed due to local resistance. Again this was significantly most common in the pre-war turbulent Kasempa District and areas of Bangweulu. In the former, according to one Solwezi official, even Chief Musokantanda's son had only been accepted as a Divisional Headman after strong *boma* pressure.¹³³ Others similarly required *boma*-supported messengers after their introduction into the Solwezi area in April 1917.¹³⁴

Despite these problems, by the end of the war Divisional Headmen had been successfully integrated into most sub-districts. For chiefs whose own status was still preserved under the new system, they presented a welcome escape from direct involvement in unpleasant war duties.¹³⁵ At Lundazi, for instance, the tendency for chiefs 'to delegate their work to [...] Divisional Headmen' was noted.¹³⁶ Similarly at Ndola, a major military food and carrier base and a district encompassing many

acephalous societies, it was observed: 'The Chiefs almost universally prefer to have a Divisional Headman appointed to act as their agent or deputy.'¹³⁷ For officials the new system was an opportunity to divorce administration from the coat-tails of heredity, which so often meant inefficiency. As one official put it, 'their special advantage, as a body, over village headmen, is being made, not born'.¹³⁸ Insistence upon selection criteria such as mental and physical agility helped to ensure that they were 'appreciated by all classes'.¹³⁹ Significantly, in Tagart's opinion, it was 'these men and not the hereditary chiefs who will be the backbone of the administration of the future'.¹⁴⁰ What is certain is that the introduction or expansion of these relatively new and generally more effective mediators or communicators in unprecedented numbers during and after the Northey offensive, played a crucial part in maintaining food and carrier supplies at a time when many traditional elites were showing clear and unequivocal signs of defaulting in this vital wartime role.

Rising chiefly discontent: the decline of tribute labour, wartime price inflation and border war losses

Divisional Headmen, however, like their traditional counterparts could not dissipate the growing resistance to war carrier employment, expressed in escalating desertion rates at village level as service conditions deteriorated after the Northey offensive. Only the impracticable deployment of massive coercive forces could hope to solve this problem. It was one of endemic proportions in the districts bordering the Belgian Congo. After a census check of Kazembe's capital, for instance, it was found that forty men had recently crossed the Luapula river to the Congo Free State without permission, 'as Kasembe and all the people well knew, and that some seventy had deliberately hidden themselves, as acknowledged in some cases by their wives, upon the arrival of the official'. The northern Lunda paramount admitted that 'some men may have gone to the Congo Mines' and he was reprimanded and told 'he would be expected to do his duty in preventing his people [...] crossing the river at forbidden ferries'.¹⁴¹ Similarly, several hundred miles to the south-west, in the unsettled Mwinilunga sub-district, southern Lunda headmen were also reprimanded. It was pointed out that 'a large number of men had scattered and disappeared into the forest when they had been called upon for [...] war transport' and 'the headmen of those men were to blame'.¹⁴²

Such mass desertions, combined with the call-up of those remaining able-bodied men, inevitably had a mounting, detrimental impact upon supplies of tribute labour. In this way, chiefs, though often immunised from the unpopular physical task of labour extraction began, ultimately, to be materially affected by the consequences of later, more intense, war labour drives. Inevitably, it was a problem most acutely experienced by the north-eastern chieftaincies. As early as August 1915, at a time of intense labour drives into the heartland of Bemba country, even Ponde, the most senior Bemba chief after the Chitimukulu was unable to attend the Feast of Assumption held at Kayambi Mission, due to chronic labour shortage. The White Fathers recorded that 'at the time of departure, he wasn't able to find a single man to accompany him as all the men from Chisanga [...] are elsewhere in the service of the boma'.¹⁴³ At Abercorn in 1914, one official had observed that the chiefs 'appear to be quite content as long as mulasa or annual free labour by their people is not refused'.¹⁴⁴ Three years later, at the height of mass war manpower levies, he recorded that chiefs were 'experiencing increased difficulty in persuading their people to recognise this right'.¹⁴⁵ As in the case of missions, increased labour exhaustion reduced the number of volunteers for such extra labour obligations. In 1917, in heavily recruited Mkushi and Serenje, many chiefs seem to have lost, at least temporarily, much of their tribute labour force. At Mkushi, faced with complaints of general impoverishment and inability to pay tax, the Visiting Commissioner asked whether it was not still customary to receive free garden work. This elicited the apparently unanimous reply, 'They used to'.¹⁴⁶ Similarly, at Serenje, a 'strong tendency all over the District but, most notably in the Wisa Division, to refuse all recognition of, and customary duty to, the chiefs' was reported.¹⁴⁷ In cases of deliberate refusal to meet *mulasa* obligations, chiefs could and did rely on the *boma* for enforcement, but nothing could be done about absentee labour, as villages were literally denuded of manpower after 1916.¹⁴⁸ The problem undoubtedly fuelled growing chiefly discontent with government policies as evidenced during these later wartime *indabas*.

Similarly, just as the real value of war carrier wages was progressively undermined by severe wartime inflation, so was that of chiefly cash subsidies and war payments. Prices of trade goods rocketed and from 1916 onwards as inflation really began to bite, *bomas* were assailed by complaints from traditional elites regarding the exorbitant cost of highly-prized goods such as salt and calico cloth, as well as basic foodstuffs. Shortages mounted during the last two years of the war

increasing the inflationary spiral. The impact was uneven. Those chiefs and headmen lacking control over rich agricultural or salt-producing regions inevitably suffered the most. Thus, Bemba and Ngoni chiefs and headmen, controlling relatively unproductive regions, were probably some of the worst off in this context. Demands were made for *boma* intervention to reduce prices. In July 1917, for instance, Mporokoso, a leading Bemba chief, asked the Visiting Commissioner: 'Cannot the price of salt (local) be reduced or kept down?' Marshall acknowledged that 'Government troops absorb nearly all the salt', but could only weakly promise that 'after the war' would 'the matter be gone into'.¹⁴⁹ At a Fife *indaba*, the rising price of trade goods formed a major topic of discussion. The Inamwanga Chieftainess, Waitwika, 'complained of the [...] very high prices now charged for trade goods in local stores'. Chipokoso, her subject Bemba headman, suggested 'that the Government should issue blankets and good cloths [for purchase]'.¹⁵⁰ Marshall was again loath to act. Stressing that the Government tried to issue a blanket to each carrier, he claimed that they 'cannot stock these things for sale'. He added: 'We regret the store prices are so high but owing to the war in Europe, Europeans also have to pay more for everything'.¹⁵¹ Ponde, the acting Chitimukulu, was more forceful. Pointing to the 'higher prices of trade goods', he complained that 'wages are not high enough', arguing that 'the Government can control prices'. Once again he received a negative reply, Marshall insisting that the Government 'cannot fix store prices'.¹⁵² Chiefly discontent extended to the far northwest, where, for instance, Guimbi headmen complained of 'the high prices of goods in the local stores'.¹⁵³ The wartime shortage and high price of such valued exchange goods as calico undoubtedly undermined the capacity of many chiefs to redistribute such goods as rewards to personal retainers and officials, with a consequent diminution of prestige. Hence the strength of discontent on this matter, particularly amongst Bemba chiefs ruling a strongly centralised society, heavily dependent upon rewards and services for social cohesion.¹⁵⁴

A more pressing problem for the Livingstone Administration was the vociferous complaints of a small, but strategically important group of border chiefs and headmen who had suffered severe losses during the 1914–16 border war. *Ruga-ruga* raids and forced military food purchases, combined with losses arising from enforced livestock removals to 'fly' areas and unsuitable pastures, had caused severe losses to many villages.

With no offers of government compensation, protests mounted after the Northey offensive. In June 1916 visiting Commissioner H. C. Marshall was presented with a list of extensive losses suffered over the

past twenty-two months by border headmen, including destruction of huts and personal possessions.¹⁵⁵ Over a year later, in July 1917, the Visiting Commissioner was confronted by the paramount Lungu and Mambwe chiefs on this issue. The Mambwe paramount, Sokolo, supported by the Lungu Chief, Zombe, complained 'We shall continue to find porters but we wish for some assistance regarding our cattle. We had to go some miles south of the road when war broke out and our cattle died.' He reported virtual denudation of other livestock. 'We have now very few sheep and goats. We had to sell them to the Government to feed the troops.'¹⁵⁶ One headman, Fwambo, reported the deaths of all his cattle except two as 'I was told to remove my cattle and they died of change of grazing and disease.'¹⁵⁷ Marshall could offer no immediate compensation; 'nothing can be done – there is disease across the northern border and fly in the south'. He stressed: 'I cannot see where you can find other cattle to restart you herds', mentioning only the vague possibility of obtaining some from German East Africa after the war.¹⁵⁸ By the end of 1917, as we shall see, chiefly discontent in the north-east over this and other issues had created serious concern within senior Company circles over their continued loyalty, thus adding to the acute 'crisis of collaboration' already experienced amongst, for instance, many acephalous tribal groups within the Kafue.

6

The Strain of Total War: A Colonial State in Retreat

Military labour and food extraction: the rape of indigenous food economies and the impact upon north-eastern tribal economies

The mass labour and food levies from late 1915 right the way through to 1918 inevitably caused severe disruption to the mainly subsistence-based, agricultural economies which predominated amongst the north-east Plateau population.¹ In respect of war labour demands, to reach any accurate estimate of the critical number of absent males that can be tolerated by any one African village economy is extremely difficult.² What is certain, however, is that those tribal agricultural systems in which the *citemene* system was practised or was predominant, were extremely vulnerable to the excessive extraction of able-bodied male labour and food, or both. *Citemene* is the single agricultural mode of production in which the large-scale participation of able-bodied males is vital. Tree cutting, the essential preliminary task to burning and ash fertilisation demands a high degree of strength, agility and skill and could not be efficiently performed by female labour.³ Furthermore, finger millet, the main *citemene* crop, has a low yield capacity and the crop and the system as a whole is labour-intensive and not geared to surplus production.⁴ More importantly, both large and small circle *citemene* was practised by the majority of the Plateau tribal polities, notably the Bemba (for whom it was virtually the sole mode of agriculture) and many others such as the Lungu, 'woodland Mambwe', Inamwanga, Iwa and Lala.

Amongst specifically *citemene*-practising tribal groups there has been some attempt to estimate the critical number of resident males necessary to sustain economic viability. Although such post-First World War studies deal largely with labour absenteeism for purely civil purposes, most

suggest that the presence of at least forty-five to fifty per cent of able-bodied males is essential during the main tree-cutting season to ensure normal food production levels.⁵ By contrast, tribal economies such as the Lunda, for instance, for whom hoe cultivation was important or predominant, were much less vulnerable to male absenteeism. As a physical task, hoeing can be undertaken by female labour, although with less overall efficiency for the village economy because of their enforced diversion from other important tasks. Moreover, cassava, the main crop of Plateau hoe cultivation systems is, overall, a far more resilient and productive crop than finger-millet.⁶

Similarly, the internal social structures of some individual tribal polities were significantly better adapted or equipped than others to compensate for large-scale absenteeism and food shortages. In stark contrast to, for instance, the loosely-bonded matrilineal Bemba practising uxorilocal marriage, the agnatic social structure of the Mambwe engendered a system of self-help and inter-village cooperation which provided for the 'borrowing' of male labour at times of stress.⁷

The war's large-scale food and labour requisitions, therefore, combined with such socio-economic variables, ensured that a vastly uneven pattern of strain would be engendered upon African village economies. The Bemba were far more liable to food crises than, say, the Lunda or Mambwe. Immediate politico-military and strategic factors increased the vulnerability of specific peoples. Thus, the already agriculturally marginal Bemba and the border tribes, by virtue of their closer proximity to the war zone, obviously faced unusually heavy and prolonged military demands compared to tribal groups further south. Furthermore, for the perceived 'martial' tribes such as the Bemba and Ngoni, but particularly the Bemba, their selection as the major recruiting base for first-line carriers and troops undoubtedly subjected them to proportionately greater long-term male absenteeism.

Indeed, it was the border tribes and the northern Bemba who bore the brunt of initial war imperatives. The tail end of the 1914 tree-cutting season (May to October) was disrupted and food stocks dangerously reduced. As early as September 1914 the local Kayambi missionaries in the Bemba area predicted famine, since 'the continual collections of food [...] in the area aren't designed to bring abundance to the houses of our poor blacks'. The continual and rapacious activities of Belgian foraging parties prompted the prediction that 'we will have famine this year'.⁸ At Chilonga Mission, located near the central land war carrier route, a furious *mulandu* erupted between the village headman and a European police sergeant demanding flour for his 200 carriers. Only

one bag was surrendered 'because the people are away and [...] there is famine'.⁹ By December 1914 food supplies in many *citemene* areas of Luwingu were already approaching exhaustion.¹⁰ Military disruption of famine reserve crops in the 'hunger season' (December to February/March) added to distress. Near Chinsali *boma*, over-enthusiastic *boma* messengers collected foodstuffs from eastern Bemba villages 'before the green foodstuffs (fresh crops) were ready'. Consequently, 'many of the villagers were living on mushrooms etc. and whatever they could find to eat in the bush'.¹¹

During 1915 military food pressures intensified as first Belgian and then British/Southern Rhodesian reinforcements, urgently needed for the border defence and forthcoming 1916 offensive, criss-crossed the north-east Plateau. In October 1915 it was reported that the Abercorn and Fife garrisons 'provision themselves to the detriment of the poor natives on both sides of the border'. The quest for supplies was 'complicated' in such areas where the inhabitants 'live from hand to mouth'. Only 'in searching through the corn stores in an area of 200 kilometres or more has one been able to feed the troops'.¹² Near Mpika, the foraging activities of 103 BSAP accompanied by 600 war carriers were observed. 'On every side the [...] inhabitants are requisitioned and sent to search the huts [...] for the revictualling of the white army'.¹³

Along the border, devastating *ruga-ruga* cross-border raids destroyed incentives to cultivate. As one local missionary put it: 'They have no heart to cultivate as they may be throwing away their strength for the benefit of the people in German East Africa'.¹⁴ The enforced protective removals, often to unsuitable agricultural sites, caused major disruption, occurring as they did at the peak of the hoeing and tree-cutting seasons of 1915. Consequently, 'in the places where they live temporarily there was no ground fit for growing corn; they could only grow sweet potatoes, beans etc. so they are in a state of famine'.¹⁵ The enforced return over a year later proved equally traumatic and disruptive and meant border villagers were indeed 'worse off with the temporary wet season gardens now abandoned and the old border gardens unready'.¹⁶

Food shortages were not wholly the result of military demands. Evidence suggests that over-enthusiastic food sales were a contributory factor. Recording massive sales of produce and livestock in Lungu and Tabwa villages, one missionary commented, 'now they feel a shortage of food and miss their cattle and goats. Their pockets are well-lined but their difficulty is in buying either food or clothing [...] when wealth is rapidly increasing there is not much time given to higher things'.¹⁷ At Chilubula, a crowd of impoverished Bemba arrived from Kasama,

having sold all their food and spent all their cash. The White Fathers consequently warned mission villagers to 'think about the future, for in their improvidence it would have been easy to sell everything, leave several months later, and endure hunger'.¹⁸

The long-term threat to village economies, however, arose from the increasingly indiscriminate mass levies of able-bodied males and even female labour after late 1915. During the intense labour pressures of 1916 and 1917, Administrative quota systems designed to extract only one third of able-bodied males at any one time soon broke down.¹⁹ At first the strain was uneven. One missionary tour of Batwa, Bisa and Unga villages revealed that 'at the house of Mulakwa and, in the surrounding areas, one still ignores the mass levy'. By contrast at neighbouring Mpanti village there was 'not a single representative of great strength who might be more than twelve years old'.²⁰ From late 1915, however, mass labour requisitions, combined with growing desertions to evade war service, denuded central Plateau and border villages for long periods of virtually all able-bodied males. Near Abercorn it was reported: 'Every able-bodied man and many of the women were employed [...] for weeks at a time it was difficult to find an able-bodied man in many of the villages'.²¹ In late December 1917, even as labour demands enjoyed a brief lull, Lungu and Mambwe villages were still left devoid of manpower. One LMS missionary was 'struck when visiting the villages to see how denuded of men they were. In some villages I have not seen an able-bodied man. When I asked where they were, I was at once told they were at the war.'²²

The most decisive illustration of the pressure upon village economies resulting from large-scale male absenteeism was, of course, the marked change in labour division between the sexes. Women and even children increasingly replaced men in all branches of agricultural activity. Around Kayambi it was thus observed as early as June 1915: 'Many men are working in Abercorn and the women are harvesting the eleusine'.²³ Less than a year later women assumed an even more prominent role: 'the men of Kayambi are absent. Some are at musebo, others at Abercorn: the women, a quite large number, are at mitanda, or they are guarding the masaka from the birds.'²⁴ Eye-witnesses recall the war period as a time when 'women were very strong [...] men were being recruited but women [...] were very strong to grow maize'.²⁵

The imbalance was reflected in wartime mission records. Women dominated school classes and congregations. At harvest time or other major events, attendances fell drastically as women replaced men in the fields. At Kawimbe in December 1915, it was observed that the mass

levies of men 'meant that the women and children had to do their work and many did not come to school'.²⁶ Elsewhere, another missionary lamented: 'No body [...] the women at the harvest of the male [...] little or no healthy men, some women, still some women'.²⁷ Women often dominated baptisms. At Chilubi, for instance, when sixty-two people were baptised, 'women were in greater number than the men'.²⁸

Female labour could not, however, efficiently replace their male counterparts, even within hoe cultivation systems. Reflecting upon the mass levies of Lunda males, one official contended that it was they 'who do nine-tenths of the hoeing [...] so until the women are taught the "dignity of labour" it would mean starvation for the women while the men were away, and the same fate for the men when they returned'.²⁹ Within the main Plateau *citemene* areas the risks were far greater; women could not replace men in the crucial task of tree cutting. Consequently smaller and smaller gardens were made with decreasing food production leading to famine. At Kawimbe, situated in a predominantly *citemene* area, it was thus strikingly observed: 'The women in these parts do not cultivate, there will be a great shortage of food again [...] many have died from hunger'.³⁰

A major factor exacerbating the growing wartime agricultural crisis was the virtual collapse of game control particularly around the two main game reserve areas of the north-east. Large acreages of *mitanda* crops were ravaged by rampant herds of elephant, buffalo and eland.³¹ The problem partly reflected the wartime Administrative crisis, with peacetime culling and game hunting halted and firearm distribution severely restricted;³² elephants in particular had apparently become 'more daring' because they had 'not been shot at'.³³ Above all, the problem again reflected the acute shortage of male labour for fence building (a traditionally male occupation). Hence in Kwambwa by 1917, as a 'consequence of war labour demands' fences had 'been neglected' with game depredations 'getting worse'.³⁴

The war years witnessed a series of severe famine outbreaks across the Plateau. Though this was an area often experiencing 'natural' famines, their great scale and frequency were almost certainly exacerbated by wartime requisitions. Bembaland, where *citemene* was the principal mode of agriculture, suffered appalling famine in late 1915 and early 1916. Severe shortages first appeared in northern Bemba villages in November 1915 and were directly linked to earlier military labour levies. 'Men are in large number at Abercorn', wrote a local White Father, 'and the famine begins to make itself felt, above all at the house of Changala'.³⁵ By February 1916, famine had spread to most parts of

Bemba and the border country and the resultant heavy mortality was vividly reported. Even the five Kayambi mission villages with an estimated 1,500 inhabitants were left 'completely deserted. One might say abandoned. The houses are falling into ruin, the grass grows everywhere. The forest animals come right into the villages to ravage some of the cultivated lands. This is [...] horrible famine'. Bemba villagers scattered into desperate foraging groups:

The poor blacks – those who have still strength enough, run from morning till night into the undergrowth searching with dull eyes all the trees in order to discover any fruit and rummage in all the termite holes [...] to [...] prevent themselves from dying of hunger.

In outlying villages famine was 'more terrible still [...] people dead from hunger cannot be counted any longer'.³⁶ Significantly, emphasis was laid upon its unprecedented severity. 'For four years we have had famine', wrote a Kayambi missionary, 'but it was nothing compared with this. It was far from being widespread as it is this year.'³⁷ Elsewhere desperate conditions prevailed. From Kapatu Mission it was observed that 'famine rages throughout the whole district. The negroes only live mostly on mushrooms and pumpkins for which elephants contend with them.'³⁸

The severely disrupted border villages also experienced crippling food shortages. From Kyengwa 'a great scarcity of food' was reported in early 1916, 'so that a few natives have died and hundreds if not thousands have been more than half starved'.³⁹ The flooding of the Kawimbe plain caused dysentery with further deaths in Mambwe villages.⁴⁰

While these predominantly *citemene*-cultivated areas faced, in many cases, unparalleled disaster in early 1916, disasters often closely linked to military pressures, other areas exhibited considerable resilience. The Shila and Lunda cassava-producing and hoe-cultivating regions were far less affected despite large-scale food and manpower extraction in 1915. An Mbereshi missionary strikingly revealed this marked regional disparity: 'Although there is a great hunger in the Tanganyika district', he wrote, 'there is an abundance of food in this district.'⁴¹ Similarly, the Bangweulu swamp peoples, the Unga, Batwa and Bisa, rarely experienced serious food shortages chiefly due to the abundance of fish and game in their areas, an effective famine reserve along with some cassava-growing. Even when the heavy rains swamped standing cassava crops in early 1916, it was observed that 'with unlimited fish and game there is no question of famine'.⁴²

Nevertheless, the mass food levies and purchases of 1916 and 1917 threatened the economic stability of even some of these regions. With reference to the highly prolific Mofwe lagoon cassava region, one district official warned in March 1917 that 'the food supply of the future will have to be husbanded with the greatest care in so far as large buying [...] is concerned, in fact it will have to practically cease in order to allow the young roots to come on to maturity'. The neighbourhood, he admitted, was 'a most prolific area, with miles of gardens which give very little work in the making but it has to support a population in proportion'.⁴³

Wartime company relief policies on the plateau

Many Company officials were slow, or, perhaps, reluctant to admit to the link between excessive war demands and the widespread famine outbreaks. Tied to stringent wartime economies, they were even slower to afford costly relief. In March 1916, for example, the Awemba District Commissioner had even attributed the 'acute hunger' of 1915–16 not to the massive war purchase of seventy tons of food from surrounding Bemba villages, since this, he ridiculously claimed, was 'mostly received [...] back again as rations whilst load carrying'.⁴⁴ His comment, of course, callously ignored the fate of Bemba women, children and elderly men. A year later, although this time admitting that 'not so many gardens have been made' and that 'transport requisitions were responsible', he nevertheless cynically claimed that 'natives had time for both if they had been more energetic'.⁴⁵ Similarly, the Chinsali official blithely predicted 'good crops' and 'no shortage of food' for 1917, despite admitting that the mainly Bemba gardens were 'small' and that 'a large proportion of the able-bodied men were away at work for the great part of the tree-cutting months'.⁴⁶

From early 1917, however, such official myopia was being steadily replaced by more realistic or honest appraisals as relentless war demands disrupted even the hitherto highly productive Mweru-Luapula district. In October 1917 Wallace himself confessed that, although this area had supplied 'large quantities of food' in 1916 for military purposes, in 1917 the supply had 'diminished considerably and [...] many of the well-established cassava gardens had been used up'. He concluded that it would 'take two years to re-establish them'.⁴⁷ For the widespread failure of the 1918 harvest in Fort Rosebery, resulting in 'actual starvation', one official stressed the cause as being the absence of male labour and the resultant lack of cultivation for the previous two years.⁴⁸ The District

Commissioner concurred, significantly also observing that amongst the famine-stricken Mukulu, Ushi and Kabende, 'the tree cutting system cultivation' was 'mostly practised' in which 'most of the work falls upon the men'. Although a 'large amount of food' was supplied from the area during the period 1914 to 1917, he nevertheless confirmed that this 'would have caused no shortage had not large numbers of men been taken in 1918 and the previous year for work as military porters in German East Africa'.⁴⁹

In Fife, where a mere 80,000 lbs of food production was estimated for 1917, the official protested that 'over 1,000 men (at least twenty per cent of the taxable population) were away all the dry season of 1916 and have made no gardens whatsoever and [...] whereas these men were fed by the military in 1916 they will have to provide for themselves with food from local sources during the coming year'.⁵⁰ Further south the *citemene*-practising Lala similarly experienced severe food shortages accentuated by the 'small area under cultivation through the absence of the majority of able-bodied men on military portage service or on the mines'.⁵¹

Amongst the hoe-cultivating Ngoni/Chewa groups, labour pressures were such that female labour was insufficient to maintain food production. In 1922, Company official E. Lane-Poole confirmed the war's severe disruption to an area previously expanding its peasant base under British rule. During the pre-colonial period, gardens had been 'small and hidden in the forest' with production at subsistence level only, particularly amongst the Chewa, 'whose crops were annually raided and looted by the Angoni'. During a distinct second phase under British occupation, 'native cultivation increased in extent and yield'; for the next fifteen years food was cultivated 'not only for actual needs but also for the market'.⁵² The high-water mark for this process of peasantisation, he asserted, was reached at about 1915. The third, significantly destructive phase, however, 'began in 1916' when mass military manpower levies caused 'a shortage of labour for agricultural purposes', culminating in a retrogression to pre-colonial production levels. The 1916–17 harvest was, he observed, 'the first to reveal this noticeably', but 'it became pronounced in the season of 1918–19 which was also accompanied by insufficient rainfall'. The result was a situation 'near to famine'.⁵³

Nevertheless, despite such hard evidence of war-inspired food crises significant Company relief was only afforded to the north-eastern border peoples. Abercorn Company officials belatedly foresaw a repeat of the disastrous famine conditions of 1915–16 for the 'hunger months' of 1916–17 and a reserve of 150,000 lbs of 'Force's' food was held back. During the period November 1916 to February 1917, rations were issued

to thirty-nine villages.⁵⁴ The majority of these were Mambwe, normally a people with greater inherent social resistance to food shortages, an indication of the enormous disruption caused to the area by war imperatives, especially the enforced 'protective' removal of villages to new and often unsuitable sites. Rations were issued to 2,098 adults and 1,374 children; adults received one pound of meal per day, children one and a half pounds per day. Calico was also distributed weekly; one yard per adult and half a yard per child. Total issues were 16,262 lbs of meal or grain, 7,385 lbs of salt and 754 yards of calico. Trade goods such as calico were to be used 'to purchase food from Fipa people across the border'. Most significantly, 'a high percentage of those rationed consisted of wives and children of military porters [...] away with the column',⁵⁵ confirming again the predominant role of mass war labour levies in the collapse of these village food economies.

Because of their exceptional losses border villages seem to have been made a special case for this limited relief. Elsewhere essentially 'negative' cost-saving relief measures were implemented consisting merely of reduced food purchases in ensuing harvests, the onus being placed upon 'self-help' to recover economic viability. Thus, in Fife sub-district, to forestall a recurrence of the 1915–16 'hunger' a deliberately reduced amount of 60,000 lbs of food was purchased. Nevertheless, even after this pre-emptive tactic a 'shortage of food' was recorded in January and February 1917.⁵⁶

Famine in the north-west: war imperatives and natural calamity

Famine in the north-east was matched by an exceptionally severe famine occurring in many north-western villages during and after 1916, notably in the Kafue, Luangwa and Batoka districts and parts of Barotseland. It precipitated a steady decline in the high production levels and military food sales achieved in 1914 and 1915. Although an element of natural calamity was far more prominent, exemplified by grave shortages of rainfall during the period January to March 1916, military pressures frequently and often decisively seem to have exacerbated distress. Military demands never reached the intensity prevailing on the north-east Plateau, but the famine year of 1916 significantly coincided with the first large-scale war labour levies in the north-west.

In two particular sub-districts, Kalomo and Magoye, excessive military labour extractions seem to have been extremely significant in exacerbating 'natural' food shortages. One Kalomo official tour, for example,

revealed not only exceptionally limited food stocks but a massive male absenteeism; up to ninety per cent of able-bodied males were absent.⁵⁷ A second tour of these mainly Tonga villages prompted similar observations. The predominance of elderly men was recorded as 'particularly striking'. Many villages had only a few months' supply of food. One headman had 'sent a large number of carriers north for military stores and none of his people had more than one months' supply of food'. The official reported, 'Extremely few able-bodied men were to be seen [...] I did not encounter more than fifty in the whole of my tour'. His further enquiries elicited the response that they had 'just returned from carrying war loads or from carrying for the Veterinary Department'. The illegal exodus to avoid war work undoubtedly contributed to this abnormally high absenteeism. It was further encouraged by the need to earn tax-money after the aforementioned (see Chapter 2) cessation of cattle-trading in these major cattle-rearing regions. The touring Kalomo official concluded that 'the ever-increasing attractions of the South, coupled with the large demand recently made for [war] carriers has practically denuded the villages [...] of young and able-bodied men'.⁵⁸ Around the major north-western war carrier bases, notably Ndola and Broken Hill, severe famine outbreaks occurring as late as 1918 were similarly partly attributed to the war's diminution of the available agricultural labour force.⁵⁹

Moreover, the ability of the normally more resilient, specifically cattle-owning African communities of the north-west to provide their own relief was undoubtedly greatly weakened by the pleuropneumonia cattle trading restrictions. Thus, in early 1916 many Tonga were unable to sell their cattle in order to secure grain. Hence the futile appeal of one Magoye headman that his people were 'starving, all are starving [...] put a store, quickly, very quickly near us where we may buy grain and cattle'.⁶⁰ The cattle-trading ban ensured that his plea was ignored.

Company wartime relief schemes: the 'squeezing out' of the north-western peasantries

By July 1916 the acuteness of famine distress in the north-western districts forced the BSAC authorities in Livingstone to reluctantly implement relief schemes.⁶¹ Relief, however, was to be paid for since Wallace, the Administrator, typically blamed the food shortages not on war demands themselves or even the deadly combination of natural anomalies – cattle-trading restrictions and war requisitions – but

upon imprudent over-selling to European grain merchants who were themselves buying for the military market. He brutally asserted:

I have seldom had to provide relief except in a very small way and I have never wished the natives to get into any habit of belief that the Administration would keep them alive if they did not take the proper precautions or if they sold too much of their grain soon after it was harvested.⁶²

It was, perhaps, a predictable response from such a commercially driven, profit-orientated Company but if over-selling was a factor in the food shortages it was by no means the predominant one, as many official ground-level reports have revealed; nor did it justify the ensuing ruthless relief policies. Anticipating an initial need for 3,000 bags of grain, Wallace ensured that, wherever possible, the cost would not be a drain upon Company coffers. His relief scheme envisaged payment by cash or even mortgaging of remaining cattle stocks. More importantly, as cash payment was unlikely, relief should be met by or directly linked to war carrier service. Previous to 1916, as we have seen, the north-western peasantries had been notoriously reluctant to enter the colonial labour market and particularly the war labour market as conditions deteriorated.⁶³ Wallace therefore proposed establishing two or three railway-based depots where Africans would buy grain 'at cost price', but with 'many cases' where cash payments would 'not be forthcoming' payment would 'be [...] in labour on war transport' or would 'have to remain as a debt payable [...] later'. Relief as a mechanism to secure war service, however, was the paramount priority. 'As far as possible', Wallace stressed to his superiors in London, 'the natives in famine areas have been used for war transport.'⁶⁴

The device was complemented by the Native Grain Trading Proclamation⁶⁵ which prohibited 'Europeans or Asiatics from acquiring grain from natives in the Territory'. Ostensibly designed to prevent over-selling and thereby costly famine relief measures, the Proclamation inevitably further encouraged the war labour exodus and also strengthened white monopoly of the war mealie market at the expense of the African peasant sector. It was selectively applied to various districts throughout the war.⁶⁶ These policies were strictly adhered to. One Kalomo official who mistakenly dispensed free relief grain to war carriers and their wives was thus officially reprimanded. Though agreeing that the official would 'have to keep his promise', the Secretary for Native Affairs nevertheless stressed that 'it must be distinctly understood that

the cost of the food should be deducted from their pay'. It 'would be no hardship, in view of the increased rate of pay now given to natives employed on the Ndola-Kabunda transport'.⁶⁷

Not surprisingly with such punitive strings attached there was, initially, substantial African resistance to Company relief programmes. In Magoye it was reported that the 'vast majority' to whom offers of relief were made, 'reject it'. The official rather callously surmised therefore that 'they were not so greatly in need of relief'. He suggested that the whole scheme 'be dropped' and assistance only be given to 'needy old men and women and the physically unfit'. It would be 'a good lesson for the natives' and would prove, he astonishingly added, that 'no sinister motives prompted this offer of relief'.⁶⁸ Similarly in Kalomo, Tonga villagers expressed 'grave dissatisfaction and uncertainty' when informed that the relief issue 'would be a free one but that they *may* be called upon at a future date to pay for or replace the grain'. It was reported that the 'natives [...] do not understand the meaning of the word obligation'.⁶⁹

While 'relief for war labour services' generated immediate benefits to the hard-pressed authorities, where the relief was issued on credit it often proved irrecoverable. Ironically, wartime cattle and grain trade restrictions facilitated this situation. In January 1918 one Kalomo official reported that many African (mainly Tonga) cattle-owners were still unable to sell their cattle and were struggling to pay up to two years of tax arrears. Any pressure to secure relief credit payments would, he warned, have 'to be enforced with great wariness [...] to [...] obviate the risk of depriving a large number [...] of their all'.⁷⁰ By January 1918, of £3,000 credit relief issued in Magoye alone, less than £1,900 had been recovered.⁷¹

The growing paralysis of ground-level control: the decline of *boma* paramountcy

After the Northey offensive escalating wartime staff shortages, combined with the massive burden of war duties, confined officials to their stations for even longer periods. District touring, a crucial physical personification of white authority, suffered severely,⁷² encouraging African perceptions of a power vacuum (see Table 6.1). Again, it was a problem early and disproportionately associated with the north-eastern *bomas*, situated close to the war front. At Abercorn, for instance, tour totals fell from 103 days during the pre-war period 1913 to 1914, to only 49 days from 1914 to 1915. During the latter period only Bemba and

Table 6.1 Annual District Touring totals (days), 1913-21 (NAZ, compiled from Annual District Reports and District Notebooks-1913-21)

District	Sub-District	Prewar	Defensive 'phoney' war N.E. Border			Northey Off: extreme pressure food/labour	Crisis German Invasion W.Tower	Reconquest and Reconstruction	
			1913-14	1914-15	1915-16			1916-17	1917-18
Tanganyika	Abercorn	103	49	82	58	-	-	115	205
	Mporokoso	114	163	203	120	102	38	85	168
	Fife	93	70	111	107	126	0	174	170
Mweru-Luapula	Ft. Rosebery	169	114	109	129	42	76	144	142
	Kawambwa	105	90	174	126	-	-	96	194
	Nsumbu Isle				-	-	-	67	90
Awemba	Chienji	131	57	98	0	65	0	68	67
	Kasama	150	113	152	136	69	0	121	111
	Chinsali	138	58	91	145	-	-	130	112
	Luwingu	139	116	74	90	-	-	104	89
	Mpika	152	96	118	114	168	87	97	169
East Luangwa	Ft. Jameson	144	102	55	110	107	160	150	76
	Lundazi	93	86	104	39	155	113	117	120
	Petauke	70	73	51	65	64	33	58	99

Serenje	141	100	138	78	173	177	165
Luangwa							
Broken Hill	65	150	124	170	67	41	145
Chilanga	153	141	130	-	-	102	185
Ndola	-	66	78	36	51	0	106
Feira	138	77	-	148	74	-	162
Mkushi	195	174	37	-	-	79	176
Kafue							
Namwala	149	120	103	110	88	138	111
Mumbwa	156	87	113	-	-	162	81
Mwengwa	45	82	196	-	-	23	176
Kasempa							
Kasempa	71	171	114	-	-	159	209
Mwinilunga	149	164	118	190	75	221	300
Solwezi	86	151	148	-	-	144	103
Batoka							
Livingstone	69	67	0	-	-	0	76
Kalomo	115	93	42	-	-	66	-
Magoye	152	108	85	72	191	122	152
Guimbi	220	207	215	200	71	88	134
Barotse							
Lealui	-	0	112	86	99	113	134
Balovale	172	130	271	-	163	51	58
Nalolo	96	25	100	114	56	55	143
Lukona	168	64	75	42	66	52	65
Sesheke	86	62	61	91	126	55	75
Mankoya	153	140	-	108	116	160	-

some Lungu villages were toured; 37 Lungu and 120 Mambwe villages were left unvisited.⁷³ Even where wartime touring levels at some *bomas* fluctuated widely, sometimes reaching surprisingly high levels, it was invariably a reflection of urgent war calls and not *civil* duties. Thus, at Kasama, while about three-quarters of the District was apparently visited during 1914–15, ‘several of the visits were solely for the purpose of collecting war labour’.⁷⁴ Remote areas of weak pre-war administrative control, such as the Bangweulu Swamps and Kasmepa, were suddenly left even more dangerously neglected. In Luwingu, for instance, encompassing 159 villages, 25 out of 38 mainly Unga and Bisa ‘swamp’ villages were ‘not visited at all’ and on Chiluiwi and Nsumbu Islands, 24 out of 33 villages ‘were either not visited at all or not censused [*sic*]’.⁷⁵

Administrative problems were compounded by the rapid staff turnover, the inexperience and ignorance of newly-arrived officials adding to overall confusion. Thus the new Luangwa District Commissioner was unable to furnish a report for 1915–16, his predecessor having left ‘no information on which to base a report’.⁷⁶ Kawambwa *boma* experienced no less than seven changes of official during the period 1914 to June 1918;⁷⁷ Fife *boma*, six changes of official between July 1914 and May 1919.⁷⁸

It was the last two most intensive years of the war, however, which effectively crippled civil administrative work in many districts. At Abercorn, with only 58 days touring recorded for 1916 to 1917, it was reported that all the Bemba villages and one half of both the Mambwe and Lungu villages (over two-thirds of the sub-district) were ‘not [...] visited’.⁷⁹ At *bomas* as far apart as Fort Rosebery and Kasempa, up to half of their districts were un-toured during 1916 and early 1917.⁸⁰ Worse was to follow – during the last twelve months of the war, ‘civil’ district touring virtually ceased at at least four *bomas*, namely Fife, Kasama, Chienji and Ndola.⁸¹

The wartime expansion of black *boma* staff: problems of control

The exceptional wartime food and labour requirements obviously demanded a substantial expansion of the small peacetime contingents of African *boma* staff. *Boma* clerks and messengers were particularly important functionaries. African clerks, many of them missionary-educated Yaos from Nyasaland, were essential for wartime food, labour and tax accounting. Receiving high salaries for their skills, their numbers often doubled in wartime. *Boma* messengers represented the elite

of station employees. Endowed with local expertise and knowledge they were crucial, not only as food collectors and labour recruiters, but as vital intermediaries between the *boma* and traditional elites. As white staff levels diminished and many chiefs and headmen proved less cooperative, *boma* messengers often took a direct role in labour recruitment, thus bypassing traditional authorities. Like the clerks, their war work was officially acknowledged. At Petauke, for instance, the staff considered 'most deserving of recognition' were the African clerks and messengers who had 'worked all hours steadily and uncomplainingly since war transport first affected this station'.⁸² Wartime messenger contingents doubled or even tripled. Many were 'war messengers' temporarily engaged when military demands were most urgent. Nevertheless, *boma* financial economies often undermined this expansion. At Ndola, the peacetime messenger staff was doubled from 20 to 'about 40'. However, with 360 carriers departing on war duties each day, their numbers were still insufficient, as 'even the provision of two [...] to each day's gangs [...] would require a total staff of 80'.⁸³ Other classes of employee were significantly expanded, notably prison warders, mailmen and station *capitaos*, to cope with the enhanced wartime prison, communication and carrier supervision work.

For these collaborators war presented not only increased responsibility but an awareness of their enhanced importance that encouraged them, like divisional headmen, to successfully agitate for improved conditions. At Kasama, the Visiting Commissioner acceded to demands from messengers for 'an increase of pay, food allowances and overcoats', from prison warders for 'an increase of wages' and from mailmen 'for more pay and overcoats'.⁸⁴ As the war intensified, their importance was recognised by a series of circulars providing for improved allowances and pay, including war bonus payments.⁸⁵ The wartime expansion of African *boma* staff, however, also posed new problems of administrative control. Many temporary staff were ill-trained, leading to frequent abuses of power. At Abercorn, for instance, of the fourteen messengers employed, 'many' were 'new men of less than a year's' service and were 'not as efficient as one would wish'.⁸⁶ In the north-west most *bomas* lost their trained police contingents, transferred to the weakly defended north-east border. Messengers or mailmen were interchanged with police and so on, often with disastrous results. Thus, in December 1914, the departure of the Mwinilunga police contingent left only the 'inferior messengers [...] to serve as prisoner's warders', who 'arrived with old martinis [rifles] and garbed in the oldest rags of uniform'.⁸⁷

Northey's offensive caused immense damage to the quality of African *boma* staff. It deprived many officials of their best messengers (many of them ex-NRP men, now re-joined), and their police, the latter a crucial aspect of the *boma's* coercive credibility. At Fife, for instance, the civil police were described in 1917 as 'non-existent', all the 'really good men' having joined the absent NRP, leaving men 'temporarily engaged' as prison warders who were 'not of the best stamp'.⁸⁸ Cases of ill-treatment of both *boma* prisoners and war carriers increased in frequency. At Ndola, the high-handed action of *boma* messengers was strongly deprecated by the District Commissioner himself.⁸⁹ In May 1916, Chilubi missionaries were incensed when their mail-runner was intercepted and his mail confiscated by messengers. They demanded exemplary punishment for these 'self-conceited messengers'.⁹⁰ Similarly, cases of embezzlement by African clerks necessitated special District Circulars designed to increase white supervision of their war tax work.⁹¹

The wartime disruption of tax control

Wartime staff shortages inevitably seriously disrupted district tax returns. Despite the expected north-eastern tax revenue increase (accruing from the 1914 rise to a 5s. 0d. poll tax), there remained a shortfall of £7,000 for the year ending 31 March 1915. This was attributed not only to the inability of many north-eastern Africans to pay, but to 'the war and the consequent dislocation of staff'.⁹² Although such a deficit was not anticipated for the 1916 tax year, 'owing to the facilities for earning money [...] by [...] sale of grain and transport for the troops',⁹³ large arrears were predicted and occurred in many north-western districts as a result of the 1915 pleuropneumonia epidemic and 1916 famine.⁹⁴ Again, the paralysis of white administration caused major difficulties in collecting these massive arrears.

It was the mass carrier levies of 1916 to 1918, however, combined with declining white supervision, which constituted the major wartime disruption to the Company's taxation control. With increasing numbers of absent male taxpayers, arrears steadily escalated. At Kasama it was reported that tax revenue 'would have been £150 or more greater had not so many men been recruited for the KAR and NRP'.⁹⁵

This deep financial malaise reached a peak in tax returns for the year ending March 1918, the last complete, and therefore representative, financial year of the war. While heavy arrears continued in north-western districts (in the region of £7,000), in the north-east the tax collected amounted to only £26,876 1s. 0d., a reduction of nearly one

sixth from the predicted £31,663 0s. 0d. that was due. Approximately 126,000 individual north-eastern tax payments should have been made, but only around 106,000 had been collected.⁹⁶ Rising war carrier mortality rates and the high wartime death rates of 'raw' civil labour, combined with a proportionate and often permanent loss of 'illegal' labour outside the Territory to escape war service, meant that many arrears of taxes became irrecoverable. Reports from Fort Jameson and Fort Rosebery in March 1918 revealed massive tax arrears and significantly pointed to these wartime anomalies for their deficits. The Fort Jameson shortfall was attributed chiefly to 'the absence [...] of large numbers of war carriers'; secondly that, on a population basis, 'about half of the district' was 'not travelled for the last four years'. A further cause was 'the enlistment in the NRP and KAR as well as the considerable number of deaths [...] among the war carriers'.⁹⁷ More alarming was the clear element of premeditation amongst many tax defaulters. In August 1916 Wallace forwarded a letter to London Wall from the Lundazi Magistrate, which he described as 'a fair example of the conditions at many other stations'.⁹⁸ Asserting that his work had been 'no more than I can manage single-handed', the Magistrate outlined the war's devastating impact upon taxation and overall control. 'For the past seven months I have been unable to attend to district work, owing to [...] war transport [...] and [...] the natives [...] have seized the opportunity to scatter abroad into garden huts and the percentage of tax in arrears has risen enormously'.⁹⁹ Similarly, at Ndola, an immense district with a wartime skeleton staff, 1500 'deliberate defaulters' were identified during 1915 and 1916 alone.¹⁰⁰ The importance of tax payment as a barometer of African acceptance of colonial authority meant that such deliberate and widespread tax evasion must be seen as another potent aspect of wartime African resistance to the colonial system.

The rising spiral of coercion

The growing success of African resistance to war service forced the colonial authorities to adopt an increasingly punitive posture. In July 1916 the state's coercive arm was considerably reinforced by the promulgation of the Administration of Natives Proclamation.¹⁰¹ The measure succeeded the 1908 King's Regulations which had defined the duties and powers of Native Commissioners, and the 1913 Native Commissioner's Proclamation which had widened the magisterial responsibility and powers of both ANC's and NC's.¹⁰² The Proclamation gave Company officials even more sweeping powers, notably for controlling the

movement of the African population.¹⁰³ Above all, it enabled officials to enforce obedience of 'reasonable orders', an ambivalent phrase which could be, and was, given wide interpretation.¹⁰⁴ The measure undoubtedly strengthened political control. From Kasempa, it was observed that 'the steady reorganisation in progress' had been 'much helped by the promulgation of the Administration of Natives Proclamation'.¹⁰⁵ The Solwezi official exuded even greater enthusiasm: 'Proclamation 8/1916 has been invaluable, and has enabled us to carry out much needed work which would otherwise have been impossible.'¹⁰⁶

On the central issue of war labour recruitment, the measure was quickly recognised as a major adjunct to the State's authoritarian structure. Wallace accordingly sought the High Commissioner's swift assent by telegraph as it would be 'a great assistance [...] in the recruitment of carriers for the Northern border if the Proclamation could be promulgated without delay'.¹⁰⁷ Indeed before the Proclamation, Company officials had experienced legal difficulties in punishing war objectors. The 1908 King's Regulations, for instance, applied only to the north-east and entailed no satisfactory provision for their punishment.¹⁰⁸ In February 1916, one official had even resorted to the Defence of the Realm Act, extracted from an old edition of the *Daily Mail*, to facilitate the mass flogging of 108 Bemba recalcitrants who had refused to aid in bridge repairs for defence purposes!¹⁰⁹ Whippings were, nevertheless, administered to war objectors at several *bomas* well before the 1916 Proclamation had been promulgated, often with dubious legal sanction. At Chinsali, for instance, of seven separate floggings administered between January and June 1916, four were awarded for 'refusal to work war transport'.¹¹⁰ No reference to any legal sanction was made in these and other cases. However, the 1916 Proclamation's section covering 'Duties of Natives' provided specific legal backing for such extensive punitive action and for the first time it was also applicable across the whole Territory.

Wartime crime and punishment: the link to social unrest and protest

The later war years also witnessed a distinctive rise in the officially recorded crime rates of many districts. The highest levels were recorded in the vicinity of major war carrier and food supply depots, and along principal war transport routes. Two types of offence were conspicuous, namely larceny and assault, and official sources linked both to the considerable social unrest arising from military operations. Accordingly, a

report by Justice Beaufort justified the 'comparatively large number of whippings' carried out at Kasama from June to December 1916. 'It must be remembered', he asserted,

that Kasama was the chief base of military supply to and from which many thousands of strangers came and went as police, carriers etc., and, while the amount of crime thereby became unusually large, the necessity for prompt punishment and the impossibility of imprisoning so many in wartime is apparent.

For an increasingly desperate Administration, deterrence of this sort was considered essential. Beaufort stressed 'I am quite satisfied that the sentences at Kasama were inevitable.'¹¹¹

Other war carrier bases recorded a substantial proliferation of crime. At Serenje 'most of the petty offences were in connection with War Transport'. Among these were sixty-eight members of one gang 'who pleaded guilty to a breach of the peace at a ration depot and paid a slight penalty'.¹¹² Similarly, at Kawambwa, it was reported in March 1917 that 'larceny seems to be on the increase' and a few 'bad assault cases' were also recorded.¹¹³ Some of the assault cases involved tribal faction fights, a direct result of service in carrier formations. Thus one large *mulandu* at Chief Kasoma's village adjacent to the water route, culminating in a boy's manslaughter, was described as 'an affray brought about principally by the canoe boys challenging some of the villagers to a fight'.¹¹⁴ More significantly, a considerable number of theft cases involved stealing from food depots and crime, like desertion, must be seen as yet another potent form of protest against war carrier service conditions in which there were frequent ration shortages resulting in starvation.¹¹⁵

After the Northey offensive, which removed most regular police from the Territory and left behind an increasingly enfeebled white administration, the control of crime became extremely difficult if not impossible. Crime waves erupted along the sparsely supervised carrier routes. Along the Ndola-Kabunda land route, for instance, crime raged virtually unchecked; the 'proper and effective control of the carriers on the road' becoming 'a matter of some difficulty'. The problem was accentuated because, after the first twelve miles, the route crossed the Congo Pedicle and therefore lay outside British jurisdiction, 'a fact which the less disciplined of the natives employed (e.g. the Baila)', had 'taken advantage'. The establishment of a Belgian police patrol hardly provided a solution, the Africans in 'the few cases' they arrested and prosecuted being sent to the Congo for punishment.¹¹⁶ The prominent role of Ila

recruits was particularly significant in view of their earlier-mentioned strong resistance to war carrier work.¹¹⁷

The most prevalent form of 'highway crime' was undoubtedly that of large-scale thefts from carrier loads. Although this was widespread on most war carrier routes, it was again particularly pronounced along the water route, home of the intractable Bisa, Unga and Batwa. Hundreds of carrier loads arrived underweight and sixty pound loads were reduced by as much as one third. Thus Wallace angrily reported home to London Wall the 'great deal of pilfering [...] by the swamp natives who have not yet forgotten their professional thieving and have been too cunning for much of the stealing to be traced to them'.¹¹⁸ An inadequate legal code to cover these losses, the profound lack of white supervision (many '*ulendo* notes' were drawn up by barely literate and unreliable government *capitao*s), the frequent lack of evidence, and above all the fear that mass deterrent punishments might provoke universal resistance to war service, mitigated against effective detection and prosecution.¹¹⁹

Perhaps the greatest difficulty lay in establishing a legal basis for prosecution. The 1912 Masters and Servants Proclamation, for instance, could only be applied to land carriers with individual responsibility for loads, and not boatmen. By January 1917, however, the Nsumbu Island district official warned that crime was 'rife' and the matter had become 'urgent'. He therefore proposed that prosecutions should be obtained purely on the dubious legal basis of the '*ulendo* note' which recorded (often inaccurately) official weights.¹²⁰

The Kasama District Commissioner minuted his agreement to this proposal to sidestep the law.¹²¹ Even the Legal Advisor concurred, demonstrating the willingness of senior Livingstone Headquarters officials to sanction illegal acts in order to meet urgent war imperatives. He recognised the District Commissioner's 'great difficulty' because paddlers were 'not individually responsible like carriers for any particular load or loads and the responsibility for shortages cannot easily be fixed upon any individual'. He agreed that 'the difficulties [...] cannot be entirely met by the existing law and [...] if it is necessary to make an example you might follow the suggestion [...] in your Minute, namely, convicting on the manifest and *ulendo* note'. This, he admitted, was 'not legal [...] and would only be a temporary measure justified by war exigencies, but if you can find no other way of making a deterrent example then it can be adopted'.¹²²

Despite such 'deterrent examples', however, pilfering raged virtually unchecked throughout the war period and represented a highly successful form of social protest against war service conditions. As one official

conceded: 'I think it would have been better to give paddlers food and then they would have no excuse.'¹²³ The problem was by no means confined to the north-eastern war zone. From 1916 to 1918, at a time of acute famine and consequent high social stress in many north-western districts, white farmers reported large-scale theft of their growing crops. In Chilanga alone, most of the 204 criminal cases reported for the year ending March 1917 were attributed to this single offence. There was 'considerable loss' to white farmers. One reported ten acres of mealies reaped by thieves; another, a loss of 100 bags of grain.¹²⁴ Again, with few white officials and police available in wartime it proved extremely difficult to catch the thieves.¹²⁵ At the 1917 Chilanga and Magoye district *indabas*, the Visiting Commissioner, whilst issuing severe warnings against this unprecedented crime wave, was, in the virtual absence of police forces, obliged to enlist the aid of local headmen to catch the thieves.¹²⁶ Little success was achieved and the problem can again be seen as a highly effective African protest, this time specifically aimed against the gross inadequacy of wartime Company relief policies.¹²⁷

Such was the scale of the problem that in July 1918 the 'Larceny of Growing Crops Proclamation' was promulgated.¹²⁸ This laid down strict penalties of fines of up to fifteen pounds or six months imprisonment with hard labour or both for theft of crops. The Resident Commissioner justified this highly punitive wartime measure on the grounds that 'such malpractices embitter relations between the two races and if their repression by legal means should [...] be regarded as ineffective, there might be a risk of some hot-headed farmer taking the law into his own hands'.¹²⁹

Ground-level control crises: the drift to government repression

By late 1916, however, the expanding problems of war labour recruitment and control precipitated actions which bordered upon naked repression. Anxious to meet urgent military imperatives, over-burdened, under-manned and often isolated Company officials increasingly resorted to punitive measures well outside even the already wide parameters of existing colonial law. Perhaps not surprisingly one of the worst examples of this occurred in the Bangweulu swamp region where thousands of Bisa, Unga and Batwa carriers and paddlers had been forcibly recruited for service on the water route. The incident was instructive because it vividly illustrated the extreme wartime pressure upon the internal colonial administration, the huge growing problems of

collaborative control and, above all, the potency of African resistance to war demands.

In July 1916, at the height of the Northey offensive into German East Africa, H. B. Goodall, the Native Commissioner for the new war carrier base at Nsumbu Island, became directly implicated in several acts of oppression concerning the illegal orders issued to several *boma* messengers and *capitaos* to arrest the wives of large numbers of men who had deserted several villages under the control of a Chief Mwanambulu in order to evade war carrier service. The result was a virtual reign of terror. The arrested women were subjected not only to 'false imprisonment' but also to rape, torture and serious assault. When apprehended the two principal offenders, Toroba, a Government *capitao*, and Muwanga, a *boma* messenger, claimed that they had acted on Goodall's direct orders.

The serious implications for the credibility of colonial authority compelled a full-scale enquiry. Goodall was forced to admit to his initial responsibility, stressing the urgent need for paddlers and that he had consequently 'instructed' his messengers that 'if the headmen [...] seemed helpless they were to bring into me any men they could find [...] and, if the men could not be found, any women'.¹³⁰ He was strongly reprimanded even by close colleagues. One deplored the order as being 'quite illegal [...] such an action as arresting women for the non-appearance of canoes is not only unnecessary but unjust as well as incompatible with English ideas of justice'.¹³¹ The enquiry implicated even the neighbouring Awemba District Commissioner who had acceded to Goodall's request to 'hold the women [...] till the men come in'.¹³²

Goodall's lengthy defence of his actions confirmed the fragility of Company wartime control over the virgin Bangweulu area. He stressed 'the difference between the lake and swamp natives and the ordinary land dwellers [...] the difficulties experienced in dealing with them due to their own temperament and to the character of the country they inhabit'. Resistance to war demands had been extensive. The requisition of canoes for war transport, he stressed, was 'a new thing and interferes with the owner's mode of life'. Wartime government propaganda had proved ineffective. 'Explanations that there is a war become stale and do not make up for the inconvenience caused to the people.' Consequently, 'pressure seemed absolutely necessary'. Above all, in sanctioning these orders he had been motivated by the paramount need to maintain the wartime credibility of *boma* power and authority. 'I knew that if I showed any sign of slackness the example of Mwanambulu's and other people

would be widely copied all over the water system and the [...] system would run the risk of being crippled'.¹³³

Both the leading *capitao* and the *boma* messenger were severely punished for their brutal crimes and the High Court recommended substantial compensation for the victims.¹³⁴ While criticising the Native Commissioner for his 'lamentable error of judgement', the judge, nevertheless, in an astonishing comment, proceeded to practically condone his methods. Justice Beaufort accordingly concluded that Goodall's earlier 'inspiring work [...] tact and success' had been 'so notably great [...] that I cannot help thinking that any less unconstitutional methods would have been wasted labour and that, on the whole, he is rather to be praised than blamed'.¹³⁵ It again demonstrated the willingness of some senior colonial officials to sanction clearly illegal methods when necessitated by urgent war imperatives. Indeed, the only proviso was that the Native Commissioner should maintain a more discreet and direct control over his African collaborators. In Beaufort's words: 'The women should be shut up, if at all, in their own villages and not dragged around the country and it would be better than even that to be limited to occasions when he himself is present'.¹³⁶

This incident represented only one extreme example of many patently illegal and repressive wartime actions which often directly involved Company administrative officials. They were understandably rarely publicised and often suppressed or concealed from the supervising imperial authorities and for these reasons, there is no record of any similar politically embarrassing incident being referred as far as the High Court in Livingstone. Private correspondence, however, does suggest that this was possibly the tip of an iceberg and that similar malpractices were prevalent elsewhere. In Fife sub-district, for instance, it was revealed that African labour was commandeered for war service 'at the end of a rope', a practice disturbingly reminiscent of pre-colonial slave-trading practices.¹³⁷ Such appalling methods received the acquiescence, albeit often deeply reluctant, of some Company officials. One Mpika official thus privately confided to a colleague that a Northern Rhodesia Police recruiting officer in the border area had been 'making an ass of himself tying up natives'.¹³⁸

The limits of coercion: conflict between the civil and military authorities

Despite evidence of acts of oppression there were, nevertheless, as the Toroba case itself demonstrated, obvious limits to the exercise of

coercion, which, on a mass indiscriminate scale and especially in the absence of substantial security forces, could ultimately threaten the survival of the colonial state itself. In cases where such a potentially explosive situation arose the civil authorities were forced to exercise restraint. By stark contrast, however, the external military authorities clearly recognised no such political limitations; with few exceptions their sole and paramount consideration was the securing of a rapid imperial victory. After the Northey offensive into German East Africa the potential for major conflict between the two authorities was evident, and one occurred in October 1916 as a bitter row erupted over the alleged widespread military abuse of the terms of war carrier contracts and of their service conditions.

The row was sparked off by Colonel Murray, one of Northey's key column commanders who, claiming that Northern Rhodesian carriers were contracted to serve the duration of the war, angrily complained of large-scale desertion. Returning deserters, he claimed, had been 'paid off and [...] allowed to return to their villages without any action being taken against them'. Murray demanded of the civil authorities that all deserters should be 'immediately arrested' and 'returned to the column to face Court Martial and punishment'.¹³⁹ The BSAC Administration was forced to intervene but, in a letter to Wallace, the Administrator, C. R. B. Draper the Tanganyika District Commissioner, angrily refuted the accusation. He dismissed outright Murray's contention that carriers had been contracted for unlimited service. 'Neither should it ever be advanced', he retorted, 'that first line porters were engaged for six months *or the end of the war* [bold emphasis in the original].'¹⁴⁰

In direct communication with Colonel Murray, Draper cited five sample cases of men who had enlisted for two to three months only, but were nevertheless forcibly absorbed into the advancing column, culminating in their desertion. Although he had punished these men, Draper stressed that he did 'not consider that they should have been treated as deserters'. They were just the tip of the iceberg. Draper further confirmed: 'there is reason to believe that many second line porters have been engaged on first line work', which 'constituted a breach of contract'. In respect of the rapidly deteriorating service conditions, Draper further bitterly complained to Murray about his persistent failure to report carrier mortalities and missing men. Noting ominously the notification of only fourteen deaths to date, Draper expressed surprise as 'with such a large number of them in the field one would expect casualties to be greater'. The cause of death, he continued, needed to be 'at once reported', as knowledge of the cause was 'important for many reasons

e.g. harsh treatment at the hands of an individual, which would at once breed discontent'.¹⁴¹

In late October 1916, Draper further telegraphed Wallace to warn him of the dangerous implications for colonial authority by the continued military abuse of war carrier contracts. He protested: 'Whilst appreciating difficulties and [the] possible most serious consequences should a really large body desert together, [I] am at a loss to see how such men can be legally or with justice punished for running away having duly fulfilled their agreement. Indeed, there had been no complaints from these men except that we have finished our time, are tired, and must make gardens.'¹⁴²

Nevertheless, by December 1916 the problem had seriously escalated. Draper reported to Brigadier General Northey, for instance, on the return of one batch of seventy military porters 'having left the Column without permission'. Again, he robustly defended their action; it was 'a clear breach of faith that these men were not discharged [...] their contract time having long expired'.¹⁴³ Predictably, Northey maintained uncompromising support for his subordinate commanders. Reporting the desertion of a further 250 porters from Murray's column and 'having learned that they are not to be punished for doing so', Northey stressed: 'If this campaign is to continue to successful termination every man who leaves [the] column without certificate of release [...] must be treated by you as a deserter. Even if only enlisted for [a] certain period they must remain with [the] column till relieved'.¹⁴⁴

In his reply Draper, while obliged to conform to Northey's wishes, expressed anathema for his sordid task. 'I must place on record that I consider my action legally wrong and only warranted by exceptional circumstances which have unfortunately arisen.' He nevertheless expressed the hope that some 1,550 time-expired war carriers would be repatriated, that 324 missing Fife carriers from Colonel Rodger's column could be accounted for, and deprecated the failure to provide blankets for many gangs. Draper concluded by warning of the potentially devastating consequences of all this for the survival of white authority. 'The great fear which presents itself', he warned, 'is the breach of faith. Our natives look to the Administration officials to always keep their word. If the civil authorities fail or appear to fail in this respect, former confidence in our integrity is severely shaken. We cannot afford to lose their trust.'¹⁴⁵

This profound crisis of colonial credibility was soon communicated by Administrator Wallace to his superiors at the BSAC London Wall headquarters.¹⁴⁶ Such was the extreme concern there that a protest

letter was sent by the Board of Directors directly to the Colonial Office. It stressed 'the very great importance of adhering strictly to the terms of contracts made to natives', demonstrating their deeply-held fears of social unrest. The London Wall Directors further demanded that a warning be addressed to Northey via the War Office. Their letter concluded: 'The Secretary of State will undoubtedly agree that the native population must be handled with great care, especially if it is necessary to resort to a measure of compulsion in order to keep up the supply of carriers.'¹⁴⁷

The Colonial response again clearly reflected their acute wartime dilemma with officials torn between enforcing 'Trust' imperatives or principles, so clearly threatened by issues of African welfare such as breaches of carrier contracts and carrier ill-treatment, and on the other hand, meeting the urgent requirement of an imperial victory which itself dictated the uninterrupted supply of war carriers. One official thus reflected upon the pre-war 'trouble' over Boundary Commission work where carriers had been similarly 'kept beyond the terms of their contract' (a scandal which had elicited strong imperial protest and intervention), describing it as an issue upon which 'it is necessary to be particular'.¹⁴⁸ He agreed that a warning be addressed to Northey, but a second official was more cautious, calling for 'War Office concurrence first'.¹⁴⁹ Other senior Colonial Office officials, however, placed more onus on support for military operations. W. C. Bottomley thus ruled: 'I think draft despatches must make it clear that we accept his [Northey's] view that the carriers must remain till relieved.'¹⁵⁰ The final draft despatch to the War Office therefore attempted an ambiguously worded compromise, but one which clearly capitulated to the military viewpoint. The Colonial Secretary accordingly felt

bound to support the Company's view as to the importance of adhering as strictly as possible to the terms of agreement made with natives, though he realises that it will generally be necessary for the carriers to remain until they can be relieved, and, is prepared to accept the view expressed by General Northey [...] that they must so remain, though strong effort will be made to release old carriers as soon as reliefs arrive.¹⁵¹

The BSAC at war: reluctant servants of an imperial cause

This striking example of major civil-military conflict at ground-level was reflected in the growing disillusionment expressed at London Wall regarding their costly role as *de facto* prosecutors of an imperial war.

By mid-1917 the enormous strain of the war had become frighteningly apparent to the BSAC Directors. In purely financial terms the most pressing problem was that of 'extraordinary war expenditure' or, specifically, who was to defray the burden of military costs; the Company or the imperial authorities? Underlying this was the highly contentious question of what forms of financial outlay constituted 'military' and which 'civil'. From the outbreak of war the precise question of liability for military expenditure was never decisively clarified. London Wall was merely informed that war expenditure would be met by means of cash advances to the Company, but to the immense discomfort of the Directors these sums would be administered only in the form of an imperial loan with ultimate liability to be determined at an unspecified later date.¹⁵²

The fears of the BSAC 'mandarins' magnified as civil and war expenditure became extremely difficult to identify or quantify. Company war expenditure bills were often queried by economy-conscious imperial officials. Thus, when assessing an itemised Company request for an imperial advance of £76,400 to help meet one bill of £143,684 up to December 1915, one Colonial Office official typically queried; 'but we must not admit that all this expenditure is really war expenditure'.¹⁵³ His senior agreed: 'The making of a road is a permanent improvement? [...] in recommending this advance Mr Bonar Law does not wish to [...] imply that all the items are necessarily admissible as war expenditure'.¹⁵⁴

The immense costs of the forthcoming 1916 Northey offensive excited even deeper apprehensions. In February 1916 Wallace, in order to avoid delays, had anxiously sought reassurances that refunds of all military expenditure costs would be met *carte blanche* by the Board without recourse to formal requests.¹⁵⁵ In turn the Board was forced to seek a further guarantee of imperial/Treasury cash advances so as not to 'unduly inconvenience the Company from a cash point of view [...] without prejudice to the ultimate determination of the question where the final liability for that expenditure rests'.¹⁵⁶

Food purchases and transport costs predictably constituted the majority of expenditure. In securing these, the Company itself became a victim of massive wartime price inflation. In order to conserve internal food supplies Wallace, the Administrator, was even forced in early 1916 to temporarily curtail European grain exports to the lucrative Katanga market. White farm products were redirected to the north-east war zone. For these, Wallace confided to London Wall in April 1916,

we shall have to pay considerably higher than last year. There is not enough grain here to supply the Congo market, which must, to a

large extent, be supplied from the Union, with the result that, in order to avoid the heavy railage, the Congo merchants can offer a very high price on the Kafue and we have to pay the same.¹⁵⁷

Furthermore, despite the vast amounts of foodstuffs sold by African growers in 1914 and 1915, the decline in production as a result of severe famines and trading restrictions throughout the Territory during and after 1916, combined with Northey's expanded war food needs, compelled the Administration to purchase large amounts of grain outside Northern Rhodesia. A food crisis in January 1916, for instance, had already compelled Wallace to seek aid from neighbouring Nyasaland but his urgent requests were nonetheless refused on the grounds of the latter's own internal war needs and carrier transport difficulties.¹⁵⁸ The Company was thus forced to purchase grain from the South, with prices inflated by the wartime rise in railway transit rates. In March 1916, for instance, Wallace purchased 250 tons of grain from Southern Rhodesia, transported to the north-east border via the newly-opened water route.¹⁵⁹ With the onset of serious famine in Southern Rhodesia later in 1916, however, even more expensive supplies had to be imported by railway from the Union of South Africa.

By the end of 1916, therefore, all costs had risen immeasurably. The increased expense of the Northey offensive in particular was vividly illustrated by official BSAC figures. For the pre-offensive period August 1914 to December 1915, war expenditure had reached £143,684. By the end of June 1916, as Northey's columns began their advance, this sum had more than doubled to £292,635.¹⁶⁰ By the end of 1917 war expenditure totalled approximately £1,000,000.

Paramount, of course, amongst the financial anxieties haunting the home Directors was the potentially hostile attitude of Company shareholders for whom even dividend payments still seemed a remote possibility. As we have seen, the Company had entered the war with insecure finances and not a few critics and the Directors feared a strong backlash if the existing peacetime financial deficit was further exacerbated by massive war expenditure liabilities. At the first wartime shareholders meeting, the President, L. S. Jameson, admitted that the war's impact on Company finances had been 'to a certain extent adverse [...] business is restricted and development hampered', and he warned 'there will be a certain amount of [...] extraordinary expenditure, that is military expenditure'.¹⁶¹

The massive escalating bill for the Northey offensive, however, forced the Board to extend further reassurances of financial solvency. At the

second wartime meeting in 1916 the Chairman confirmed: 'As shareholders you may have felt some apprehension about the cost of these military operations to the Company.' Reporting a total military expenditure of £200,000 by the end of March 1916 he reassured shareholders, to accompanying cheers, that 'the Imperial Government [...] is from time to time making us advances to cover such expenditure, so that it does not constitute in any way whatever a drain upon the financial resources of the Company'. In the same breath, however, he cryptically revealed: 'We are still discussing with the Colonial Office the ultimate responsibility for disbursements under these various heads.'¹⁶²

However, the Directors' private correspondence clearly exposed their underlying deep anxieties. Thus, BSAC Director L. Michell, in direct reference to this same 1916 shareholders meeting, congratulated P. L. Gell, his fellow Director, 'on surviving the risk of occupying the Chair at our recent meeting. So many shareholders, all with anxious minds, called on me [...] in London last year that I anticipated a strong breeze, or should have done so, but for the fact that our shareholders are exceptionally patriotic and long-suffering'.¹⁶³ As the war expenditure bill relentlessly escalated during 1917, London Wall's fears spilled over into a blunt protest to the Colonial Office. 'The liability for the expenditure has still to be determined but the Directors cannot believe that H. M.'s Government will ultimately claim that any part of the cost of these operations should be borne by the Company.'¹⁶⁴

By the end of 1917, however, the prevailing pessimism was openly voiced by Director H. Wilson Fox. Estimating the Company's cash resources on 31 March 1918 to be £2,065,965 he further predicted 'a liability of £1,000,000 [...] to cover war expenditure'. Although it was 'hardly conceivable' that the Company would be made liable for 'the whole of the amount', he stressed, nevertheless, that it was 'more than likely that it will have to meet quite a substantial proportion of it'. He advocated an early settlement as it would be 'far easier to deal with a matter of this character while the purse-strings of the Treasury are unloosed [...] it would be fatal to defer discussion to the end of the war'. In any event he estimated Company liability of 'at least £250,000'. This sum alone would considerably undermine the Company's development plans, reducing the working capital below its reserve of £1,000,000 to £750,000, 'an amount which would not allow much new development on a large scale to be undertaken'. This potential loss combined with the fact that the Company debentures (amounting to £1,250,000) were due for repayment in 1920, meant that it would 'be necessary to apply to [...] shareholders for further funds at no distant date'.¹⁶⁵

The practical answer to the existing and potential wartime financial deficit was, of course, a policy of stringent economy. In April 1916, therefore, C. Birchenough confirmed to assembled shareholders: 'Ever since the war began common prudence has dictated to us the policy of restricting our expenditure.' He reported 'wide-spread reduction of expenditure during the past twenty months'. This was, however, not to be at the expense of shareholders: 'We have not attained these reductions by starving our commercial estates and undertakings,' affirmed Birchenough.¹⁶⁶ Consequently, basic Northern Rhodesian administrative votes or budgets such as Health and Education were ruthlessly cut and it was impressed upon Wallace that the Board was 'not prepared to incur [...] expense at a time when the Company's finances are strained to the utmost'.¹⁶⁷ Although the African population received little or no health or educational benefits, economies inexorably hit them through parsimonious Company relief policies. Any finance outside strictly military expenditure was curtailed. White farmers on the north-east border were therefore, for instance, rigidly refused compensation for border raid losses.¹⁶⁸ The impact of these economies was reflected in the reductions in the Capital/Expenditure Account for Administrative purposes from £22,247 in 1914 to £5,357 in 1917.¹⁶⁹ Such cost-cutting, however, made little impact upon the prevailing administrative account deficit. Despite transfers of large amounts of police and defence expenditure to the War Account, this large deficit, though falling from £48,177 in 1914 to £38,692 in 1915, rose again to £39,168 in 1916 reaching £40,549 in 1917, largely as a result of rising tax losses and unexpected veterinary and famine relief costs.¹⁷⁰ In January 1918 Wilson Fox thus pronounced the Northern Rhodesian deficit as 'even more serious [...] there is no prospect that revenue and expenditure can be balanced for many years to come'.¹⁷¹

For the Company Directors these grave financial problems underlay growing wartime disenchantment regarding the political future of both Rhodesias. In 1914 a precise date for the end of Chartered Administration had emerged with the renewal of a Supplemental Charter with a limited ten-year duration. At the same time Company land assets were severely threatened by the still undecided Privy Council land case which sought to ascertain respective imperial, settler and Company possession rights in both Territories. Company plans to unite the two Rhodesias, firstly by formal amalgamation and secondly, after the failure of the former, by a single administrator, collapsed owing to combined settler¹⁷² and imperial opposition.¹⁷³ Significantly, both these schemes were designed to promote more economical

administration. Consequently, Company-imperial and Company-settler relations became further embittered.

During 1917, therefore, the Board of Directors was rapidly coming to the conclusion that its long-held policy premise, namely that the Company should be able to pursue its work 'unhampered by inefficient or unsympathetic government action and with the certainty that a policy of spoliation could not be applied to it', was no longer tenable. The Directors were dismayed and angered by the 'antagonistic temper' of a 'large number' of the settler population and 'the lack of support accorded to the Company by the Colonial Office in its task of Government'.¹⁷⁴Saddled by early 1917 with this political backcloth, an escalating war bill and administrative deficit and, above all, a rapidly deteriorating social control situation within Northern Rhodesia, the stage was set for a major political clash between London Wall and the Colonial Office. It reflected the former's view that the Company and its politico-commercial operations in Northern Rhodesia were being subjected to unnecessary and unfair strain by virtue of its position as a surrogate agent for the imperial war machine.

7

The Nadir of Colonial Power in Northern Rhodesia

The political repercussions of the Makombe rising of 1917

On 2 April 1917, a terse telegram informed London Wall of a major insurrection in the Barue region of neighbouring Portuguese East Africa. A crucial half-sentence in the despatch, that the rebellion was 'probably due to commandeering of natives by Portuguese authorities for military service',¹ brought home the potentially disastrous political consequences the rebellion might have for the Company's own tenuous control.² A London Wall Director, D. O. Malcolm, immediately confided to the Colonial Office, with masterly understatement, that 'one doesn't like native risings in one's neighbour's territory'.³ An official Company despatch about the crucial importance of honouring carrier contracts more accurately represented the fears of London Wall. It agreed that the rising was the direct result of the 'commandeering of natives [...] for military service' and stressed that it was 'vitaly important to avoid the risk of similar trouble in Rhodesia'.⁴

Indeed, both politically and militarily, the rebellion could not have occurred at a more inopportune time for both the Company and the imperial authorities. From January 1917 onwards, the Company had been forced to acquiesce to imperial requests for the mass levy of thousands of Ngoni and Chewa males for carrier service in support of Nyasaland's field forces.⁵ The levy had represented the most concentrated and widespread use of compulsion of the war and the Portuguese rising was a chilling warning of the risks involved. Moreover, the main recruiting ground, the East Luangwa district, bordered the principal area of unrest on the Portuguese side.

Furthermore, the initial collapse of Portuguese authority with the capture of Zumbo and the defeat of a Portuguese force by the main Barue *impi* on 3 April was an obviously shattering blow to white prestige, not

only in Portuguese territory, but across British Central Africa. This was underlined in the frequent reports sent from Feira, the main Northern Rhodesian border post, which emphasised the urgent need for a decisive border demonstration of white power with European troops and machine guns. One despatch, forwarded in mid-June, emphasised the urgency of a deterrent force, warning that a continuation of the rebellion was 'likely to unsettle our own natives along the Border and lead to trouble', and that 'invasion was quite probable'.⁶ It included supportive memoranda from local missionaries and settlers. One of these, by a Father Kraupa of Katondwe Mission, was particularly striking. He wrote:

From our experience we know the native has only one feeling i.e. he fears, and only so long as he is loyal, as long as he fears, and now they consider there is nothing to fear from the white inhabitants [...] day by day we hear their conversation in which they say that the white people are no longer strong, they have no troops in the district, no guns etc., and that they (the white men) are at war amongst themselves.

This, he stressed, did 'not only apply to the Portuguese white people, but to all white people in the country'. More significant, for the worried Company authorities, was his comment that a recent levy of 200 war carriers in Feira sub-district would 'not simplify matters in the least', as it was 'quite possible for these natives, on hearing of the general state of affairs, to throw away or destroy their loads and return to their villages to join the rebels'. Ominously, Kraupa also reported that he had frequently heard of the intention of Mpangula (a rebel chief), possibly assisted by chiefs Madzombe and Kasonga, 'to cross the Luangwa River, when fordable, and attack Feira and also to kill the whites at Feira and the natives who were loyal'.⁷

Reports of the political organisation of the rising increased Company and imperial fears of a spread of the rebellion into both Rhodesias and Nyasaland. The apparently prominent role of spirit mediums immediately conjured up memories of the 1896–7 rebellions, which had only been suppressed by massively reinforced Company and imperial forces, and at the cost of heavy losses to unprotected white settlers.⁸ As one Colonial Office official observed midway through the rebellion, 'it appears that Makombe, the Chief who besieged Tete, was inspired by a Joan of Arc – a "mondoro" [...] who was a little girl. Her idea was to conquer Tete and then consider whether an attack should be made on the English.'⁹

Meanwhile, the Northern Rhodesian authorities, like their counterparts in Southern Rhodesia and Nyasaland, faced the additional problem of controlling the massive influx of refugees from the uprising. By the end of May 1917 the recorded total had reached 3,000 and there was a real fear that rebel forces would cross the Luangwa river once it became fordable, to exact retribution from them for their loyal stance in escaping to British territory and not joining the rebellion.¹⁰ With administrative and food resources absorbed by the war effort, relief grain was only provided for elderly men and women, the young men being 'called upon to go out to work',¹¹ thereby providing a useful augmentation to wartime Company tax and labour requirements.

Above all, the rebellion revealed the extreme paucity of coercive resources still available within Northern Rhodesia to combat any invasion or sympathetic internal dissension. Only a few score European troops and Northern Rhodesia Police remained. When, early in the rebellion, the Magistrate at Fort Jameson asked for a hundred Bemba police to be despatched to the Portuguese border, since 'less would be a sign of weakness',¹² the Administrator refused him; there were 'none available, all being in German East Africa'.¹³ As imperial demands for impressed carriers inexorably continued, Wallace repeatedly warned of this dangerous power vacuum lying behind the execution of such provocative and unpopular policies. In March 1917 he stressed: 'We are without force to carry out compulsion and any show of doing so must come from the District Officials who have to bear the responsibility, and must feel their way and use all their influence when insisting upon the need for men for Imperial service.'¹⁴ One month later, as news of the Portuguese rebellion flooded in, Wallace repeated his dire warning:

All district officials are doing all they can but the number of natives is not inexhaustible and all those whose duty it is to press them to work have to watch carefully that their patience shows less sign of exhaustion than their numbers.¹⁵

As if to emphasise this coercive paralysis, it was not until mid-June that a small deterrent force of only forty-three Northern Rhodesia Police was despatched to the Portuguese East Africa border.¹⁶ This force itself had to be sent the several hundred miles from the capital, Livingstone, at the cost of a significant weakening of the latter's garrison. Until that date, for nearly three months the defence of Northern Rhodesia's approximately 200-mile Portuguese East Africa border against any rebel aggression, had rested upon a mere score or so of poorly-armed local *boma* messengers and white settlers.¹⁷

The potential for military reinforcement from neighbouring friendly territories was, similarly, extremely limited. Demands from the East African and European Fronts had denuded Nyasaland and Southern Rhodesia of European regular troops, leaving only small, scattered and largely immobile irregular white defence units. In February 1917, just before the outbreak of the Makombe rebellion, Drummond Chaplin, the Southern Rhodesian Administrator, had already informed Colonial Secretary W. H. Long that Southern Rhodesia had 'come to the end of the men whom we can send to the war', commensurate with the need to 'keep the mines going and retain adequate protection [...] to deal with any possible local trouble'.¹⁸ Long, however, even doubted the effectiveness of residual defence forces in coping with internal unrest, stressing that if Chaplin 'had trouble you would be hard-set to provide anything which would be at all adequate'.¹⁹ In any event Southern Rhodesia had to defend a far longer border with Portuguese East Africa (over 650 miles) than her Northern sister-state. Available Portuguese forces were, of course, themselves hard-pressed by both African rebels and invading German forces, while Northey's columns were widely dispersed in chasing von Lettow's elusive German irregular forces through remote areas of German East Africa and, eventually for much of 1918, northern Portuguese East Africa.

In the far south three years of war had similarly emasculated even the Union of South Africa's vast reinforcement potential. By September 1916, with over 50,000 white troops serving in Europe, South-West and East Africa, High Commissioner Lord Buxton confirmed that these exceptional manpower demands had absorbed 'a very large proportion of the adult population' and had not left 'very much of a margin for further recruiting'.²⁰ In the Union, moreover, a large number of garrison troops were tied down to prevent a resurgence of the bitter 1915 Afrikaner nationalist revolt, aside from any potential African uprisings, a fear which haunted both Rhodesian Administrations encompassing, as they did, large Afrikaner minorities.²¹

The situation represented a stark contrast to the military situation during the earlier 1915 Chilembwe uprising which, occurring early in the war and before the Northey offensive, had been rapidly suppressed by readily available African and European regulars. Although there is little doubt that forces could eventually have been provided to counter any rebel invasion of Northern Rhodesia and/or a major internal African uprising, perhaps from the Belgian Congo several hundred miles to the west, it was clear that any such long delay would have been fatal to Company prestige and control in a territory already strained to the limit by unpopular war labour and food demands. The Portuguese rebellion

had thus placed Colonial control within Northern Rhodesia on a knife edge, as Wallace again gravely emphasised to the High Commissioner in April 1917.²²

A memorandum drawn up by A. H. M. Edwards, the Commandant-General in Salisbury, in July 1917 further emphasised the critical imperial strategic situation in Central Africa, thanks to the double crisis in Portuguese East Africa – the German invasion from without and the Makombe rising within. Although largely concerned with Southern Rhodesian security, he stressed the danger of a successful revolt in adjacent territory with the possibility that ‘local conflagration’ might break out. He pointed out that the Rhodesian-Portuguese East border was ‘impossible to defend in its entirety’, the local white Rhodesian defence units being ‘for the most part immobile and, consequently, unable to take the offensive’. A more potent threat emanated from the possibility of the African rebels joining the German forces. Already, he noted, the ‘natives in the area of “Mataba” i.e. northern Portuguese East Africa [...] had thrown in their lot with the Germans whom they appear to prefer to the Portuguese’.²³

This sense of acute vulnerability determined the extremely cautious imperial response to Portuguese appeals for aid to suppress the rebellion. Although well aware of earlier Portuguese assistance in crushing the Chilembwe rebellion, High Commissioner Buxton stressed to Wallace that it was ‘most undesirable to create the impression among natives that we are cooperating in re-establishment of what they probably with some justice regard as an intolerable system of administration’. The High Commissioner laid down that any action should be strictly confined to ‘preserving order within and preventing invasion of Rhodesian territory and giving protection to refugees’.²⁴ To the anger and dismay of the Portuguese authorities their requests for British troops were accordingly refused. Nevertheless, despite widespread distaste for the brutal methods of Portuguese rule felt amongst both Rhodesian and imperial officials, overall white colonial prestige demanded that the rebellion be suppressed. Buxton accordingly adopted a temporising policy of supplying British rifles, machine guns and ammunition, but no troops.²⁵ In this way, during the period July to November 1917, Portuguese forces were certainly helped to break the back of the rebellion but without the stigma of visible British intervention.

This policy of feigned neutrality undoubtedly helped to prevent rebel incursions into British territory. During the whole nine-month duration of the rebellion only one small raid was recorded in Northern Rhodesian territory and this was by ‘natives friendly to the Portuguese’.²⁶ Moreover,

the rebel chiefs repeatedly denied their intention to invade and drew gratifying distinctions between the more humane rule of the British when compared to their notoriously brutal Portuguese masters.²⁷

The inequality of war carrier strain: open conflict between the BSAC and the imperial authorities

The Makombe uprising had exposed the extreme vulnerability of Northern Rhodesia, not only to external aggression, but also to the potentially disastrous consequences of heavily oppressive recruitment policies for weakened colonial administrations. The implications soon caused a major row at the highest levels between London Wall and the Colonial Office. Eleven days after receiving news of the uprising, the BSAC Board protested to the Colonial Office about the higher level of coercion it was being forced to employ to secure carriers from the East Luangwa District. It backed up its complaint by enclosing a recent warning from Wallace, stressing that the local administration no longer had the means to enforce its wishes in the event of any resistance to recruitment.²⁸ The Board stressed that it ought not to be obliged to resort to compulsion 'until the possibilities of voluntary recruitment in all the territories from which carriers [...] can be obtained, have been exhausted'. It was clear to the Directors that this point had already been reached in Northern Rhodesia. Moreover, they resented the damage which had been caused to mining and agriculture in both Rhodesias by the recent renewal of the RNIB recruitment ban in order to facilitate war carrier recruitment. The Board's fears were as much commercial as administrative and it called for evidence that the possibilities for voluntary recruitment in Nyasaland had really been exhausted, since it seemed 'possible, in view of the greater density of the native population in Nyasaland that it might be practicable by further recruiting in Nyasaland [...] to lessen the strain on the Company's territories'.²⁹

The Colonial Office response revealed that deep fears of a renewed rising in Nyasaland had been a cogent restraining factor in war labour policies there. One official commented that Nyasaland had been 'doing its utmost as regards voluntary recruitment' and there were 'strong reasons against compulsory recruitment there, having regard to the Nyasaland native rising in 1915 and the general unrest among natives in these parts'.³⁰ Northern Rhodesia would simply have to make the best of it. London Wall was told that Nyasaland's labour resources had already neared exhaustion and that there were 'special reasons which make it undesirable to resort to compulsory measures in that Protectorate'.³¹

The Board of Directors was furious. In a private letter to H. Lambert, the Under-Secretary of State, one of their number, D. O. Malcolm, angrily complained that Nyasaland was not the only territory to have 'special reasons' for its unwillingness to resort to compulsion. There was a similar risk wherever one turned. 'We have the strongest possible objections to resorting to compulsory measures in our territory.' The Company's local Administration were 'having a very great strain indeed put upon them'. He enclosed private correspondence between Wallace and H. Wilson Fox, the Company's commercial manager, to underline his case. He demanded an equitable distribution of labour strain, and concluded 'We are faced with the fact that we are being asked to go in for compulsion and that Nyasaland is not.'³²

The Colonial Office decided to take the matter directly to the Governor of Nyasaland, to 'tell the Governor what case he had to make out' to counter the Company's allegations.³³ At least one official considered that the Board was 'making a good deal of unnecessary trouble' and stressed that, in agreeing that the East Luangwa mass levy of 6,000 carriers would require compulsion, Wallace had forecast that it would be 'wisely exercised' and 'cause no difficulty'.³⁴ Nevertheless, the Colonial Office got the evidence it wanted, that the Nyasaland Government had also used compulsion,³⁵ despite earlier comments which suggested that to safeguard against any rising this was being exercised in a far more limited way than in Northern Rhodesia. The evidence was enough to silence the critics at London Wall, especially since the Colonial Office also accepted Malcolm's demand that carrier pay rates in Nyasaland be raised to the same level as those of Northern Rhodesia, so as to 'equalise, as far as possible, the drain from the two territories'.³⁶ The Colonial Office had won, though at least one official lamented that the matter should have been 'carried on, on such controversial lines'.³⁷ The dispute had given a clear indication of the extreme alarm felt within Company circles over Northern Rhodesia's escalating war burden. Ironically enough, before six months had passed, London Wall and the Colonial Office were to close ranks against the War Office and Treasury, who objected to a Company initiative designed to relieve the growing internal crisis within Northern Rhodesia.

The wartime internal labour control crisis 1916–18

During the second half of 1917, both the Company and the imperial authorities became acutely aware of a growing crisis affecting the control of the internal labour supply, particularly in the western district of

the north-east Plateau. Thousands of Northern Rhodesian Africans were increasingly taking steps to avoid the hated war labour, especially as conditions of carrier employment rapidly deteriorated during the aftermath of the Northey offensive. Many were lured to Katanga and Southern Rhodesia, finding work with higher wage rates in the mines.³⁸ On the Plateau, many others, perhaps the majority, simply crossed the Luapula River and lived in temporary camps outside Northern Rhodesian authority, taking advantage of the negligent Belgian border security. It was a movement almost impossible to control, given the enfeebled state of internal security.³⁹

In August 1917 the scale of the problem was dramatically revealed by I. Denton-Thompson, the Inspector of Rhodesian Natives in Katanga. In that month Thompson reported that thousands of black Northern Rhodesians were camping in large groups on the Belgian side of the Luapula River. At least five illegal villages had been constructed and, at two places, Kasholwe and Kaindu, the refugee population was 'being increased daily by natives from Rhodesia who cross to avoid war transport work'.⁴⁰ Many of these were northern Lunda under Chief Kazembe, whose absence from the cassava fields undoubtedly helped explain the decline in production for the war effort after 1916. The exodus was inevitably encouraged by the ban on war labour recruitment from the Katanga mines workforce in February 1917, leading to the enhanced activity of scores of illegal recruiters. The offenders, Thompson observed, were mostly Greeks, who sent their *capitao*s across 'to entice the natives over with offers of work at the Star and Lubumbashi [mines]'. He reported seeing 'several canoes filled with Rhodesian natives going to Kasenga en route for Elizabethville'.⁴¹

The illegal residents on the west bank of the Luapula took the opportunity to flout openly the strict Northern Rhodesian government regulations on firearms and game control. The 'numerous, irregular camps' were 'occupied by natives engaged in shooting game on *both* sides of the Luapula'; their guns were 'very numerous and no difficulty was found in obtaining powder at any (Belgian) store'.⁴² Above all, it was observed 'little if at all the Sleeping Sickness Regulations deter the constant movement of natives through restricted areas'.⁴³

This loss of potential war labour elicited the deep concern of the local imperial authorities. The Resident Commissioner called for an immediate relaxation of the Sleeping Sickness Regulations which were, he considered, provocative rather than preventative. The Regulations were impossible to enforce – river patrols were the only solution, he suggested, but quite impossible in the current manpower shortage. The

knowledge that Belgian Africans enjoyed 'unrestricted access to the river without any obvious detriment to their health', he pointed out, 'necessarily served as a temptation to Rhodesian natives to cross the River in defiance of the Regulations' and, he stressed, they were 'less likely to resist the temptation' when it was 'reinforced by such other inducements as a distaste for war work'. In view of the wartime paralysis of border control, H. J. Stanley, the Resident Commissioner at Salisbury could foresee the ultimate solution to the problem only when Northey's carrier demands 'became less urgent' and 'it would then be possible to reopen the north-eastern districts to Robert Williams and Company'.⁴⁴

From Cape Town, Buxton agreed, recommending not only a relaxation of the Regulations but an amnesty for offenders.⁴⁵ It was a proposal firmly vetoed by Wallace, the man on the spot, fearful that the move could be interpreted as a sign of weakness leading to a chaotic exodus. Whilst confirming that 'natives are once more breaking the Sleeping Sickness Regulations because they prefer work on the Congo to war work', he opposed the suggestion on the grounds that 'this they were deliberately doing and to promise an amnesty [...] though it might encourage a few to come back, would probably encourage a far greater number to seek the work which was left by those returning'.⁴⁶

Similarly, the Resident Commissioner's proposal to offer deferred pay in British (as opposed to Belgian) currency, as an incentive to unregistered labour to come through legally controlled channels⁴⁷ was again rejected by Wallace on the grounds that 'to offer the same advantages to independent labour would be to encourage a movement which it is wished to restrict'.⁴⁸ Other moves to halt the exodus of illegal labour proved hardly more successful. In September 1917, under pressure from the Rhodesian authorities, the Belgian administrators issued instructions that no Rhodesian Africans should be registered for work unless they were in possession of a pass signed by a Rhodesian official. Such regulations could, however, be flouted by the many independent labour contractors in the Katanga⁴⁹ and took no account of those hundreds of 'war labour refugees' camped illegally on the Belgian side of the Luapula, subsisting on local game and not entering the mine labour market. Similarly, more stringent controls of the activities of illegal recruiters and their runners, as for instance laid down under the Northern Rhodesia Labour and Recruitment Proclamation of 1917, posed the normal problems of enforcement.⁵⁰

Elsewhere in the territory, the Administration attempted to plug other labour loopholes, especially within important war carrier catchment areas. Indeed, the loss of independent labour to the south posed as

many problems as the western outlet across the Luapula. In 1917 the authorities attempted to reform the notorious ticket system of the East Luangwa plantations. Under this, African labourers could enrol for a thirty-day ticket which could be spread over several months rather than made to expire in thirty consecutive days. It was a favourite device for evading service in the hated carrier corps, and resulted in planters taking on excessive amounts of labour in order to guarantee adequate workforces on consecutive days. To root out the 'loafers', the administration sought to abolish the system and replace it with strict calendar month contracts.⁵¹ The attempt foundered on settler obduracy. The Chairman of the North-East Rhodesia Agricultural and Commercial Association thus explained that his members 'quite recognise that military requisitions must come first, but fear that if the present system is once altered it would be very difficult to return to it after the war'.⁵²

Recognition of crisis and internal political appeasement: the BSAC scheme for reward and compensation

In the wake of the Makombe rising and with evidence of a growing internal labour crisis, the Livingstone executive launched a major political initiative in October 1917 designed to restore administrative control. In despatches to both London Wall and the Colonial Office, Wallace stressed the urgent need to reduce African discontent and meet future and existing military imperatives through a grand strategy of rewards and bonuses for war services, with compensation for war losses. The carrier pressure, he warned, was 'not going to be lessened for a long time'. In order to keep up the supply, he thought it would now be necessary to make some promise of help when the campaign was over 'in re-establishing the conditions that existed before the War'.⁵³ The limits of coercion had been reached in at least one district, Serenje, where it was considered impossible to recruit a larger number of carriers 'without greater pressure than it was deemed advisable to use'.⁵⁴ Wallace urgently called for 'compensation [...] for cattle lost and for villages destroyed'.⁵⁵ Increases in wages were also necessary for 'those natives who are called up for the third or fourth time' and to combat considerable price inflation.⁵⁶

The despatches enclosed copies of a crucial supportive memorandum drawn up by the Visiting Commissioner, H. C. Marshall, based on his findings from two 1917 tours of the north-east. He urgently called for financial recognition of the hard-pressed smaller mediating agencies, the village headmen. He pointed out that 'a large number

of natives employed during the past few years could not have been obtained but for the co-operation of the headmen'; they had, nevertheless received 'but slight recognition and provision has yet to be made to recompense them'. The authority of the chiefs, he warned, was being undermined by excessive and unpopular war labour demands. With 'so many people constantly away from their homes', they 'had failed to receive the customary help in garden and other work given annually to the Chief'. Marshall warned that there were indications that the 'strain and pressure was being felt both by the people and the headmen'. The principal indication of this was 'the disappearance from villages of a percentage of able-bodied men who can readily find employment outside the territory'. Many of these 'runaways', he significantly affirmed, had 'performed some war work before leaving their homes'.⁵⁷

Marshall strongly felt that this rapidly deteriorating position demanded a new remedial strategy, designed to appease an increasingly deprived and discontented African population. 'I suggest the time has arrived', he dramatically reported, 'firstly, to decide upon and announce the form of recognition of the headman's work. Secondly, to consider the advisability of raising the pay of war carriers, especially those working in war areas.' Hitherto, wage rates 'had been very fair for work within the territory but much lower than Congo mining rates'. Thirdly, 'to decide that a bonus in some form should be definitely promised to all war carriers'. Other recommendations included special concessions such as the relaxation of Firearms and Game Regulations for chiefs and, more importantly, the promise of provision of post-war compensation for losses of villages, crops and cattle sustained during the protracted border war of 1914–16.⁵⁸

This compensation and reward scheme would not, it was emphasised, be administered in cash form. 'Any help', the Administrator Wallace thought, 'should [...] come in a form of eliminating the trader's excessive profits'.⁵⁹ He therefore supported Marshall's suggestion of inflation-proof aid in the form of axes and hoes. Marshall recommended that every man who 'had worked three or more months during the war', should be awarded a hoe; a headman of standing who had done good work should receive several. To avoid issuing 'inferior trade hoes' they would have to be imported from England and stamped with BSAC insignia. Alternatively, if this idea proved too expensive, an issue of hoes should be made to each headman 'amounting to 30% of men under his control who have worked'.⁶⁰ Cash outlay would be restricted to lost cattle and destroyed villages, amounting to an estimated total of £600 to £700. The cost of the hoes or other tools, however, might amount to

£25,000 or 'equal to about 6*d.* per month added to the pay earned by all the workers'.⁶¹ The alternative was only higher pay, which it was considered would 'not have any great success' and could prove more costly.⁶² The political alternatives to the scheme were dangerous. More compulsion in the north-east would probably be a failure and, in the less pressurised north-west, would critically damage mine and agricultural labour supplies.⁶³

The scheme received the unanimous support of the London Wall Board⁶⁴ and the High Commissioner's Office.⁶⁵ Within the Colonial Office support was also virtually unanimous. The only criticism from one official was largely based upon the belief, soon proved erroneous, that war carrier operations would be immediately terminated.⁶⁶ Other officials were more enthusiastic. One, E. C. T. Machtig, termed the proposal a 'good one';⁶⁷ W. C. Bottomley was even more earnest, stressing that the matter was 'one of great importance' and the scheme should be extended not only to carriers but also to recently demobilised soldiers.⁶⁸ Another official agreed that the reward should be given to all 'Northern Rhodesian native troops' as well as carriers.⁶⁹

Two aspects of the scheme, however, ensured it would have a bleak future. Most importantly, the cost predictably would *not* be charged to the Company but, in Wallace's opinion would be a 'fair charge against War Expenditure'.⁷⁰ Secondly, the suggestion by several Colonial Office officials that the scheme should be extended to a wider regional area and a wider class of military employee carried controversial financial and political implications that ensured it would never be accepted.

The problems soon became apparent. In January 1918 the Colonial Office received a blunt rejection of the plan from the War Office, the Army Council expressing the opinion that 'it would form a dangerous precedent to initiate a policy of grants of this description to natives'.⁷¹ In February the Treasury, itself acutely economy-conscious in wartime, similarly rejected the scheme. It was considered by them 'uneconomical in order to secure a relatively small number of carriers for a period which, it is hoped, will be short, to grant, not only in consideration of future services, but, in respect of services rendered during the past three years, a concession which', it was noted, 'had to be extended so far beyond the scope of the original suggestion'.⁷²

The twin rejection was followed by a change of strategy on the part of the Colonial Office which, during late February and March, pressed the War Office to confirm the military importance of Northern Rhodesia's logistical role in the German East African Campaign. The War Office, after consultation with the GOC, East Africa, was forced to admit to the

continuing importance of maintaining Northern Rhodesian carrier supplies, but again refused to concede acceptance of the scheme, arguing that 'it would be most difficult to impose a limit upon such concessions if once initiated'.⁷³ Thus, fears of wider political and financial implications precluded Treasury and War Office support.

The Northern Rhodesian Administration was not so easily put off. Wallace again wrote to Buxton, the High Commissioner, with news that control was slipping still further. He warned that the

promise of future help [...] may make the difference between continued success and a breakdown. Volunteers at any wage there are few or none. Compulsion would be useless if the natives lose heart or sulk, and it would then be impossible, for our police have been taken to East Africa and we have not any show of troops in camp, or passing through, to remind them of any force behind us.⁷⁴

Wallace refuted War Office and Treasury arguments that Northern Rhodesian carrier supplies would be imminently reduced. On the contrary, Northey had recently informed him that 'all carriers for the Rhodesian Column must be maintained indefinitely'. Ten thousand carriers had been despatched to Nyasaland alone and there were urgent requests for 4,000 more 'to replace those returning and wastage'.⁷⁵

The urgency of government approval for the plan was compounded by the impending visit by the Visiting Commissioner to the north-eastern Chieftaincies where Marshall would be 'asked [...] many questions about what will be done for them at the end of the war'. It was 'whilst he was there', Wallace insisted, and 'before the new calls for carriers, that those questions should be answered'. 'If the East Africa Campaign lingers on', Wallace reiterated, 'such a promise may become absolutely necessary'.⁷⁶

Wallace's and particularly Marshall's position received powerful support from H. J. Stanley, the new Imperial Secretary at Cape Town and, until recently, the Resident Commissioner at Salisbury. He observed that 'the loyalty of the north-east Rhodesian natives' had been 'put to a severe test and it would be very unwise to disregard the considered advice of so experienced an officer as Mr Marshall'.⁷⁷

Stanley's advice, based on both his own Rhodesian experience and his recent personal contact with Wallace and Marshall undoubtedly played a significant part in Buxton's strong intervention in the controversy at the end of May 1918. On Stanley's recommendation Buxton telegraphed a brief despatch to the Colonial Office. He urged that the rejection be reconsidered. 'I think it most desirable and important in

interests of general native policy as well as of further supply of carriers that Marshall [...] should be enabled to make natives definite promise of such assistance'. The sum of £25,000 he stressed was 'trifling relatively to what might be entailed if serious discontent were to arise'. A promise of imminent help by Marshall would have 'great effect on future supply of carriers and may even prove indispensable'. Above all, Buxton warned: 'Compulsory recruitment would become ineffective and dangerous if natives lost heart or sulked. In absence of bulk of police, show of armed force in districts concerned is now impracticable, and we have to rely on loyalty and goodwill of natives if supply of carriers is to be maintained.' He called for the 'earliest possible' reply.⁷⁸

The Colonial Office immediately applied further exceptional pressure on both the Treasury and the War Office in order to secure acceptance of the scheme. Forwarding copies of both Buxton's and Wallace's correspondence, the Colonial Office again underlined the 'considerable difficulty' in maintaining the supply of carriers and also the danger of serious discontent arising if the proposed assistance could not be promised. The matter, the Under-Secretary of State stressed, was 'very urgent' as the loyalty of the Northern Rhodesian African population had been 'subjected to severe strain'.⁷⁹

The Colonial Office itself faced severe pressure, not only from the High Commissioner, but also from London Wall. In a private letter sent in July 1918, D. O. Malcolm threatened what was virtually blackmail in trying to get imperial validation of the scheme. He enclosed a private letter from Wallace to C. Birchenough, a fellow Director, on the critical recruitment situation. Wallace, for the first time, revealed that the increasing carrier death rate was largely responsible for the mounting discontent. The mortality rate, he asserted had 'increased badly lately' and had caused 'some anxiety, for it will affect seriously the objection of the natives to be called out'. Many carriers, particularly the Northern Rhodesian Ngoni-Chewa recruits attached to the Nyasaland force had 'died half-starved and sick on their way back'.⁸⁰ Malcolm called for urgent efforts to get 'other authorities to see reason' and concluded, adding menace to his despair, that 'if the facts become known in Parliament they would produce a very painful impression'.⁸¹

Political nemesis: Marshall's north-eastern and north-western tours of June to September 1918

As the Colonial Office pursued Treasury and War Office validation of the Company reward and compensation scheme with renewed urgency, Marshall's tour revealed the heavy political price being paid for the

renewed military pressures, following a brief lull in early 1918. The most striking aspect of this was signs of an imminent breakdown in the chain of recruitment as chiefs and headmen of even the normally most reliable recruiting areas spoke of major problems of control over their followers. At a Kasama *indaba*, for instance, attended by large numbers of Bemba chiefs, headmen and their followers, Marshall was given disturbing news of the escalating recruitment crisis. He was informed by the Chitimukulu himself: 'The people have today clapped assent when you said they should obey their headmen but [...] there are some who refuse and even abuse their headmen when ordered to engage for war work'. In reply, Marshall could only recommend an intensification of coercion, stressing that the objectors should be arrested, to be punished by the *boma*. The Bemba paramount reiterated however that, while the chiefs were 'perfectly loyal' and wished to help the government, some of the people were nevertheless 'disobedient'. When asked by Marshall if disobedience had increased, Mwamba, a leading Bemba chief, agreed, observing that even his messengers were abused and his orders were often disregarded.⁸² This dissent significantly applied to both personal tribute services as well as war work suggesting indigenous antipathy to war service was undermining overall chiefly authority.

At an Abercorn *indaba*, Marshall was forced to admit to the assembled Lungu, Mambwe and Bemba chiefs and headmen the recruiting difficulties earlier reported by their Bemba counterparts further south. He nevertheless stressed that it would still be necessary to call up a good many of the 1916 first-line carrier veterans for renewed service. The anxious border chiefs and headmen 'hoped every effort would be made to first engage those who had not yet been employed outside the territory'. This suggested that these veterans formed a discontented, if not potentially disruptive group amongst their followers. Indeed, immediately after this collective opinion had been expressed, it was notable that Penza, a Mambwe Chief, and Chitombala, a Bemba headman, jointly asked 'how they should act when men refused to engage and checked [manhandled] and abused the headmen and messengers'.⁸³

At a Kawambwa *indaba* held in the north-east district most devastatingly affected by the illegal labour exodus, the mainly northern Lunda chiefs and headmen admitted their inability to prevent the mass departures to the Congo. Kazembe, the Lunda paramount, admitted that many were, by then, permanently resident in the Katanga, while one of his headmen, Puta, supported by several others, observed that the people 'go there without passes, the headmen do their best to keep the men

but still they go'.⁸⁴ It demonstrated the continuing scale of the internal labour problem as late as July 1918.

Above all, the tour exhibited the extent to which Marshall's political credibility had been seriously undermined by the failure to secure official agreement on important incentives such as war subsidies to a wider class of headmen, increased carrier wage rates and bonuses, promises of post-war compensation and so on. At most of the *indabas* Marshall was unable to offer any tangible rewards to the many unofficial headmen or, in the case of border Chiefs and headmen, compensation for damage to villages and livestock losses. At Luwingu, for instance, Marshall mentioned the possibility of special subsidies 'to acknowledge the extra work the headmen had done' but was forced to admit that 'the matter was not quite settled'.⁸⁵ The tours were further marked by a total lack of offers of reward for the population as a whole and only an occasional promise of higher wages for war carriers.⁸⁶

Perhaps the most disturbing feature of the tours was the strength of resistance to war work, exhibited not just in the hard-pressed north-eastern districts, but also in the far north-west, with the concomitant, almost draconian, escalation in the use of coercion. It was a situation in which, in one area, even chiefs and headmen complained of excessive use of force by the *boma*, incidents of which undoubtedly undermined their authority as its principal agents. At a Solwezi *indaba*, a leading Kaonde Chief, Kapilimpanga, cryptically observed that 'some of the people have been beaten when they have not turned out for war work'. A divisional headman was more forthcoming. He raised with Marshall the punishment of war objectors arguing that 'any who had other work on hand should be let off for a period'.⁸⁷ It was a highly ominous situation for a weakly-controlled district, notorious as one of the pre-war trouble spots. The complaints prompted Marshall to request the district authorities to prepare a case list. This rare 'war punishment sheet' was a striking indication of the strength of resistance among mainly Kaonde villages, and the high level of coercion being resorted to during the closing months of the war. Recording punishments in only July and August 1918, the list nevertheless revealed one case of an entire village refusing a headman's call to war service in direct defiance of the *boma*, resulting in mass punishments for younger offenders of five to ten cuts of the cane. Those who had recently returned from carrier service received a lesser sentence of five cuts only. At another village a headman even volunteered to go on war transport, to replace one man who 'ran away from messengers recruiting'.⁸⁸

Pressures of war: the reform of *mitanda* policies and the move towards decentralisation

A further profound illustration of the enormous strain on the internal administration during the closing stages of the war was the decision taken to virtually abandon the long-held strict regulations against *mitanda* settlements⁸⁹ and thereby tacitly allow village decentralisation. The policy had not lacked critics before or even during the early stages of the war. In 1915, for instance, several district officials had criticised the policy on grounds which are strikingly similar to some contemporary criticisms of *ujamaa* villages in Tanzania. Artificially large villages encouraged crime and disorder; they constituted a health threat; they disrupted the village agricultural system by causing soil exhaustion and would thus, ironically, ultimately subvert the policy itself by encouraging garden cultivation at increasing distances.⁹⁰

It was the increasing wartime pressures after the Northey offensive, however, that provided decisive backing to such criticisms. The combined effect of military food and labour demands, the often related famine outbreaks and the acute wartime problems of game control inevitably resulted in widespread village dispersal, as starving villagers scattered for food in the exterior or contributed to increasing numbers in *citemene* areas. It was a movement, moreover, encouraged by the wartime decline of *boma* power making any preventative measures extremely difficult. In March 1918, for instance, a Chilubula missionary described a punitive drive against illegal *mitanda* by a local Native Commissioner, 'punctuated [...] by the destruction of mitanda found along the path'. The 'fiercely angry' official ordered: 'No more mitanda on the pain of severe punishment.' Illegal gardens were consequently burned and the transgressors sent to Kasama for summary punishment.⁹¹

It was a policy, however, that was unsustainable in face of the urgent wartime pressure to increase food production by means of larger and more numerous gardens, particularly in the hard-pressed *citemene* areas. Thus, only three weeks after ruthlessly suppressing illegal gardens, the same Kasama official, after being approached by a local headman who had stressed the need for more *citemene* gardens in order to boost war food production, was forced to accede and rescind his earlier policy.⁹² Official sanction of this volte-face on nearly three decades of centralisation was confirmed by the Visiting Commissioner during his 1918 tours of north-eastern villages. Thus, at one Mporokoso *indaba*, Marshall confirmed that 'in some districts the people have been granted temporary permission to live in mitanda partly because you have all done so well

in war work and partly to be more certain of securing food supplies'.⁹³ Aside from the obvious propaganda aspect of the first part of his address, it was clear that the war's economic demands had finally broken the back of the Administration's *mitanda* policy. Moreover, the government's attempt to regulate what was essentially a major retreat on its internal order policy only increased its problems. *Mitanda* relaxation was only granted on condition that people returned to their villages at weekends for tax and labour calls for example, and in order that chiefs and headmen were kept informed of their whereabouts.⁹⁴ It was a policy obviously frequently impossible to enforce and undoubtedly added to the rapidly growing problems of war labour recruitment so powerfully voiced at the 1918 meetings. Thus, local Kapatu missionaries observed in August 1918 how one company official desperately threatened the people of one village with the wholesale 'suppression of *mitanda* if they continued to neglect to come back to the village on Saturday and Sunday'.⁹⁵

With the tacit liberalisation of *mitanda* policies, the official *de jure* decision to abandon this long-held policy and to decentralise villages inexorably followed. In August 1918 Coxhead, the Secretary of Native Affairs, duly and formally announced its abandonment. Nevertheless decentralisation was not to be (officially) encouraged in wartime. Coxhead stressed: 'No change [...] should be contemplated until the demand for war workers entirely ceases'.⁹⁶ The move was nonetheless welcomed by Company officials stationed in the north-east war zone, especially those supervising *citemene* areas, although, as the Kasama District Commissioner recognised, the chaotic impact of the war had effectively pre-empted the policy change. He observed: 'As far as tree cutting goes I do not know that it makes any difference; they have their *mitanda* all over the country now.'⁹⁷

The move was universally welcomed by village chiefs and headmen. Decentralisation undoubtedly eased the intense political pressures of wartime Company policies which increasingly isolated them as food and labour exploiters. Population dispersal to smaller villages at least eased the physical strain on their authority. Indeed, the policy as a whole might be seen as indicative of tacit official recognition of their political limitations, particularly of the commitment to indirect rule, now so starkly exposed under the extraordinary pressures of these latter war years. As one official observed: 'The reasons for creating larger villages [...] and to give back to the chiefs their partially lost power over their people [...] have answered their purpose, and large villages are no longer necessary; the chiefs have long ago regained as much control over their people as they will ever have'.⁹⁸

The Colonial Office ban on compulsory war labour recruitment in Northern Rhodesia

By August 1918 the political battle over relief expenditure was approaching a decisive climax. In late July the Colonial Office had already been further pressed by the South African High Commissioner, Lord Buxton, for immediate action on the issue. Buxton warned of the potentially serious consequences of any delay, highlighting signs of an imminent African insurrection in Northern Rhodesia. To refuse aid, he telegraphed, was morally unjustifiable as 'hardship and loss' was 'due to the war and imperial military requirements'. It would produce an 'unsettling effect' which would be 'aggravated by further demands for carriers under compulsion'. This 'discontent might become serious if unassuaged by some tangible recognition of past loyalty'. Above all, Buxton confirmed the real crisis of white power and authority in the area and the danger of the rapid spread of any conflagration. 'It would be difficult', he asserted, 'with present resources in Northern Rhodesia, to suppress disturbances should they occur and example might prove infectious in other territories of Central Africa war zone.' Buxton ominously concluded: 'Having placed this warning on record I must leave the matter in your hands.'⁹⁹

With receipt of this dire warning the Colonial Secretary, Walter Long, made a last ditch attempt to break down War Office obduracy by means of a direct personal appeal to Lord Milner, the Secretary of War. Long bluntly outlined the gravity of Northern Rhodesia's internal political crisis, calling for immediate reconsideration of the issue. 'I am absolutely convinced', he warned, 'that if the Army Council persist in their refusal, we are running very grave risks – how serious that risk is I need not enlarge upon to you with your experience of South Africa.' The question, he stressed, 'was really one to be looked at on broad imperial grounds and not from any financial standpoint'.¹⁰⁰

After a protracted delay, Milner's reply, communicated via a War Office official, again refused to reconsider the issue on the grounds that the cost of the scheme was civil expenditure and the War Office 'had no power to authorise or press for the expenditure'. The Treasury had therefore been informed that the War Office did not consider the expenditure 'necessary for the prosecution of the war'.¹⁰¹

An incensed Colonial Office, now aware that there was to be no possibility of the Treasury sanctioning the expenditure without War Office approval, determined upon a drastic policy change. In order to obviate the risk of potential social unrest and exert a final pressure on the War Office, it was decided to implement a total ban on compulsory war

labour recruitment in Northern Rhodesia. As one official, C. T. Davis, angrily pointed out, since the case for financial assistance 'had been based largely on the fact that compulsion has been necessary to provide the adequate supply of carriers [...] it should follow, as a corollary to the War Office decision, that we should [...] tell the Company [...] that compulsion should no longer be applied'.¹⁰² The consensus on this point was unanimous, the Under-Secretary of State arguing that this radical solution would be 'a very fair test of the reality of War Office indifference'. Although predicting that the ban 'may result in few or no carriers being forthcoming', he firmly concluded that, 'we have no option'.¹⁰³

Accordingly, on 19 September, the Colonial Secretary officially notified the War Office that he proposed to ban compulsion.¹⁰⁴ With no subsequent change in the former's attitude, the Under-Secretary of State declared: 'We must now carry out our threat.'¹⁰⁵ On 26 September the War Office was peremptorily informed and given confirmation of the implementation of the ban on compulsory recruitment of war labour within Northern Rhodesia.¹⁰⁶ The letter enclosed a copy of a fateful telegram to Buxton, confirming to him the execution of this policy. The telegram highlighted the intransigent attitude of the Army Council and, most importantly, the grave risk of widespread social unrest in Northern Rhodesia. Buxton was therefore instructed that, in order to avoid existing conditions being 'aggravated by further demands for carriers under compulsion or pressure akin to compulsion', he should 'issue directions to the local authorities [...] making it clear that all future recruitment of native carriers should be on a purely voluntary basis'.¹⁰⁷ The decision represented an unprecedented political intervention in wartime operations and underlined both the gravity and reality of the perceived ground-level control crisis within Northern Rhodesia. Militarily, in view of the virtual total absence of volunteers, the move effectively paralysed Northey's carrier/logistical support from the territory and also from many key bases further south.¹⁰⁸ Above all, within five weeks, both the ban and the relief expenditure controversy were to achieve a significance far beyond the wildest imagination of either the Colonial or War Offices as German forces unexpectedly and devastatingly launched a major incursion into Northern Rhodesian territory.

The German invasion of Northern Rhodesia: military debacle and the collapse of control on the north-east plateau

On 10 October 1918, advance parties of the over 2,000-strong German forces led by the redoubtable von Lettow-Vorbeck entered the Northern

Rhodesian border post at Fife, after overrunning the major British carrier and food supply base at Mbozi. The invasion was a devastating blow to the totally unprepared local military and civil authorities. In just a few days the protective political buffer zone extending deep into German East Africa and so painstakingly constructed during the post-Northey offensive period had collapsed in ruins.¹⁰⁹ Inside Northern Rhodesia only a few Police detachments remained to oppose the rapid German advance. The few hundred pursuing and dispersed KAR/NRP units were too weak to intervene. Wallace's and Buxton's earlier dire warnings of the profound power vacuum within the Territory had become a grim reality; the imperial nightmare had begun. By 9 November German forces had reached the outskirts of Kasama; they now controlled the principal carrier and food base for the whole of the north-east Plateau.

During these critical days two major obstacles, one political and one medical, combined to paralyse any prospect of rapid British reinforcements from the South. The German advance had coincided with the rapid spread of the Spanish influenza pandemic from Southern Rhodesia, northwards across the Zambezi and into Northern Rhodesia. By 5 November the virus had struck Broken Hill, another key carrier supply base. On that day Brigadier General Northey, vainly pursuing von Lettow's forces was warned by telegraph of the serious military crisis 'with no troops available owing to influenza to assist you should he come south from Kasama'.¹¹⁰ On 6 November the Administrator himself confirmed that Broken Hill was 'seething with influenza' and that carriers needed to transport troops from the nearest railhead at Kashitu were not available. The local District Commissioner later recalled the devastating impact of influenza upon the packed carrier contingents assembled at his Broken Hill depot. The disease had been 'rampant' with 'natives falling dead by the roadside. The deaths were so numerous that we had to bury them in one long trench.' All carriers on the Ndola route had also been sent home on account of influenza. Due to their very small numbers the previously demobilised and scattered all-white defence units of the Northern Rhodesia Rifles could also 'not be of much assistance'.¹¹¹

The equally totally unforeseen problem of the influenza pandemic was complemented by the recent implementation of the ban on compulsory carrier recruitment.¹¹² Thus, a proposal by Defence Headquarters in Salisbury, Southern Rhodesia, to despatch a 1,000-strong battalion of troops by rail to Broken Hill to link up with carrier transport there, was vetoed by the Northern Rhodesian Administrator, Wallace. He confirmed that, 'in view of influenza and of the High Commissioner's

instructions that compulsion is not to be used, we could not possibly arrange for any considerable number of carriers at present'.¹¹³ The Colonial Office ban had thus achieved a far more serious impact upon the conduct of War Office operations than could ever have been envisaged at the time of its implementation six weeks earlier, when the strategic situation had been significantly less critical. Indeed, such was the security crisis that Buxton felt compelled to intervene two days later, offering to break the political impasse by 'any means in my power'.¹¹⁴ The wording intimated a willingness to revoke the ban. It was a belated gesture. As Wallace confirmed, the ban had caused the 'greatest difficulty' in recent carrier recruitment, there predictably having been no volunteers, but he also observed that, by then, even compulsory recruitment would be irrelevant in view of the urgency of demand. 'Carriers free from influenza might be obtained by use of compulsion', he affirmed, 'but would not be here under eight weeks'.¹¹⁵

By 12 November von Lettow's forces had reached the Chambezi rubber factory and the Livingstone authorities braced themselves for a further rapid advance southwards to Broken Hill via Mpika, Serenje and Mkushi, or perhaps, even worse, a strike westwards to the copper mining conglomerates of Katanga, an area of vital importance to Allied wartime mineral supplies. In the event, the day was fortuitously saved by the momentous news of the signing of the 11 November Armistice in Europe, only belatedly communicated to German commander von Lettow-Vorbeck on 13 November 1918.

The military struggle had ended but it was the internal political collapse which looked as if it might be only just beginning. The image of British supremacy, of the power of protection, imperfectly maintained during the earlier border war of 1914–16,¹¹⁶ and so heavily propagandised throughout the war years, had visibly crumbled in the wake of the German invasion. In the space of barely two weeks, von Lettow had penetrated nearly 100 miles into British territory, ransacked and burned two government *bomas*, and looted three mission stations, as well as pillaging numerous African villages and livestock en route.¹¹⁷

On the border, the initial German thrust had sparked off chaotic scenes as German *ruga-ruga*, consisting largely of 'Mbozi spearmen' conducted ruthless attacks upon unprotected Northern Rhodesian food convoys between Mbozi and Fife.¹¹⁸ Wounded carriers limped into Fife for days afterwards. The resulting panic and political turbulence along the frontier resulted in orders to NRP and KAR contingents pursuing von Lettow, to 'deal drastically with revolting natives'.¹¹⁹ Around Fife, just before its looting and burning, surrounding Iwa and Inamwanga villages

had again been evacuated south, barely two years after returning from previous evacuations during the border war.¹²⁰ The immediate implications for the credibility of British power and prestige were hinted at by one official, who spoke darkly of 'a feeling akin to disgust in the native mind that is inclined to make some half-hearted'.¹²¹ Worse was to come. As far south as the Chambezi depot, the Plateau tribes were treated to the dangerously edifying spectacle of the visible collapse of British power as *boma* officials hurriedly evacuated Fife and Kasama. One KAR veteran, fighting in the area, recalled how 'Bwana Croad [...] the District Commissioner himself ran away from the boma, then only one European was left who helped the army to fight'.¹²² Not only Fife and Kasama but several other *bomas* as far west as Kawambwa and as far south as Serenje, considered vulnerable to German attack, were earlier evacuated or prepared for evacuation, giving the impression of the collapse of British power over a far wider area. At Abercorn, although bypassed by the German units, news of the invasion nevertheless had a 'most disquieting effect' on local Lungu and Mambwe villages. The mere fact of 'having to evacuate stores gave an exaggerated idea of danger, which spread rapidly'.¹²³ Many of the mission stations on the Plateau were also abandoned, or prepared for evacuation, underlining the profound loss of white prestige. Scenes of panic were vividly described by local missionaries, matched by mass desertion of carriers along the supply routes.¹²⁴

It was the immediate vicinity of Kasama, however, that experienced the most serious breakdown of order. News of the German advance had resulted in mass desertion of carriers and consequent undermining of evacuation plans, a phenomenon earlier experienced at Fife. A fateful decision to throw the Kasama stores 'open to the Natives'¹²⁵ to deny materiel and provisions to the approaching enemy units undoubtedly fuelled the resulting widespread and uncontrolled lawlessness. Von Lettow-Vorbeck himself recalled that the African Lakes Company 'had given written instructions for the destruction of its depots by the natives',¹²⁶ but the move was undoubtedly initiated by local officials, who failed to foresee the consequences for colonial control over a far wider area.¹²⁷ Accordingly, as German forces entered Kasama, it was observed that the local Bemba 'came in large numbers to loot' and 'buildings and their contents' had been 'largely destroyed by looting natives'.¹²⁸ Ironically, only the intervention of a German detachment under a Lieutenant Spangenberg rescued the District Commissioner's house, the last symbol of British authority, from destruction.¹²⁹ The District Commissioner, H. C. Croad, later recalled the chaotic scenes in the

heartland of one of the most prolific carrier recruitment areas: 'There is only one thing to express the state of the Awemba and that is that they had the wind thoroughly up them as soon as they saw things were disorganised. They started their old habits of thieving and no load or house was safe from them.' Croad stressed the sense of betrayal felt by both chiefs and people. They had 'done excellent work in finding porters throughout the war', he asserted, 'and I agree with the chiefs that it is quite disgraceful that they should have been left quite unprotected in the way they were. Looking at matters from this end, it looks much as if the Military Authorities had intended von Lettow to come down through Northern Rhodesia.' He concluded: 'It will take a long time to get these natives in order again and for them to regain confidence in the Administration.'¹³⁰

The disorder was by no means confined to the immediate vicinity of Kasama. At nearby Chilubula Mission, wild, lawless scenes, considered unprecedented since the advent of colonial rule, were vividly described. On the night of 7 November 'crowds of people' passed by, encumbered 'with whole loads of material, soap etc., some armchairs, chairs, objects of all kinds [...] the result, they say, of plundering the stores of Kasama'. The looters themselves were attacked en route by the local mission villagers, who wanted their 'share of the booty' and who 'hadn't had the luck to have been at Kasama'. The missionary concluded: 'The spirit of former days that awakens to pillage, isn't a role to be acted.'¹³¹

At Ipusukilo Mission, on the western extremity of Bembaland, the missionaries were unable to evacuate their loads after hearing that the roads were 'no longer safe' and were 'infested with thieves who attack the carriers, rob them and [...] beat them up when they try to put up some resistance'. Since the sacking of Kasama it was observed, 'several of these acts of robbery were recorded in the village as well as on the musebo [...] like the Boche their maxim is: "In time of war anything goes!"'¹³²

To the south of Kasama, at Chilonga Mission near Mpika, missionaries similarly witnessed the disorders following the Kasama disturbances. A missionary observed: 'Our negroes have returned to their wars of former times which were only an organised pillage.' One mission villager was accordingly thrashed for 'trying to pillage one of the pilferers of material'.¹³³ The involvement of war carriers from the abandoned water carrier depot at Chiwutuwutu was perhaps indicative of a sense of grievance underlining some of this disorderly behaviour. Thus the Chilonga missionaries, 'having learned that our people of Chilonga, like all their companions of forced labour, have plundered', implored

the local Native Commissioner 'to send a messenger who can help us to recover the pillaged items'.¹³⁴ Missionaries themselves were by no means immune to the pillage. The shocked Chilubula missionaries, returning to their evacuated mission, found objects had been stolen not only by passing Germans, but by their own local villagers.¹³⁵

More serious for the colonial authorities was the problem of *askari* deserters who, unlike their carrier counterparts, were armed with rifles. That significant numbers of these regular black troops should desert was, perhaps, indicative of the damage done to British prestige by the initial success of invading German forces. Thus at Milima, six miles from Kasama, an *askari* machine gun unit from either the NRP or KAR led by Major E. B. B. Hawkins deserted en masse and was found 'scattered along the road' having 'thrown away the machine gun', some of them crossing the Lukulu River and 'not coming back for several days'.¹³⁶ Along the Kasama to Chambesi road, the mainly NRP *askari* were observed to be in a mutinous state, expressing feelings of betrayal, 'grousing a good deal about not having proper guns and equipment' and 'complaining of lack of food'.¹³⁷ The District Commissioner considered that had the Germans advanced down the road, 'all except a few would have bolted. They made no effort to keep any formation and I had to tell them several times to keep a rear-guard out.'¹³⁸ At Chambesi rubber factory, even during the last hours of fighting, *askari* and *tenga-tenga* alike deserted and 'a good deal of looting' took place.¹³⁹ Looted items were discovered all along the road back to Kasama. In the midst of chaos at least one lone African hero emerged. Twenty years later, in 1938, retired District Commissioner, Frank Melland, recorded how his District Messenger and friend, Kashimoto, had bravely tried to restore order after escorting his wife to her home village near Chambesi, following an astonishing journey by foot of 'nearly a thousand miles'. He recalled:

One day an excited rabble of men, women and children rushed into the village. Kashimoto had no authority there, he wore no uniform, and didn't belong to the place but it was he who took command of the situation and asked the rabble what they were running away from. 'Wa Jeremani' (the Germans) they shrieked. 'The Germans have arrived at the Rubber Factory.' (That was where these Africans worked). Kashimoto – a [...] man in a shirt and loin cloth – looked at them and then unhesitatingly, he called out: 'We English can't run away from the Germans.' And he led them back, all unarmed, just as he was, to face von Lettow's veteran army. Before the Germans

got there, news of the Armistice had arrived and von Lettow had surrendered.¹⁴⁰

There is evidence to suggest that some *askari* deserters played a prominent part in fermenting disorder in rural areas. At one village, near Chilubula, an itinerating White Father encountered three NRP deserters who told him 'stories of brigands to explain their flight', but, he observed, 'they contradicted each other every moment. The greater burden of the affair is that they spread terror in the village.'¹⁴¹ In view of their possession of modern arms these deserters presented a serious menace to the authorities and their capture and disarming was an obvious urgent priority in the immediate aftermath of the German surrender. Thus, near Chilubula, it was observed the day after fighting ceased that the local Native Commissioner had 'stopped [...] a good number of soldiers in flight' and had 'taken them as prisoners'.¹⁴² Their rifles were swiftly confiscated.¹⁴³

Disorder continued well into the post-Armistice period and extended across the Plateau. From Luwingu *boma* it was reported that the German invasion and the 'throwing open of the Kasama stores' had 'caused a veritable upheaval, especially among the Eastern villages and, for some days, the people to a great extent ran amok, and [...] went back to the pre-administration days of lawlessness. Every day', the Native Commissioner reported, 'labour was given up and robbery and burglary were frequent.' In one instance, a caravan of men with ten loads of store goods was 'set upon' by local villagers who stole all the loads. More significantly, even government convoys were attacked. The evacuated loads from Luwingu *boma* were thus themselves intercepted, all being 'broken open and their contents rifled'. The stolen haul symbolically included 400 tax receipts.¹⁴⁴ Similarly, at Nsumbu Island *boma*, it was reported that crime had reached peak level during this period.¹⁴⁵

The Secretary of the Livingstone Administration thus described the two weeks leading up to the Armistice as 'the most trying experience Northern Rhodesia has known'.¹⁴⁶ The political crisis was, however, by no means resolved. During the next three months the Livingstone authorities were confronted by the rapid rise of a war-inspired intrinsically non-violent but, in many ways, more potent anti-colonial movement, which openly challenged the very foundations of colonial order in Northern Rhodesia.

8

Reconquest and Reconstruction

The wartime rise of the Watchtower Movement: the nature of the challenge to colonial authority

In November 1918 a war-weary Livingstone executive received a flood of alarmist reports from Tanganyika District officials concerning the rapid mushrooming of a branch of the Watchtower movement, a movement which, in neighbouring Nyasaland, had already been identified as subversive to colonial authority.¹ Before analysing its causes, the close links between its rise to prominence and the wartime disruption of black society and the colonial system as a whole, it is necessary to isolate both the form and nature of its challenge to colonial authority. Like the short-lived Chilembwe rebellion three years earlier, Watchtower must be seen as a significant break from the past. It was not a 'primary' or traditionally-based resistance. Unlike the Ngoni resistance war of 1897–8 it was led, in the words of distinguished historian, Professor George Shepperson, 'not by traditional chiefs [...] but by men with a reputation for their success in following European ways who were able to lay equal claim to support from people of all tribes'.² The war, by its excessive politico-economic demands, had exposed the political emasculation of tribal organisations of even once-powerful tribal polities such as the Bemba;³ many traditional leaders had been identified with the colonial system as never before, while their unprotected followers had been cruelly sacrificed to the exceptional and brutal demands of an imperial war. In this sense, Company fears of a second 'Makombe' had been misplaced; those of the nefarious activities of an expanding mission-educated elite, even of a second 'Chilembwe', were well-founded.

Watchtower seized on and filled the vacuum in authority left by a largely discredited traditional elite with its bitter rejection of white

colonial authority, often so brutally repressive in wartime (their propaganda slogan for *boma* significantly being 'that which makes itself heavy and important'⁴) and its hated collaborators (*boma* messengers being portrayed as 'drops of rain falling down from trees' or 'stupid men of no importance'⁵). Despite the practical unreality of its apocalyptic vision in which, for instance, the end of the world was predicted for 13 December 1918, Watchtower presented the only credible outlet for wartime grievances against the ruling white authority,⁶ grievances no longer adequately satisfied by an increasingly redundant tribal authority. In this sense it must be seen as a political movement, albeit a naive or embryonic one that skilfully deployed religious slogans to justify primitive hopes or aims – the ending of a white colonial state and its replacement by an egalitarian order run by Africans for Africans. In the words of one colonial official: 'Their ideal was a theocracy with no executive authority. Prayer was to be the remedy for sin and presumably for crime also. The logical outcome of this would be a policy of "Africa for the Africans" [...] the movement was antagonistic to the white man'.⁷

War and Watchtower: colonial military exploitation as a catalyst to Watchtower expansion

Any analysis of the genesis of the Watchtower movement in Northern Rhodesia in 1917 and 1918 must further investigate the close links between the rise of the movement and wartime oppression and consequent social dislocation.⁸ Indeed, Watchtower first significantly achieved prominence when two of its principal propagators, Hanok Sindano and Shadrach Kanjele, clashed with Tanganyika District officials over the extremely sensitive issue of military recruitment. In September 1918, both were sentenced to three months imprisonment for refusing to serve as military porters and inciting others to do likewise, 'it being plainly shown they had no reasonable excuse – that offered being we cannot serve two masters – God and Man'.⁹

The initial arrival of six Watchtower preachers in the north-east border districts in late 1917 coincided with a period of acute social distress as a direct result of unrelenting war demands. In early 1917 one female missionary located in the border war zone provided a rare African oral record of the collective sense of injustice and disillusionment expressed by Lungu and Mambwe women attending her classes:

White men take our land, make us pay taxes and tell us to live at peace. Then they fight among themselves and for safety we are forced

to leave [...] and go to live where there is little food. Then they take away our men and force them to carry food etc. for their soldiers. Some of our girls run after the soldiers and never come back. We [...] hoe other patches of ground but before the seeds grow we are returned to our own villages and [...] find the houses broken down and the gardens overgrown. Our husbands return but are quickly sent out again and we are left with great hunger and no food.¹⁰

On this seething seedbed of discontent, Watchtower, promising a new world without white oppression, could not fail to bear fruit. Not surprisingly the areas and peoples expressing most fervent support were the Mambwe, Inamwanga, Iwa and Lungu – border peoples suffering maximum socio-economic disruption. Moreover, with specifically largely unprotected Iwa villages bearing the brunt not only of German-led *ruga-ruga* cross-border raids during 1914–16, but also of the main German column's invasion in October–November 1918, it was, perhaps, inevitable that they should provide the epicentre of support for the Movement's activities.

The full extent of colonial oppression in these border areas was only fully revealed after the war's termination. In his post-war analysis of Watchtower, Chief Justice Macdonell observed: 'All through the war this unfortunate division was being traversed by the Nymys and Pistols [criminal elements] of the fighting force, beyond the meanest of mean whites, who would now, could they but have their just deserts, be serving long terms for assault, robbery and rape.'¹¹ Though such excesses were predictably refuted by an angry Administrator, district correspondence confirmed their occurrence.¹² From Kasama it was admitted that, 'certain strictures' had been made on border forces which included 'disapproval of the way boys had been sent [...] to buy up livestock [...] in the Tanganyika District'. The official observed that 'War would always [...] collect the riffraff' and the border campaign had created 'a very bad effect on the natives; our prestige has certainly gone down'.¹³

The Tanganyika District Commissioner was more forthcoming. Instances were cited when Fife villagers would 'bolt at the sight of a white man'. Inability to prevent German cross-border raids had 'probably meant a loss of prestige'. Cases of offences by European troops included some 'which might have come under the category of rape'. Regarding robbery and assault, 'some' troops had 'forced the sale of fowls and so forth or even taken them'. Wartime road workers had been mistreated. The 1917 Rinderpest Commission, run by local white settlers, had grossly exceeded its authority, even 'tying up a headman because he could not provide carriers'.¹⁴

Clearly many of these excesses stemmed directly from the severe disruption, even paralysis, of white civil authority during the later years of the war, although the Administration, as we have seen, was itself at times to blame. It was again Fife sub-district, the incubus of Watchtower activity, which had suffered disproportionately vis-à-vis its two sister border districts. Fife had barely been toured in four years.¹⁵ For long periods it was run by a single official,¹⁶ and in the last year of the war there is no record of any district travel.¹⁷ Consequently, census and tax collection, vital symbols of white authority, had virtually ceased; by 1918 the area faced massive tax arrears.¹⁸ (See Table 8.1). Astonishingly, for one momentous period, the division had even been run by 'supply men, not so well liked or respected' who were 'inclined to take matters [...] into their own hands' having been 'reprimanded several times' for 'beating natives [...] for shortages by carriers'.¹⁹ Injustice was compounded by revelations that alleged thefts were committed by these same European suppliers at Abercorn. At times, control of the division had lapsed into the hands of poor-quality *boma* auxiliaries, 'new and inferior men' who replaced experienced messengers and warders drafted into the military.²⁰ The Fife division therefore encapsulated all the worst shortcomings of wartime Administrative control; the area was consequently a 'blackspot' for war carrier recruitment.²¹

Administrative paralysis was Watchtower's opportunity. As late as February 1918, a police tour report commented not on the antipathy of Fife villages to white authority, but their ignorance of it! The police commander considered it 'phenomenal' that 'a district administered for many years should lack that discipline that one should expect of it'. He had seen 'less civilised natives in our territory bordering on Portuguese West Africa but [...] never [...] the same lack of recognition of a white man, not to mention an official'.²²

It represented a profound void in white authority, underlined by the calamitous German invasion of Fife division in November 1918 (see Map 8.1). From the ashes of Fife *boma* arose a rejuvenated 'Watchtower phoenix'. Many officials agreed that the event was a decisive boost to the Movement.²³ The invasion seemed to confirm the Watchtower millenarian teachings of the ending of an old world dominated by the white man and the ushering in of a new one, in which the slogan 'Africa for the Africans' could be realised *in toto*. In Chief Justice Macdonell's words:

In a day all [...] disappeared. The natives saw the enemy moving unopposed through the country, looting and burning, while the British officials fled. Many [...] thought the end of our rule had

man deserves to die for it was the white man who started the war.²⁷ Similar memories of traumatic wartime experiences, probably referring to forced carrier service in German East Africa, were reflected in the 'hut of defiance' incident when Watchtower supporters angrily shouted: 'We will never be taken to another country. We will be killed in our own country.'²⁸ The predominance of young able-bodied males was similarly noted at the Terefyā village confrontation of 26 January 1919.²⁹

Moreover, it was a movement controlled largely by a mission-educated elite discontented and disillusioned by wartime experience with the existing colonial order. Overtly, the Movement eschewed notions of formal leadership but the high social status and education of renegade mission teachers and monitors ensured they played prominent roles as both spokesmen and de facto leaders. Thus, at Chunga, one ex-mission teacher asserted: 'We are all brethren. They can speak if they like but now I speak for them.'³⁰ While many preachers and teachers had prospered within the traditional mission framework, others had been deeply alienated by wartime oppression. Scores had been forcibly inducted into the carrier corps, a recruitment in which the missions had openly collaborated with the *boma*. Disillusionment with both *boma* and mission was prevalent in wartime. At Kawimbe it was noted that teachers and monitors had 'felt it keenly, as they said the quarrel was not theirs but between the Europeans and yet they had to suffer for it'.³¹ At Chunga the bitterness and acute sense of betrayal clearly emerged. Labon (an ex-Livingstonia teacher) of Terefyā village (the virtual Watchtower headquarters) spoke on behalf of the Watchtower group:

The words he learnt at Mission School were brought by the White man. He was taught stop fighting, committing adultery and drinking beer and thought such teaching good [...] we learnt to teach others [...] we taught the children and beat them to make them learn. Now Watchtower teaching tells us war is bad, adultery bad, beating children bad.³²

The heavy involvement of ex-Livingstonia mission teachers was particularly striking. Of all the Plateau missions, the Livingstonia missions at Mwenzo and, to a lesser extent at Lubwa, had been the most disrupted by the war. An unusually high proportion of teachers had been called up for war work and European missionaries had been absent for unprecedentedly long periods. Despite an attempted reorganisation of the mission by the influential Dr Chisholm in February 1916, it was

observed by March 1917 that most of the teachers had either 'scattered to German East Africa and the South', or had 'become polygamists'.³³ During much of 1917 and 1918, with the absence of Chisholm on active service, Mwenzo was run by a small caucus of black evangelists. It presented an unrivalled opportunity for independent thought and action.³⁴

Indeed, the extent to which Watchtower doctrines had permeated the unsupervised Mwenzo Mission was strikingly revealed in late 1918. An unsigned note, deposited with the Fife authorities, noted that after eighteen years of schools there were 'very few [...] who do not declare themselves as teachers or scholars. We have given them the power to read.' The author (possibly Chisholm), reported that dozens of Watchtower magazines had been sent to literate 'boys'. It was this magazine and 'the teaching given down south' that was the 'source of the present disturbing doctrines'. Noting the accusation by Watchtower leaders that the Mission had 'hidden' truths from them, the author protested: 'We accept the responsibility of having given the education but not of the Watchtower Church or the disturbances arising there from.'³⁵

The prominent role of ex-mission teachers in the Movement confirmed the earlier wartime Administrative fears of mission-educated elites as subversive to colonial order. Thus, in his report on Watchtower, C. R. B. Draper observed that the 'most difficult to deal with' were the 'young men, erstwhile mission teachers, monitors and pupils'. He was 'convinced' that it was, above all the 'more educated Mission teacher class who are mainly responsible' and who had 'to be dealt with' as 'a crowd follow their method'.³⁶

Wartime disruption of colonial authority: the persecution and radicalisation of Watchtower, November–December 1918.

Despite the ideological incompatibility of much of Watchtower doctrine or beliefs with major tenets of colonial authority, the movement nevertheless pursued its aims with almost complete passivity during the period up to and including the German invasion. The only recorded incident, and it was scarcely violent, was the unresisted arrest of two leaders for interference with military recruitment in September 1918. Indeed, the transformation of the movement from one of pacifism before the invasion,³⁷ to that of violent agitation after it, must be seen substantially in terms of an over-reaction by

the colonial authorities themselves. The calibre of authoritative control in the three main Watchtower-affected districts of Fife, Chinsali and Abercorn had certainly been severely undermined by the strain and disruption of over four years of war. C. R. B. Draper, the Acting District Commissioner based at Abercorn and the chief Administrative antagonist of Watchtower, had been forced early into responsibility for Tanganyika District by the sudden transfer of Chesnaye and several other experienced officials into the occupied buffer zone of German East Africa in June 1916.³⁸ His colleague, P. M. W. Williams, was merely an Assistant Native Commissioner; he had been subjected to severe strain for long periods of the war as the lone official at Fife *boma*.³⁹ C. Dewhurst, stationed in the other sub-district, Chinsali, had similarly been grossly overburdened supervising exceptional military food and labour demands.

It was, perhaps, understandable therefore that during the chaos of the German invasion and the post-invasion period, a series of misjudgements and misperceptions were made and, indeed, admitted to by these Company officials. The first of these misjudgements almost certainly occurred during the confusion accompanying the evacuation of Fife. Following urgent representations from local chiefs, the inexperienced Williams hurriedly gave the Iwa paramount, Kafwimbi, *carte blanche* police powers to suppress the sudden surge of Watchtower activity in his division.⁴⁰ Kafwimbe was 'told to act to stop the preaching etc. and, if necessary, chase the leaders away'.⁴¹ As earlier in wartime, the move only encouraged naked and brutal suppression. When Kafwimbe's predictably extreme attempts to crush the movement resulted in reciprocal personal attacks, notably that he was 'a woman with child', he 'got mad, starting to beat the Watchtower adherents in his country and going to the lengths of taking away articles of clothing etc'.⁴² The ferocity of Kafwimbe's crackdown, and that of other chiefs and headmen, was confirmed at the later Chunga *indaba* where Draper was himself shown *chikoti* cuts on the backs of some Watchtower followers and the vengeful Watchtower group as a whole tried to attack assembled chiefs and headmen.⁴³ With the benefit of hindsight Draper criticised both himself and his subordinate, Williams, for handing over such wide unsupervised powers to the chiefs. The situation, he confessed, had been 'made worse in the early stages by abortive attempts by some of the chiefs to stop it'. His own orders to Abercorn chiefs and headmen 'to chase such people away and, if necessary [...] apply light chastisement' had also, he agreed, been mistaken. The matter, he conceded, would have been 'far better settled by the Government than its own direct officers'.⁴⁴

It was not only chiefs and headmen, however, who pursued a violently antagonistic course against Watchtower supporters. Some missionaries, presumably like traditional elites, perceiving them as a deadly threat to their authority, also sustained a vitriolic campaign against Watchtower. They often proved to be more alarmist than the *boma*.⁴⁵ The Chilibula White Fathers, for instance, exaggerated its immediate threat describing it as a 'repetition of the movement organised at Blantyre by John Chilembwe'.⁴⁶ At an earlier meeting of missionaries held in September 1918, the movement had even been castigated as 'related to those of the Bolsheviks'.⁴⁷ More specifically and provocatively, during the chaotic invasion period there is evidence that some missionaries took the law into their own hands. At Terefyia village in early November, for example, one White Father named Tanguy had attempted to violently suppress a Watchtower gathering, even firing his gun to restore order. This provoked one hysterical follower to cry out 'that a gun had killed him'. With the help of two *boma* messengers Tanguy detained one adherent and only released him after a beating with a *chikoti*.⁴⁸

Such violent persecution by both chiefs and missionaries was soon compounded by further government overreaction. In December, Dewhurst was reprimanded by the Livingstone legal authorities for misusing a 'reasonable order' intended to 'stop irresponsible teaching and preaching' after one confrontational *indaba* in Chinsali district. Dewhurst's deep resentment over this official rebuke even led him to threaten to resign several months later.⁴⁹

It was the Chunga *indaba* of 30 December 1918, however, a meeting attended by several hundred Watchtower supporters as well as many Fife district chiefs and headmen, which represented the climax of over two months of misperception, misjudgement and, in some cases outright persecution, by local Company officials. Draper's strategy during this major confrontation between Watchtower and the colonial state is worth detailed analysis, particularly as it was subsequently severely criticised by Chief Justice Macdonell, a leading member of the Livingstone Legal Department.

During the opening stages of this *indaba*, for instance, as Watchtower adherents noisily arrived, Draper had made a futile attempt to evict them using his *boma* messengers. This had resulted in brief physical conflict as well as a faction fight between chiefs, headmen and Watchtower supporters.⁵⁰ Macdonell subsequently identified this as a major error since, 'the first action of violence' came 'from his side'. It was, he asserted, a panic reaction by an inexperienced official. 'I do not know

how a really good Native Commissioner – Tagart, either Hall, Stokes or Lyons would have dealt with this difficulty but he [they] would not have done this.⁵¹ Secondly, despite this initial provocation by Draper, Macdonell noted how the Watchtower protestations that they were ‘peaceable and annoy no-one’ continued to be rejected by an uncompromising Draper. His demand to speak to a leader was seen as unnecessary and a ‘false move’. Similarly, Draper’s failure to justify his demand that ‘teaching must stop’, whilst simultaneously asking if they were prepared to stop, was criticised by Macdonell as having confused the issue and invited the resulting negative response.⁵² Finally, he criticised Draper’s openly biased support of the chiefs and headmen, as Draper repeated their accusations that Watchtower had caused lack of rain and brought the disease (influenza). This had finally provoked the Watchtower contingent into ‘uproar’ and open defiance of Draper’s renewed demand of them ‘not [...] to teach and preach’. Macdonell contended that Draper should have explained instead that the order not to shout and sing was ‘wrong by their law as well as ours’.⁵³ In the event, the meeting broke up in disorder and confusion with the departure of an unsubdued and obviously inflamed Watchtower group.

Draper’s clumsy handling of the situation displaying, in the words of Macdonell, ‘a certain want of tact and skill’ had thus fatally inflamed the movement.⁵⁴ A golden opportunity to compromise with, or even disperse Watchtower had clearly been missed. The fruits of the political debacle at Chunga were clearly seen in the far more extreme behaviour of the movement during January 1919. At the Mwika village disturbances of 14 January, for instance, the Government was openly defied. In his fruitless attempt to re-arrest Watchtower prisoners, liberated on their way to Kasama prison, Draper faced a ‘howling, violent and riotous mob’.⁵⁵ Indeed the Mwika incident was highly significant, not only because *boma* messengers had been assaulted (as they had been earlier at Chunga) but because the District Commissioner himself was physically restrained after lightly striking one Watchtower follower.⁵⁶ It signified the extent to which the ‘majesty’ of the *boma* had been dissipated; at Mwika the ‘bullet-proof waistcoat of [...] white skin’ had been worn dangerously thin.⁵⁷ Defiant shouts such as ‘If you come back bring a maxim gun [...] Talk will not move us’ underlined the crisis now confronting white authority.⁵⁸

The domino effect of events at Chunga and Mwika soon became apparent as the Mwika escapees returned in ‘a mad and defiant state’ to local Chinsali villages.⁵⁹ Three weeks after Chunga, Draper himself again admitted that his ‘failure to so far suppress the movement

had [...] greatly increased the difficulties of the Native Commissioner at Chinsali'.⁶⁰ Dewhurst's own attempts to re-arrest the Mwika group resulted in a similar futile *mêlée*, with ominous defiant shouts recorded claiming that 'Draper was beaten at Mwika and was [...] now dead at Mwenzo'.⁶¹ Dewhurst thus confirmed that the Watchtower movement had 'changed fundamentally from passive resistance to active resistance' and this change was 'directly due' to 'recent events in Fife'.⁶²

Reconquest: the case for armed intervention and the suppression of Watchtower

The Chunga debacle, combined with the subsequently violent events occurring in both Fife and Chinsali sub-districts during the first half of January 1919, finally spurred the Livingstone authorities into action. Immediate armed intervention, however, with all its costly ramifications, had been dictated not solely by the obvious loss of control by several local *bomas* but also by other disturbing reports of the wider impact of Watchtower doctrine.

By January 1919, for instance, the Livingstone executive had received further alarming reports of Watchtower's expansion not only amongst the more vulnerable and politically fragmented border tribes, but of a major, albeit brief penetration into the heartland of the more powerful centralised Bemba polity. A Chinsali quarterly report ominously confirmed how Watchtower ideas had 'appealed to the Awemba natives' during the immediate post-war period. The Mwaruli section, 'the centre of tribal superstition and spirit worship', dwelling-place of the High Priest and burial place of Bemba chiefs, had at one momentous point been totally infiltrated by Watchtower. 'The village headmen', it stated, 'together with their entire villages and the officiating priests were, with few exceptions, converted and baptised.' The reporting official stressed its 'serious' nature and emphasised 'the effect it had on the rest of the tribe'.⁶³ The striking impact of Watchtower propaganda in this area was, perhaps, predictable in view of the dramatic and deleterious blow delivered to British prestige by the successful German invasion, which included, to the apparent consternation and anger of Bemba chiefs, a rapacious penetration of the Bemba heartland.⁶⁴ Although it is true, as one observer has pointed out,⁶⁵ that leading Bemba chiefs, including the Chitimukulu himself, had strongly disowned Watchtower prisoners at the 1919 Kasama trials several months later, this undoubtedly reflected their appreciation of the full restoration of British power, so

ably demonstrated by the crushing of Watchtower and other post-war disorders.⁶⁶

In January 1919, therefore, fears of serious unrest amongst the Bemba and perhaps amongst tribal groups even further south, constituted an important consideration in the decision to suppress Watchtower by force of arms. Indeed, two months later, reports from Nyasaland to some extent justified these fears. They revealed an ominous Watchtower infiltration of KAR Bemba *askari* units serving in Northern Rhodesia. Whilst on leave from the defence of Kasama, two privates, Sefu and Mapilenga, had refused to serve, arguing that they were 'now Christians so they could no longer be askari'. A patrol of seven *askari* was despatched and they were 'tied up' and detained. This was not the end of the problem. 'A number of askari' also complained 'that their wives had been baptised, also if they were baptised they could no longer be askari'. They were sent to the Native Commissioner 'who told them he could do nothing for them'. This, Sibold reported, 'caused considerable ill-feeling between my askari as practically all the villagers in the district had been baptised.'⁶⁷ One veteran later recalled the pernicious impact of Watchtower propaganda amongst the black military: 'Soldiers were told that Jesus Christ did not fight, that's what they were preaching.'⁶⁸

Secondly, it had become clear to the colonial authorities that by early January (significantly the peak 'hunger month') Watchtower exhortations to cease cultivation to prepare for the end of the world were appreciably exacerbating the post-invasion food crisis. District officials feared large-scale starvation as significant numbers of 'Watchtower villages' in Fife and Chinsali sub-districts neglected agricultural activities in preparation for the widely predicted and imminent Armageddon.⁶⁹ By mid-January 1919, therefore, it was clear to both the Livingstone and higher imperial authorities that, for all these accumulated reasons, the Watchtower Movement would have to be decisively crushed, if only to relieve the acute economic pressure so evident across the north-east Plateau region.

Obstacles to the post-war suppression of Watchtower

However, in mobilising forces to suppress Watchtower (and other disorders) the colonial authorities faced serious political and logistical problems. Politically, the hands of the Livingstone authorities were still tied by the wartime Colonial Office ban on carrier impressment. As in wartime, few volunteers were forthcoming. Without carriers police forces could not intervene in the crisis erupting on the Plateau by

December 1918. The extent of this escalating crisis was graphically outlined to the imperial authorities by the Administrator. 'The situation in the north', Wallace observed, was 'one of some anxiety.' The area was in the grip of a major food crisis. The vast bulk of food supplies had either been destroyed or absorbed by the imperative need to feed an estimated 4,000 German military prisoners of war including their attached carriers and families. Continuing 'lawlessness' compounded the critical food situation. Wallace stressed that only the 'assertion of authority' would help to pull the people together' and he warned, 'should the civil and military forces become paralysed or even much hampered by not being kept mobile and in food there may be some [...] disorders which will spread'. He urgently called for a renewed implementation of Section 7 of Proclamation 8 to forcibly secure carriers.⁷⁰

Wallace's request posed a serious politico-legal dilemma for the imperial authorities in Cape Town. The termination of the war in November and the absence at that time (mid-December 1918), of a full-scale rebellion meant that Section 7 was not applicable.⁷¹ As Stanley, the Imperial Secretary, pointed out to Buxton, the use of the measure could not be justified, firstly in terms of 'defence of the Territory' as it was 'no longer imperilled' and 'action for the defence of the Territory was at an end'. The only possibility was to argue that the 'present emergency' arose out of past operations against an external enemy and might be 'incidental *ex post facto* to the defence of the Territory'. Yet Stanley doubted whether such a 'retrospective connotation' was 'admissible'.⁷² Secondly, Stanley did not consider that the situation reported in the Administrator's despatch could properly be described as 'disorder and rebellion', arguing that 'we are concerned with the *prevention* of the spread of lawlessness rather than the *suppression* of disorder and rebellion'. Recourse to the Legal Advisor would, Stanley feared, only lead to a reply 'in a decided negative which would make it impossible [...] to help the Administrator'.⁷³

The legal dilemma constituted only one half of the problem. The political ban on compulsion by the Colonial Office had also to be considered. It prompted Stanley, in a minute to Buxton, to make a thinly-veiled and bitter attack on the War Office and Treasury for earlier refusing to consider wartime relief and thereby precipitating the post-war unrest. 'All this trouble need not have occurred if His Majesty's Government had taken your [Buxton's] advice and authorised the proposed promise of post-war assistance [...] to the North several months ago. The natives would have been in good temper and a request for carriers would probably have sufficed.'⁷⁴

These twin politico-legal obstacles made the impasse seem insuperable as it was 'rather a strong order both to disobey the Secretary of State and do an illegal thing'. The 'present emergency' might justify disobedience but 'was it grave enough to justify illegality in addition to disobedience?' Stanley identified only three credible courses of action to Buxton. Firstly, to inform Wallace that a renewal of compulsion was in fact impossible politically and legally; secondly, to submit the point of law to the Legal Advisor and thirdly, to 'damn the consequences', accept Wallace's interpretation and allow compulsion, though with the proviso that all voluntary possibilities must be tried first.⁷⁵

In view of the crisis, Buxton decided to 'damn the consequences' and effectively commit an illegal act. In his explanation to the Secretary of State, Buxton argued that although his action was 'prima facie at variance with your instructions', it was 'warranted and [...] necessitated by the exigencies of the situation'. The wartime imperatives for the 28 September ban were 'no longer applicable'; the carriers would 'not be subjected to the risks of war'. Compulsion, he argued, would 'certainly involve less hardship [...] than the evils of a partial famine or the spread of disorder'. The 'December crisis', he argued, was the 'direct product of the invasion', could be seen as '*ex post facto*' and, above all, it had 'seemed important to dispel any impression that the Administration was unable or afraid to assert its authority'.⁷⁶ The subsequent news, received in January 1919, of the dangerously radical upturn in Watchtower activity undoubtedly influenced Colonial Secretary Long in accepting Buxton's defence and explanation but the affair could have resulted in a major political scandal.⁷⁷

At ground level an equally potent logistical barrier to operations was the spread and devastating impact of *La Grippe*, the Spanish influenza pandemic. In October 1918 the Administrator had warned that once the disease had reached outlying villages 'we can do nothing for them'⁷⁸ and although the total mortality will never be precisely known it almost certainly numbered in the thousands. Spreading northwards from Broken Hill, probably along carrier routes, it had reached most north-east districts by Christmas 1918. 'For more than three months the silence of death made itself felt around the missions', wrote a disconsolate Bishop Larue.⁷⁹

Equally concerning for the Colonial authorities was that the pandemic caused a major disruption to the logistical operations essential to the control of post-war disorder, notably the Watchtower threat. Closely-packed carrier formations were obviously extremely vulnerable to the spread of the influenza virus. The contamination of Fife carrier

depot on 12 December, for instance, resulted in 300 *tenga-tenga* being confined to the already over-burdened local mission hospital. Out of a total of 454 patients, 60 died.⁸⁰ As carriers were hurriedly dispersed the infection spread throughout neighbouring villages. At Kayambi mission village the tragically unfortunate villagers were struck firstly by a dysentery epidemic, brought in by demobilised war carriers, and then by influenza.⁸¹ In the north-west, Native Commissioner, T. R. Williams was a rare personal witness to the many large-scale, often unrecorded tragedies arising from the mass exodus of 1,800 disease-ridden war transport carriers from Ndola to their home villages. After burning one corpse he was passed by 'a string of Alunda war transport repatriates [...] some staggering along barely able to walk – their food already discarded, only loaded with their blankets, so that if we die we may be wrapped in them for burial'. He continued: 'One has no conception of what hardship is till one sees such sights as those – I suppose the retreat from Serbia was something of the same sort.'⁸² In a desperate move to avoid a further spread Company officials stationed across the north-east Plateau ordered a mass dispersal to quarantined *mitanda* settlements, which itself only served to paralyse food and labour supplies for up to three or four months and prolonged many existing famine outbreaks.

As police logistical operations were paralysed, the physical and psychological impact of the influenza epidemic played a significant role in Watchtower's rapid expansion during the closing months of 1918 and early 1919.⁸³ Just as many missions reported a return to 'heathenism' (at Kayambi, for instance, their African Christians severely hit by 'La Grippe' were pressed to throw away their rosaries to save themselves⁸⁴), so the cataclysmic impact of the disease, like that of the German invasion, seemed to fulfil Watchtower prophecies of imminent Armageddon. An observer of a frenzied gathering at the main Watchtower centre at Terefyā observed, for instance, that simultaneously 'most of the village' was 'being struck with Spanish influenza'.⁸⁵ Some Watchtower leaders even claimed responsibility for the epidemic,⁸⁶ and at least one leader contracted the disease.⁸⁷

The combination of these potent political and logistical obstacles, the former an indirect result of wartime disruption, had seriously delayed by several weeks the suppression of post-war disorders. In the case of Watchtower the delay had arguably allowed it to become (fuelled by the mishandling of local authorities) a far more potent threat by mid-January 1919 than it might have been had it been suppressed immediately after the Armistice. Police forces finally and belatedly moved into the main Watchtower camp at Terefyā village on 28 January 1919,

supported by a strong reserve at Kasama. The camp was burnt down and 138 adherents arrested, 30 of whom were later released.⁸⁸ The rest were tried en masse at Kasama High Court between 25 March and 17 April.

The 23-day Kasama trials have been examined elsewhere,⁸⁹ but it is important to note that only the Watchtower leaders were given 'intentionally severe [...] deterrent sentences' (to be served in remote Livingstone prison), while approximately 60 rank-and-file were given 'intentionally lenient' sentences, so as to avoid unnecessarily inflaming the movement.⁹⁰ Significantly, to visibly balance the scales of *boma* justice, some chiefs were also successfully prosecuted for their repressive behaviour towards Watchtower supporters.⁹¹

For one major critic, Chief Justice Macdonell, the war and the Watchtower crisis had revealed as never before 'our fragile [...] hold over these people, and at times one saw the abyss opening'. Its causes, he argued, lay chiefly in the Company's reliance upon a system of exploitative authoritarianism, a negative political system so fully realised under the pressure of wartime imperatives. In his own words: 'We have governed the native and over-governed him. We have taken from him the power of self-determination and have hedged him in with a network of rules and permits [...] in return for what we have taken away we have given very little in exchange'. He called for a new approach to administration from the massive centralisation so evident in the war; 'less of [...] legalism and Proclamation 8/1916 and a great deal more district travelling and unfettered discretion to the man on the spot'.⁹² It was a critique angrily rejected by the Northern Rhodesian Administrator, Lawrence Wallace,⁹³ after it had been publicly leaked by Macdonell without Company vetting or permission. This, in itself, combined with a prevailing Company post-war policy of stringent financial economy during its remaining four years of rule, ensured that despite Macdonell's proposed liberal reforms and recommendations (such as a 'native School of Agriculture'⁹⁴) and having weathered both the war and the Watchtower storm, the BSAC beyond restoring administrative control had neither the moral will nor the financial inclination to radically change a political system designed solely towards lining the pockets of its shareholders, or, in the case of a chronically insolvent Northern Rhodesia, reimbursing them.

Other manifestations of post-war disorder

In 1919, Kambole missionaries recorded with alarm the resurgence and expansion of a 'secret society' termed 'Butwa'. Unlike

European-influenced Watchtower, Butwa was of wholly indigenous origin and far more clandestine in its activity. Even today, little is known about its origins, organisation and aims.⁹⁵ One contemporary authority, however, reveals that it was a 'distinct cult, possessing initiatory rites, ceremonies and temple services with life secrets, imposed at initiation'. Furthermore, it was a society mainly associated with the 'water peoples' of Lake Bangweulu, the Batwa, Unga and Bisa, but also included sections of the Ushi, Lamba, Shila, Bemba and Itawa tribes. Butwa's 'aims' were apparently 'to suppress selfishness and promote social life', the chief attractions being 'dancing, singing concerts, beer-drinking and sexual licence'.⁹⁶ It was the latter aspect which undoubtedly aroused the bitter hostility of local missionaries – the sexual excesses of Butwa, included widespread adultery and incest. As early as 1906 an Abercorn official described local missionaries as 'actively working against it' and, under pressure, two headmen, Vituta and Mangala, were reported to have 'abandoned it'. The official stressed that a 'constant watch' must be kept and any resumption' must be met with most severe punishment'.⁹⁷

For the *boma*, less preoccupied with the finer points of moral behaviour, the potent challenge of Butwa emanated more from its position as a virtual state within a state. The movement had its own executive authority, the 'priesthood or council of Butwa officers [...] composed of five or more elders of each sex, who wear special dress and bear special names'. Power was exercised by their claim 'to possess magical powers' and younger members were terrorised into obedience by threats of witchcraft.⁹⁸ Butwa further undermined the network of colonial control by its subversive impact on traditional tribal authority. Thus Campbell described Butwa as 'politically [...] a tremendous force to be reckoned with. Its unity gives it power so that headmen of villages, to safeguard and ingratiate themselves with their people – if not already members – become members on assuming chieftainship'.⁹⁹ Watchtower, of course, opposed rather than assimilated traditional authority but in the simple context of a rival autonomous organisation, Butwa exhibited some similarities to Watchtower. In the words of I. Cuinnison, 'Both spread right over the country and both had their own internal organisation which set up a system of rank and authority which, as far as their internal affairs were concerned, denied the authority of the state over them.'¹⁰⁰

It would appear that the attempted suppression of Butwa in 1906, as with Watchtower in 1919, only served to drive the movement underground. The more clandestine nature of Butwa undoubtedly facilitated greater success in this respect. In 1906 it was observed that although

'large villages may be free' it was 'feared that Butwa may be continued in those smaller and more difficult [areas] of access by Europeans'.¹⁰¹ In fact, Campbell maintained that three years later, in 1909, the revival of Butwa ceremonies on both sides of the Luapula River had resulted in a major surreptitious breaking of Sleeping Sickness regulations.¹⁰²

It was the acute social disruption of the war years, however, that seems to have resulted in an unprecedented and almost public resurgence of Butwa. The 1919 Kambole Mission annual report, significantly entitled 'Reaction after the War' revealed that Butwa had deeply penetrated the north-east border peoples and even more significantly was being spread by disillusioned war veterans. It was observed that Butwa had expanded 'with great rapidity among the Alungu and Amambwe, being chiefly propagated by the young men back from the war who had seen so much vice as well as virtue at the front'.¹⁰³ It was, perhaps, symbolic of the wartime and immediate post-war paralysis of *boma* control that the society became almost public, as 'whilst in the past, the participants had retired to temporary dwellings in the bush for their orgies of lust, now the proceedings were carried on in huts in the villages to the utter demoralisation of the people'.¹⁰⁴ The potent threat to *boma* supremacy was illustrated by its inability to gain any information about the cult (in contrast to the Watchtower movement), as a 'large number of the Government Messengers were involved and so many were afraid that they would be bewitched if they should disclose the facts'.¹⁰⁵ These missionary observations were urgently forwarded to the authorities. A major Government crackdown was implemented with a threat of two months' imprisonment and twenty-five lashes imposed for possessing Butwa membership which allegedly 'put an effectual stop to it',¹⁰⁶ but it is more probable that the society, like Watchtower, was merely driven back underground.

Demobilised *askari* as a disruptive force within colonial society

The termination of the war signalled the discharge of several hundred *askari* of the King's African Rifles and the Northern Rhodesia Police (see Figures 8.1 and 8.2). As the elite of the black military, they had been subjected to the edifying experience of participating as armed combatants in a white man's war. For some, it had undoubtedly been a traumatic experience as they fought on equal terms both alongside and against white troops, and in some cases, obviously killed white German troops.¹⁰⁷ Despite their carefully maintained subordination within the

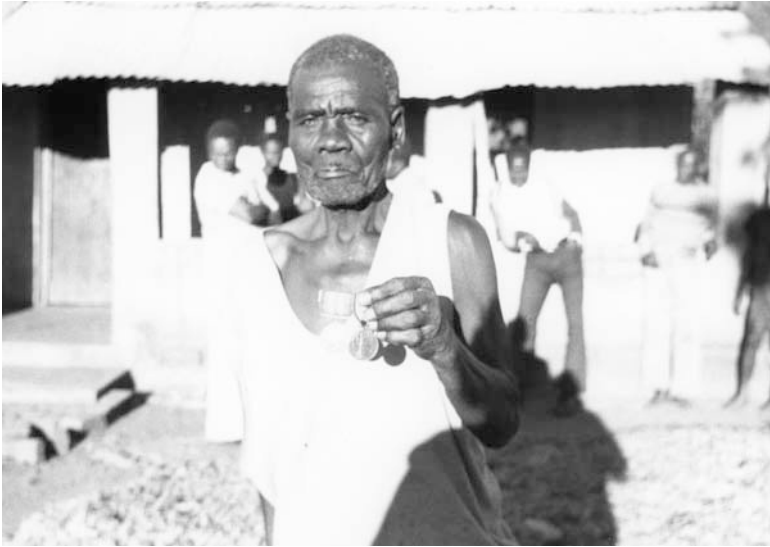


Figure 8.1 A rare image of an *askari* veteran, Corporal Ndezemani Phiri, NRP, proudly displaying his Great War medal, photographed and interviewed by the author in May 1980 (© E. Yorke)



Figure 8.2 Another rare image of another *askari* veteran, Sgt Kamzimbi Mwanza, NRP, also displaying his Great War medal, photographed and interviewed by the author in May 1980 (© E. Yorke)



Figure 8.3 An even rarer image of a war carrier or *tenga-tenga* veteran, Fikizolo Jere, with his son, Councillor Jere and his great grandsons, photographed and interviewed by the author in May 1980 (© E. Yorke)

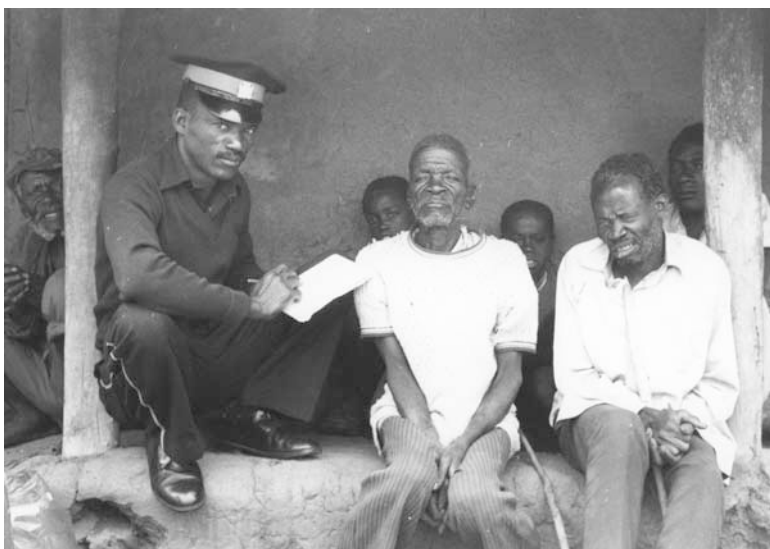


Figure 8.4 Another war carrier veteran, Njolomo Mvulu, also photographed and interviewed by the author in May 1980. Unlike their *askari* counterparts the thousands of war carriers deployed were, regrettably, never awarded medals for their stupendous efforts and terrible sacrifices made on behalf of the imperial/Allied cause (© E. Yorke)

British socio-military establishment, the war inevitably imbibed some with feelings of an enhanced, albeit undefined, social status. Wartime *askari* songs, for instance, expressed new feelings of equality with the white enemy at least on the battlefield; an equality not accepted in peacetime colonial society. One Ngoni roughly translated a song thus: 'We are going to the army and the weapons that we are carrying home are the axe, a hoe and a gun. These are the implements to fight the German. Once we have smoked the dagga and also the German smoked the dagga we will fight.'¹⁰⁸

The wartime feeling of elevated status possibly explains the assertive and disruptive posture of some *askari* both within wartime and post-war Northern Rhodesian society. Soldiers on leave played a prominent part in numerous wartime acts of oppression. From Kasama 'several cases' were reported 'against the KAR askari discharged or on leave for assault'. One was sentenced to twelve months imprisonment for attacking a headman. Significantly, it was noted: 'They state that they were allowed to do that sort of thing.'¹⁰⁹ Similarly, a Fife official recalled that *askari* 'commandeered foodstuffs' and he had 'complained' of the 'conduct of certain police returning from wartime leave and not under European supervision, who misbehaved themselves badly'.¹¹⁰

Such disruptive behaviour also occurred after demobilisation. Some ex-*askari*, as we have seen, undoubtedly became involved in the Watchtower and Butwa movements, which offered a degree of social status outside the rigid hierarchy of a post-war colonial society which reserved no special role for discharged members of a black military elite. Most, however, understandably sought to perpetuate their special wartime status by remaining in coherent social units. In some cases this transition was achieved peacefully within the accepted norms of colonial society through peaceful participation in *mbeni* dance societies¹¹¹ or even separate communal establishments.¹¹² Others, however, expressed their feelings in a blatantly disruptive manner engendering the wrath of some colonial authorities. The White Fathers had noted the 'arrogance' of some discharged Bemba *askari* 'for whom the simplicity of yesteryear was going to disappear'.¹¹³ At Chilonga this arrogance spilled over into violent, unruly behaviour. It was reported that 'our discharged soldiers' had 'held together till now pretty decently'. After a beer-drinking session, however, one group rioted and attacked two government mailmen. Boma punishment was swift and severe. The leader of the veterans was whipped and sentenced to one month's imprisonment. Others received lesser sentences. Above all, a significant social penalty was administered. Their military uniforms were confiscated and publicly burnt,

accompanied by a salutary warning to their companions that further disorder would result in a confiscation and burning of all their military effects.¹¹⁴

Post-war reconstruction

The suppression of Watchtower and other forms of post-war 'disorder' was paralleled by a distinct phase of reconstruction as the colonial authorities desperately sought to restore pre-war administrative norms. District circular and intra-district directives emphasised, for instance, the imperative need to crack down on the many tax defaulters, legion in disaffected areas such as Fife.¹¹⁵ Officials were ordered to resume full district travelling, again particularly in the Watchtower areas of Fife, Abercorn and Chinsali.¹¹⁶ In some areas officials even exceeded pre-war touring levels.¹¹⁷ *Boma* registers recorded the complete census of villages in their localities (in many districts, the first for over four years) and by March 1920 most tax and census records had returned to a semblance of normality.

More significantly, much of the wide political latitude afforded to both district officials and traditional African leadership in wartime was rescinded. One circular, for instance, warned Native Commissioners that the wide interpretation often applied in wartime to the 'reasonable orders' Clause of the 1916 Proclamation was no longer admissible in peacetime. It was pointed out that 'if [...] general orders, affecting all natives in a particular district [...] exceeded the levels laid down in the Proclamation, and are given without reference to Headquarters, a native policy consistent through the territory becomes impossible'. Any future standing orders issued would, in future, require the District Magistrate's approval, and ultimately that of the Secretary of Native Affairs.¹¹⁸ Another circular stressed the need to treat headmen, such crucial mediators in wartime, equally under the law. It was laid down that a headman should be 'punished in the same way as other people and given lashes if he deserves it'.¹¹⁹

This profound rationalisation of authority was accompanied by the final go-ahead for village decentralisation, now facilitated by the cessation of war recruitment. During 1919 and 1920, scores of villages all over the territory were fragmented into smaller entities, the only restriction being that each new village should incorporate a minimum of ten taxpayers. It signalled the final death knell of over twenty years of village amalgamation, a policy reversal accelerated by wartime pressures. In some districts the transformation was dramatic. In Abercorn

division, over thirty villages were approved, many under new divisional headmen.¹²⁰ In Luwingu, forty-two new villages were approved by March 1920. The official noted that it was a movement 'growing in popularity' and was 'advantageous' for food supply, while petty crime had 'diminished'. He was, however, sceptical that more serious 'crimes', witchcraft for example, might be hard to detect in smaller settlements.¹²¹ The idea of settlements close to gardens to obviate illegal *mitanda* was, however, scorned by at least one missionary observer. He argued that the transient Bemba *citemene* cultivators would be unlikely to tend crops in the vicinity of a new village for more than a year.¹²²

Nevertheless, from the Administrative point of view the new, smaller villages destroyed any *raison d'être* for remote, illegal *mitanda* settlements so detrimental to tax and labour control in the past. The post-influenza epidemic period unleashed an orgy of suppression of illegal *mitanda*, a task which had proved virtually impossible in wartime. Ruthless methods were employed, including burning of illegal gardens often with dire effects on the local food supply. Near Chilubula Mission, a *boma* order was transmitted via the local chief to all headmen, stating that 'all people found in the *mitanda* would be punished'.¹²³ At Chilubi, only missionary intervention prevented Matipa, an island chief, carrying out a *boma* order to burn village *mitanda*, an action almost certain to cause famine.¹²⁴

In the context of chiefly authority, the policy was a significant exercise in devolution. Their followers enjoyed greater physical autonomy, although chiefly power remained firmly buttressed by the *boma*. Noting the fragmentation of villages in western Bembaland, one observer commented 'each one wants to be a chief and makes it their business to get together a little group of their relations and friends in order to form a smaller village'.¹²⁵ For some officials it was also an opportunity to rationalise; to weed out inefficient mediators. At Abercorn, the creation of many new villages enabled the replacement of some elderly or infirm sub-chiefs and headmen by more of the new divisional headmen.¹²⁶ This was no revolutionary change; the 'Big Men' remained firmly entrenched, but the lower echelons of traditional authority were slowly being reordered and made more efficient. In this way the wartime drive for more competent colonial mediators was quietly perpetuated, albeit less urgently, in peacetime.

For the missions, already seriously incapacitated by war and influenza, this represented a further major blow to their own political authority as they were forced to decentralise branches and chapels and to expand their black teaching staff. The once powerful Chilubula White Fathers,

for instance, observed the break-up of 140 old villages into an estimated 200 with others 'still being formed'. With this substantial increase and dispersal 'the branch centres were necessarily displaced'.¹²⁷ At Ipusukilo it was similarly noted that the reorganisation would result in a need 'to treble the amount of catechists'.¹²⁸

Post-war reconstruction also involved a major purge of wartime pockets of crime activity which had proved so detrimental to colonial control. In the notorious Bangweulu swamps region the authorities, making good use of the new strategic, war-established Nsumbu Island *boma*, launched a major crackdown on carrier thefts. By the 'energetic investigation of even the smallest clue', several gangs were arrested and convicted. This significantly reduced crime.¹²⁹ At Fort Rosebery, the officials resorted to the widespread use of the draconian Collective Punishment Proclamation (promulgated in 1913), providing for the mass arrests of chiefs, headmen and villagers in order to recover stolen goods. During the war, by contrast, the local magistrate had 'not considered it expedient to recommend any application of the Proclamation'.¹³⁰

An important corollary of this 'reconquest' period was the frenzied post-war drive to improve communications. During 1919 many villagers on the Plateau were pressed into road-building as well as new bridge construction, a task sorely neglected in wartime. Thus few Christians arrived for services at Chilubula in August 1919 as they were busy 'making roads from village to village on order of the boma'.¹³¹ Such *musebo* was considered essential to ensure the mobility of police patrols to combat normal civil crime and, above all, any resurgence of anti-colonial movements such as Watchtower.

The experience of Watchtower also resulted in the drawing-up of rudimentary defence contingency plans for the protection of European civilians and of government centres. District officials were assigned a major role in this. They were instructed to draft memoranda on defensive positions, communications and so on in their local areas, while on the Plateau police patrols continued to make regular deterrent sweeps in Watchtower areas long after its formal suppression and lasting well into the 1920s.¹³²

Physical deterrence of this sort was paralleled by a massive propaganda campaign designed both to restore *boma* prestige and to discredit Watchtower. This was particularly evident during a series of post-Armistice *indabas* held across the north-east Plateau during the months of March, April and May 1919, and was deliberately timed to coincide with the Kasama Watchtower trials and their aftermath.¹³³ At Abercorn, for instance, chiefs and headmen were treated to a long

diatribe concerning German wartime atrocities. British supremacy, it was claimed, had never been threatened; the Armistice had merely saved General von Letow-Vorbeck from being overwhelmingly defeated by British reinforcements from Ndola! Much was made of the conquest of German East Africa and the capture of German troops and arms. *Boma* power was fully restored – ‘now that the war is finished [...] you will see more officials come and they will come round to see you in your villages’. Watchtower was skilfully denigrated by pointing out how it had infringed not only the law of the *boma* but also traditional tribal law. It was further emphasised that Watchtower had been propagated by only a minority of African teachers from Mwenzo, while other teachers from Kambole, Kawimbe and Kayambi had not been involved or punished.¹³⁴ In this way Watchtower was isolated from the mainstream of mission teaching and also from the sacred tenets of tribal authority.

Demobilisation: an avalanche of new wealth

The demobilisation and repatriation of thousands of *askari* and *tenga-tenga* during the period November 1918 to March 1919 signified for many an inevitably brief but notable period of affluence as hundreds of pounds was paid out in wages and back pay. At Mporokoso, for instance, the discharge of scores of war carriers was observed, ‘many of them getting £30, £40 or even more when paid off. They seldom had so many pence at their command and so did not grudge giving four or five times the normal price of food.’¹³⁵ Many returned loaded with trade goods purchased in ‘spoils of war’ looted along the campaign routes. In central Bembaland it was reported in 1919 that ‘all the troops had been demobilised on equal terms. You should see those black privates [...] they are returning with a good sum of money, with shoes, hats, material, a watch and all sorts of tools’.¹³⁶

During 1919 this new wealth was expended in a wide variety of ways. A proportion was undoubtedly spent on worthless trade goods. Many others, however, invested wisely in new tools, household artefacts, bicycles and in particular, livestock. One Ngoni contemporary recalled: ‘They were buying food [...] clothes, some were buying a cow [...] they had £10 [...] they could buy anything’.¹³⁷ Another Northern Rhodesia Police soldier recalled that although many *askari* returned with ‘little money’ (possibly already expended in garrison towns such as Zomba) some, nevertheless, ‘could buy goats, some could just help their families, some could buy cows’.¹³⁸

The comparative prosperity of these returning war veterans was reflected in a limited but significant trading boom in many districts during the immediate post-Armistice period. This was particularly evident in the heavily-recruited areas of the north-east such as the Bemba and Ngoni heartlands. The return of long-term Ngoni and Chewa first-line veterans from German and Portuguese Africa, for instance, precipitated the trading boom reported from Fort Jameson, Lundazi and Petauke sub-districts which lasted until September 1919 and benefited both Indian (Hindu merchant or *banyan*) and European storekeepers.¹³⁹ The boom was not confined to the north-east; Kafue, for instance, reported enhanced commercial activity resulting directly from this infusion of war wealth,¹⁴⁰ and parts of Kasempa district also.¹⁴¹

War and social change: a desire for enhanced social status

For those thousands of black Northern Rhodesians caught up in the maelstrom of an imperial war, the impact was dramatically revealed in ways far beyond pure economics. One missionary thus strikingly observed how one demobilised group of African soldiers had demonstrated 'how to use their imagination in order to be important'. In the remote outskirts of one Bemba village he had stumbled upon 'whole barracks, called a soldier's barracks'. The dwelling places were 'built quite differently [...] no longer the old round huts good only for peasants but pretty tembe, comprising two or three rooms, kitchen, bedroom, dining room with chairs, a table covered with cloth and a jar of flowers'. Next to it was even constructed 'the bathroom – a little straw hut'. This amazing attempted replica of a wartime barracks was complemented by the use of 'kitchen utensils and a dinner set', the 'crude indigenous pottery' being 'no longer in fashion', with the 'little woven paniers for the bwali' being 'thrown aside. One uses cooking pots, preserving pans, dishes of all kinds, plates, knives [*sic*] and forks [...] even a tea set'.¹⁴²

Just as profound and perhaps a more durable attempt to reproduce the social impact of such a traumatic war emerged with the introduction of *mbeni* dance formations into post-war Northern Rhodesia. An Abercorn official recorded its arrival into his district 'in 1919 from Tanganyika Territory' but it is probable that it appeared much earlier during wartime.¹⁴³ The dance, basically expressing a pantomime version of the European military structure with its own in-built hierarchy of rank, discipline and so on was an important illustration of the profound social impact of the First World War upon this territory. Through this form of dance both *askari* and *tenga-tenga* could recreate, mimic and, to some extent,

vicariously participate in social relationships from which, in the words of Clyde Mitchell, 'they were normally excluded'.¹⁴⁴ Moreover, through division into high status *marini* for soldiers and low status *arinoti* for porters, the survival of *askari* as a social elite was perpetuated in peacetime. One informant recalled the popularity of these dances 'like kalela' which 'came from the war from Abercorn'. Drums played were apparently brought back as loot from German East Africa – 'mainly they were grabbed from African homes'. The *mbeni* dance was associated from this source with the Mambwe tribal group. The dance was perpetuated in the post-war period by 'old soldiers who were in the army [...] teaching the young ones in the villages'.¹⁴⁵ A dance which provided the opportunity to participate, albeit remotely so, in one form of European social organisation not surprisingly appears to have threatened the survival of some traditional dances. Perhaps aided by the suppression of Butwa in 1919, one Colonial official significantly observed in 1920 that *mbeni* was possibly 'taking the place of the Butwa' although it was not then known if *mbeni* was 'any more immoral than any other dance'. Unlike Butwa, however, *mbeni* dances were 'public and anyone may join',¹⁴⁶ and this probably disinclined the Administration to identify it as in any way potentially subversive.¹⁴⁷

Integration into a money economy: the impact of wartime service upon post-war civil labour markets

For many of the thousands of demobilised war veterans it was clear that the disciplined conditions and relatively high wages of military employment had provided an important catalyst to participation in post-war labour markets. As some Company officials had predicted earlier in the war,¹⁴⁸ thousands of young males were introduced to, and became accustomed to regular and relatively long periods of employment, often as in the case of many Unga and Batwa, for the first time. Although experienced under severe wartime pressures, such extreme adversity may have been somewhat ameliorated by the opportunity to use their extraordinary military cash wages to purchase large quantities of 'luxury' items in late 1918 and 1919. The higher wages offered by contractors at the newly reopened Katanga and Southern Rhodesian mines offered even greater opportunities for personal enrichment, especially once war earnings had ceased and available cash had been spent. This profound socio-economic stimulus engendered by the war must, therefore, be seen as distinct, although not separate from, the necessity of meeting existing colonial tax obligations.¹⁴⁹

Of course, many Africans had tasted regular wage employment before the war, but even amongst the southern Bemba and their Ngoni counterparts, the war's role as a stimulator to 'proletarianisation' was dramatically recorded. Noting the 'all-out recruitment for the mines of Salisbury and Katanga' after May 1919, one missionary in Bembaland commented: 'The portorage of war having terminated, many young people are taking the blanket engagement. During the war they had had a taste of shillings and sterling pounds; nothing will hold them, neither the family nor the house, nor even the land.'¹⁵⁰ Similarly, an Ngoni contemporary recalled how many ex-war carriers and soldiers 'after the war came home, you know how they spend money [...] they were not used to spending money, they wanted to have money [...] so they had to go to the mines [...] they wanted to enrich themselves'.¹⁵¹ Another Ngoni *askari* veteran remembered that once war wages had expired 'all thought of going to be employed at the mines to get money'.¹⁵²

For the missions, the massive post-war labour exodus engendered a labour crisis equalling if not surpassing wartime shortages. 'Most of our difficulties at Mbereshi may be expressed in one word, "Congo",' one lamented. The same missionary observed that many of his African Christians returned briefly from war service only to leave again to seek personal enrichment at the mines. They returned with 'stocks of European clothes and household utensils and very often a sewing machine or bicycle'. It was reported that 'most villages' had 'their local tailor who makes shirts, trousers and blouses for the women'. It was also noted how teachers cynically used the mission only to obtain education for 'better paid work elsewhere', generally on the mines.¹⁵³ Similarly at Chilubula, a missionary deeply regretted the lack of cash needed to attract labourers who had returned from war service and the mines 'with handfuls of gold'.¹⁵⁴ In northern Bembaland, a new 'spirit of restless adventure' was observed, 'engendered by the war and the attractions offered in the way of clothing, blankets [...] and high wages by Congo recruiters'.¹⁵⁵ Consequently, 'one does not wonder at labour difficulties'.¹⁵⁶

The higher wage levels offered outside the Territory in the post-war period, and the war's role in raising wage expectations, also threatened white farming interests. In wartime, despite complaints, the Northern Rhodesian European farmers had managed to obtain sufficient labour, notwithstanding the pressure of military recruiters, mainly because RNLB recruiting had been suspended. Peacetime allowed the full reopening of RNLB operations offering enhanced earning capabilities

in both mine and agricultural work, incensing local farmers who paid far lower wages than their Southern Rhodesian counterparts.¹⁵⁷ The two Northern Rhodesian Agricultural Associations accordingly demanded a further restriction or suspension of RNLB activity in the settled areas. In the north-west, the problem was allegedly exacerbated by the existence of a prosperous peasant community, now liberated from wartime demands and understandably unwilling to enter any post-war labour market.¹⁵⁸

With war imperatives removed the north-western farmers received scant sympathy from either the RNLB Board or the Company and imperial authorities. They simply argued that the obvious solution was to immediately raise wage rates. Demands from a small section of white farmers for a return to the wartime policy of forced labour were swiftly dismissed, and by September 1919 most north-western farmers had been reluctantly forced to raise their adult wage rates from 10s. 6d. to 15s. 0d. a month.¹⁵⁹

The North-East Rhodesia Agricultural and Commercial Association, however, proved to be far more obdurate. North-eastern farmers and planters stressed that they had 'loyally supported the effort [...] to produce the necessary labour for military purposes'. They claimed that the August 1917 ban on RNLB recruiting applied also to peacetime.¹⁶⁰ The claim was angrily dismissed by the local Magistrate who argued that the ban had applied only to wartime and, moreover, had lasted until November 1918, eleven months beyond the initial period requested at the meeting in August 1917. He attacked the unreality of the planters' low wage rates, observing that the recently demobilised Ngoni and Chewa war carriers had 'been earning big wages at the front' and there was 'plenty of money in the villages'. Consequently, they did 'not wish to turn out for work at present rates of pay' until they were 'compelled by the exhaustion of their money to do so'.¹⁶¹ Later, he also castigated the extremely wasteful 'ticket system' which the planters had refused to reform in wartime and which had proved to be a useful refuge for war work evaders. 'If planters were to cut down their rolls and make their natives turn out more regularly', he asserted, 'more labour would be available to others.'¹⁶²

Appeals over the heads of the Company to the imperial authorities also fell on waste ground. In a letter to the Resident Commissioner, the Association Secretary further pointed to the Nyasaland government's assistance in resolving their own post-war labour crisis by recruiting 4,000 African labourers for 'distribution in Planter's Districts'.¹⁶³ The

Resident Commissioner, however, firmly supported the BSAC, noting that the East Luangwa District was 'well-populated' and that the alleged labour shortage was due 'not to competition by the Bureau but to the low wages which are offered'. The war, he confirmed, had raised wage expectations and, as he observed to Buxton, the High Commissioner, the north-eastern farmers would have to raise their wage rates like their north-western counterparts.¹⁶⁴ Furthermore, a government role in civil labour recruitment was not possible; the Nyasaland government's preferential labour policy would 'not be regarded as a precedent which could be followed by the Northern Rhodesian Administration'.¹⁶⁵ Buxton fully concurred.¹⁶⁶

It was a notable political defeat for the most powerful sectional interest in Northern Rhodesian Colonial society – white Northern Rhodesian agricultural producers had abjectly failed to secure any government intervention to guarantee their labour supply. This situation was markedly at odds with both their Nyasaland counterparts and, in particular, their more numerous and powerful settler compatriots further north in Kenya, where in 1919 Governor Edward Northey's infamous labour circulars had been implemented. These repressive labour regulations had been imposed on Kenyan Africans and were primarily designed to secure the labour needs of white farmers and planters in Kenya but also to alleviate acute post-war labour shortages.

The Company's notably unsympathetic response again undoubtedly partly reflected their growing disenchantment with the earlier antagonistic stance of leading settlers (among whom farmers predominated). To the chagrin of the Company, and despite important agricultural concessions, farmers had opposed war measures such as the annual collection of crop statistics and reform of the 'ticket system'.¹⁶⁷ More recently, radical farmers, led by arch-critic Leopold Moore, had bitterly attacked the Company through the medium of the newly-established Advisory Council.¹⁶⁸ A more crucial determinant in the Company's opposition to settler labour demands, however, was undoubtedly its reluctance to disrupt the peacetime activities of the RNLB, the crucial labour supplier to its far more valued mining and agricultural industries in Southern Rhodesia. Ironically, therefore, an 'unholy alliance' of Company and Colonial Office had resulted in a small, but significant victory for African welfare over local settler interests as, by the end of 1919 internal agricultural wage rates were reluctantly raised by one third. It was a minor advance, however, soon to be overshadowed by a resumption of powerful colonial tax and land demands.

The post-war legacy: distress and disillusionment and the impact of post-war inflation

By September 1919 this relatively brief period of prosperity for some Africans came to an abrupt, premature end as the real value of war savings was undermined by a rapidly escalating inflationary spiral. In some areas the post-war rate of inflation exceeded that of wartime. Trade goods reached fantastic prices. In Luangwa District, for instance, a comparison between the pre-war and post-war prices of 36 common trade goods in 1,254 general stores revealed a net increase of 60 per cent (see Table 8.2). More devastatingly, the prices of specifically 'native goods' such as Indian print, calico, blankets, beads, hoes and others, had 'increased by 200 to 300 per cent in four years'.¹⁶⁹

The high prices of such basic necessities aroused deep African resentment. Wartime *boma* propaganda promising a decrease in inflation after the war was cruelly exposed. To a great number, one official observed, the war had 'principally meant higher prices for clothes, blankets, beads, wire, hoes, etc.', but 'instead of prices decreasing, as they expected, they have gone higher. Victory such as this', he emphasised, 'does not appeal to them and it is difficult to explain as wages remain stationary and the prices paid for their crops have not changed from the pre-war rate'.¹⁷⁰ At many post-war *indabas* the high price of goods remained a long-standing grievance, demonstrating its detrimental impact upon both chiefs and followers alike.¹⁷¹

The inability of many to purchase exorbitantly-priced trade goods soon became graphically evident in the frequent return to indigenous forms of barter and dress. At Mporokoso, the 'great increase' in the cost of calico cloth and clothing resulted in local Bemba 'being reduced to rags and a general look of poverty which they never had before'.¹⁷² In Serenje, some Lala producers 'dissatisfied' with rises in store prices raised their own prices.¹⁷³ Nevertheless, the widespread distress caused was noted in the 'general tendency among the village natives to return to the old bark-cloth and skin clothing'.¹⁷⁴ Missionaries found that the unpopularity of cash purchase made it incumbent 'to use trade goods for buying food and other native produce'.¹⁷⁵ The problem was also reflected in a significant trade slump affecting most areas by late 1919 as the high store prices exhausted African wartime savings. In Solwezi, for instance, after the brief post-war boom, 'native trade' decreased by 30 per cent during the latter half of 1919, with cash-takings at one store falling from £1,800 in 1918 to £1,233 during 1919. The 'falling off' was attributed to the reduced amount of cash generated by the cessation of wartime grain-buying and war transport work.¹⁷⁶

Table 8.2 War and post-war price inflation (items selected from an extensive list enclosed in Ft Jameson Annual Report 1919–20, NAZ, ZA 7/1/4/4)

Item	Prewar	Present (1920)
'Native' hoes	1s. 6d.	3s. 6d. to 4s. 6d
Oxen	£3	£8 to £10
Cows	£3	£8
Khaki drill	1s. 3d. yd.	3s. 6d.
Blankets ('Native')	3s. 6d.	12s. 6d.
Native Food stuffs (6d. 20 lbs)	6d.	1s. 0d.
Ammunition –303 per 100	22s. 6d.	35s. 0d.
Flour	6d. per lb.	9½d.
Sugar	6d.	11d.
Tea Nyasaland	2s. 0d.	2s. 9d.
Cocoa	3s. 0d. per lb.	6s. 0d.
Coffee (local)	6d.	9d.
Butter (local)	1s. 9d. per lb.	2s. 6d.
Cheese	2s. 3d. per lb.	5s. 0d.
Candles (pkt. of six)	1s. 3d.	1s. 9d.
Soap	1s. 6d. per pkt.	3s. 6d.
Calico	3d. per yd.	1s. 0d. per yd.
Salt (rough trade)	3d.	6d.
Jams (S. African)	1s. 1d. 1b.	1s. 4d.
Rice (Local)	2½d. 1b.	6d.
Petrol	5s. 6d. gallon	10s. 0d.
Fowls ('Native' bantam)	3d. each	6d.
Sheep (Local)	5s. 0d.	15s. 0d.
Beef	6d. 1b.	1s. 3d.
Mutton	8d. 1b.	1s. 6d.
Bacon	1s. 6d. 1b.	2s. 9d.
Eggs ('Native')	1s. 0d. for 30	1s. 0d. for 12.
Boots	30s. 0d.	60s. 0d.
Shirts	5s. 6d. to 7s. 0d.	13s. 6d. upwards
Bicycle tyres	13s. 0d.	27s. 0d.

The absence of post-war relief: social distress in the north-east border areas

For many border communities, the impact of inflation only added to the residue of misery caused by war. Any prospect of significant post-war relief and compensation perished with the political debacle over the Company relief scheme in September 1918 and its official abandonment in the following month. As the prospect of political handover to the Colonial Office loomed and the issue of war

expenditure remained unresolved, London Wall remained even more determined to restrict any capital expenditure in post-war Northern Rhodesia.

By March 1920 neglect of the border communities was revealed in one report which listed large numbers of outstanding compensation claims for wartime agriculture, livestock and building losses.¹⁷⁷ More tragic were the vivid descriptions of their acute social distress. Tabwa villagers, for instance, were described by one observer as leading a 'nomadic existence and in a state of chronic hunger', necessitating issues of guns to kill game for food.¹⁷⁸ Many border villages had already experienced food shortages as a result of von Lettow's incursion. The distribution of hoes, a central feature of the earlier abandoned relief scheme and which had been in short supply in wartime, took place in 1919, but had to be paid for, albeit at allegedly low prices.¹⁷⁹

Renewed exploitation: post-war Company tax and land demands; the doubling of the tax in the north-east; the consummation of wartime distress

In January 1918 the President of the Board, after reviewing Northern Rhodesia's heavy administrative and war deficit, had vehemently declared that whilst it was 'grossly unjust' to extract funds from Company shareholders who 'already contribute in taxation', it was 'perfectly reasonable that Rhodesians, whether settlers or Natives should, like other subjects, take a pro rata share in the burden of war debt'.¹⁸⁰ It underlined again the late wartime policy emphasis on 'shareholders first' and solvency at all costs. Wartime conditions had precluded implementation of either an income tax for settlers or an increase of tax for Africans. By 1919, moreover, the Board had lost the initial battle to introduce income tax due to fierce settler opposition, expressed through both the newly-established Advisory Council and the columns of the *Livingstone Mail*.¹⁸¹ The stage was therefore set for a crushing financial exploitation of the war-ravaged north-east African population who, until 1920, by virtue of recognised poorer economic resources, had enjoyed a lower tax threshold than the north-west districts (10s. 0d. in the north-west compared to 5s. 0d. in the north-east). The 1920 tax would not only provide parity of revenue with the north-western districts but, more significantly, would exploit the greater tax potential realised by a massively expanded wartime labour pool. Recognition of this wartime phenomenon by senior Company officials predictably ignored the region's poorer economic resources vis-à-vis the north-west.

Lacking significant labour centres, apart from the limited seasonal plantation employment at Fort Jameson, and any substantial indigenous agricultural base, the result could only be a massive migration from the Territory, principally to the Katanga and Southern Rhodesian mining centres and farms.

In considering their approval for this huge tax increase, however, imperial officials were skilfully deceived as to its enormous socio-economic implications. When the High Commissioner anxiously queried the potentially adverse social impact of the tax in the area,¹⁸² the Resident Commissioner could only quote Wallace's and, more crucially, the influential Marshall's assurances of minimal dislocation. Buxton was informed that local Africans could pay 'without difficulty'; there would be 'no hardship'. Buxton's fears were further assuaged by H. C. Marshall's reports of widespread support within the District Service for a tax rise to parity with the north-west. While the Resident Commissioner admitted to the 'appreciable degree of unsettlement' in the north-east, 'due to the heavy demand for war carriers', he considered this had been 'mitigated to some extent by the large sums of money [...] earned'. The 'hardships' of carrier work would 'soon be forgotten'. Buxton's fears of enhanced social unrest, especially a resurgence of Watchtower, were played down. The German surrender had been 'tangible evidence of the success of British arms'; the Watchtower unrest was by then limited. Buxton's assent was further wooed by the promise of widespread exemption for old people and the Resident Commissioner's recommendation that a portion of that revenue (10 per cent) be set aside for African interests along the line of the Barotse Fund.¹⁸³

On the basis of the Resident Commissioner's recommendations, so heavily reliant upon Wallace's and Marshall's reports, Buxton agreed to the increase, though recommending that a Trust Fund be established.¹⁸⁴ Milner's assent rapidly followed and in May 1920 the new tax increase was implemented.

Over a year later, the extent to which the imperial authorities had been misled by senior Company officials became evident. T. F. Sandford, the Native Commissioner at Fort Jameson, exposed to Bishop May the existence of widespread dissent within the District Service and a successful cover-up by the Company authorities.¹⁸⁵ The new tax was an 'iniquitous robbery of the native because the BSAC was afraid to tax the European'. Officials who 'registered the grumbles of the native were quickly given to understand that such should not be encouraged. That is what we are for – to enforce the orders of a Government who had none who can listen to grievances from natives.'¹⁸⁶ Later, he amplified his

acute dilemma and that of the many protesting district officials as Company employees. 'Over the 10s. tax I feel ashamed. I would certainly have resigned if I had not been myself in a bad position with so many equally eligible persons looking for work. You will say that I am a coward. I fancy I am, but still I can ease the position for them.' The Company had cruelly deceived a hesitant Buxton. 'I was informed that the High Commissioner [...] required convincing [...] there, again, Marshall showed himself to be entirely under the direction of London Wall'. Most important was his revelation regarding the huge extent of internal criticism; 'only two native officials approve of the 10s. 0d. tax'.¹⁸⁷

The imperial authorities were not entirely blameless. A leading District Commissioner, E. Avery Jones had been interviewed by H. Stanley, the Imperial Secretary, whilst on leave at Cape Town *before* imperial sanction of the tax rise. Although 'guarded', he admitted that the new tax 'if not actually a mistake [...] was an ungenerous act coming so soon after the strain of the war period'. Though not anticipating 'serious trouble' he had confirmed that Africans in the more remote districts would have 'difficulty in paying'.¹⁸⁸ His criticism was decisively played down by Stanley, Buxton's influential advisor on Rhodesian affairs, who doubted 'whether we should be justified in turning the proposal down. Of course, one does not like to increase any tax on natives but the necessity cannot always be avoided'.¹⁸⁹ Similarly, Stanley later played down Alston May's criticisms which included anonymous quotation of Sandford's observations.¹⁹⁰ Though acknowledging awareness of Avery Jones' dissent and, more recently, an actual resignation by one official, C. Dewhurst, over the tax issue, he claimed it was 'news to me that practically all the local officials of the Native Department were, and are, opposed to the increase'. He opposed May's description of the ten shilling tax as 'disastrous', naively arguing that 'the particular difficulty [...] would have been very nearly as great as if the tax had stood at 5s. 0d'. In the same breath, however, he confessed to having 'no first-hand knowledge of conditions in north-east Rhodesia'. Stanley's bias further emerged in his advice to the Bishop for seeking formal redress of the tax issue. He advised him to protest via the Administrator first (an obviously futile step in view of the Company's role as originator of the tax), stressing that, even if he approached the High Commissioner directly, Buxton would have to refer back to the Company authorities. Stanley further commented that in making the suggestion he was 'not committing the High Commissioner to any promise of action beyond the consideration of anything you might represent to him'.¹⁹¹

Stanley's support for the tax increase might possibly be seen as an act of imperial service, bearing in mind the imminent Colonial Office takeover in 1924, a takeover at which time it was hoped the annual deficit would be as low as possible. However, his 'blanket' role in the tax issue more probably reflects a markedly pro-Company bias, demonstrated by his support for the Company's wartime relief scheme, but more significantly by his earlier role as Resident Commissioner in securing imperial sanction for the 1915–16 Southern Rhodesian Native Reserve proposals.¹⁹²

The ground-level impact of the ten-shilling tax: social catastrophe in the north-east

By the middle of 1921 the enormous social consequences of the Company's ruthless tax exploitation of the vast, war-expanded labour pool became evident. After touring the north-east, Alston May wrote that 'since the additional tax was imposed the country had been drained of its male population to an extent that was not dreamed of before, not even [...] during the war, or at all events not until the war'.¹⁹³ It was an exodus encouraged by the continuing high prices of local goods, especially cloth. His informants confirmed the exodus. R. Goode, a senior Administrative official, spoke of an 'unaccountable exodus of men from the Fort Jameson District'. May himself insisted that Abercorn district was 'in a worse case than Fort Jameson' and 'Serenje, I know to be very bad'.¹⁹⁴ Contrary to Wallace's and Marshall's earlier assurances and Douglas-Jones' assumption, war work savings had been largely expended by late 1919 and with no major employment centres on the Plateau after the cessation of war labour, thousands of young males were forced into long-term employment, often outside the Territory, in order to meet the new tax obligations.¹⁹⁵ While the first major post-war wave of labour migration had incorporated a degree of voluntarism, a desire for personal enrichment, the post-1920 exodus was one conducted almost entirely under duress. T. F. Sandford commented bitterly: 'The ten shilling tax has done more than anything to break up the tribal system upon which the government of the country must depend until something has been produced which can replace it.'¹⁹⁶

The Plateau missions confirmed the unprecedented denudation of manpower, even surpassing wartime mass levies in some areas. In Western Bemaland it was reported that 'most of the villages' were 'empty of young men'. Many catechists had to resign themselves to instructing only women and children.¹⁹⁷ At Chilonga, in southern

Bembaland, missionaries compared the war's impact when 'villages were looked after by the old people, women and children' with the 10s. 0d. tax impact when the disruption was 'no less'. The exodus to the mines wasn't coerced, they observed, as in wartime, but the conditions were 'similar' due to the tax rise.¹⁹⁸ Just as the war years had realised the enormous untapped labour potential of most of Northern Rhodesia, particularly the Plateau region, so the post-war drive for maximum efficiency in census and tax collection after four years of declining control helped ensure that thousands of Africans were inexorably drawn into the colonial economic nexus. The strain of this exceptional colonial demand, however, was aggravated by the obverse need for officials to grant large numbers of exemptions to elderly people and others.¹⁹⁹ This period of unparalleled social pressure²⁰⁰ was only partly relieved in 1925 when the authorities belatedly agreed to reduce the tax to 7s. 6d., following numerous district reports critical of the levy.²⁰¹ However, even this lesser amount was still high for a region severely deficient in local mining and agricultural industries and, as contemporary sources indicate, the previous five years had already caused enormous social damage commensurate with, or in some districts possibly surpassing, that of the war years.

White soldier settlers and renewed colonial land pressures

In 1917, as the lives of hundreds of black Northern Rhodesians were being sacrificed to the ruthless demands of an imperial war, arrangements were already well in hand for the post-war acquisition of significant areas of African land as an integral part of Northern Rhodesia's agreed contribution to the imperial soldier settlement scheme. In May 1917, for instance, the Company's Inspector of Lands had drawn up comprehensive plans outlining suitable areas for settlement. As such farms needed to be 'within reach of the Congo and southern markets, proposed areas were mainly isolated alongside the railway line between Livingstone and Lusaka.²⁰²

It was a settlement scheme, however, to be strictly regulated by an economy-conscious London Wall. D. O. Malcolm, for instance, insisted that 'our offer of 500,000 acres would not merely be intended to reward men for having fought in the war'. A universal award of free land was 'not a function of our shareholders who like other taxpayers have borne their full share of the cost of the war'. Indigenous 'South African' settlers would not qualify. In stark contrast to the lax and uncoordinated pre-war settlement policies, there would be no undercapitalised *bijwoner*

(derogatory term for poor Afrikaner dirt farmer) settlement which might become a financial burden upon the Company. The scheme, Malcolm continued, could 'not [...] go beyond the offer of free land to men from overseas, able to finance and look after themselves'.²⁰³

It was the rich agricultural and fly-free cattle-rearing lands of the Tonga, many of whom had so recently served in the carrier corps, which therefore bore the brunt of the immediate post-war soldier-settlement land pressure. Many Tonga understandably refused to surrender their ancient land rights in return for the limited benefits of monetary compensation. To break down resistance some Company officials applied subtle pressures; for example, allegations of starting bush fires or trespass were used to encourage removal. Thus, when one chief, Nakwesa, refused to move it was 'suggested that his people had been the cause of the bush fire' and 'that it would be better if he moved away from the farming area'.²⁰⁴ It was later revealed that the fire in question was in fact due to 'certain drivers passing through'.²⁰⁵

Nakwesa and other Tonga leaders, such as Sindamu, eventually lost their fight.²⁰⁶ One, however, Chief Mwanachingwala, appears to have successfully resisted Company pressures through sheer persistence. He claimed that to move and rebuild new gardens would require up to eight years and 'every bit [...] of old land was now occupied by whites and now the whites were at their very doors'. Even if he vacated his land, 'you will again come and say "We want this land, go out we want it"'.²⁰⁷ After over twelve months of relentless but fruitless pressure, it was the Colonial authorities who were compelled to retreat. The District Commissioner concluded that an order to move would only 'raise deep and lasting resentment'; the only 'course possible' was 'the withdrawal of the whites'.²⁰⁸ Three projected white farms were subsequently reassigned to other areas. The authorities hoped this successful resistance would not be copied elsewhere.²⁰⁹

In fact, no other Tonga leaders appeared to have achieved Mwanachingwala's degree of success. The Company did, however, face resistance elsewhere, notably from Chief Msoro, who lived near Msoro Mission in the north-east. In his struggle against the authorities, he was at least supported by one important European ally, Bishop Alston May.²¹⁰ By contrast, the Ngoni-Chewa peoples clustered around Fort Jameson proved relatively defenceless against the Company post-war land pressures. Many Ngoni had been disappointed by the revocation of wartime promises of arms in return for war service.²¹¹ Instead, they witnessed the return of old planters from war service, and even new 'soldier-planters', increasing the land pressure in this most densely

populated area of the north-east. It was a problem revealing again the ruthless nature of Company machinations, as this area became one of the first to be surveyed for the inevitable Reserve Commission which met later in 1923–4. Thus T. F. Sandford scathingly deplored the cynical exploitation of a war-ravaged Ngoni-Chewa people. He dismissed E. H. Lane-Poole's efforts to map out reserves in the Fort Jameson area as 'running around [...] with his hands quite tied'; knowing that 'the North Charterland Exploration Company's claims will not be disputed [...] that he must stick to the present reserves as proposed by Marshall and Willis in [...] 1913/14, neither of whom knew anything about the district, its history, or its people, and who did not consult any chiefs and were not capable of doing so in a sympathetic manner'.²¹²

Sandford's observation provides a fitting epitaph to nearly seven years of unprecedented colonial exploitation of black Northern Rhodesians, over four of which were experienced under the relentless pressures of a brutal imperial war. They were, nevertheless, years during which new avenues of African political, social and economic development were forged, developments which in themselves heralded the ultimate demise of European colonial hegemony.

Conclusion

'Without exaggeration [...] they carried us to victory upon their heads'.

T. Cullen Young, Society of Malawi Library
(Page, *Chiwaya War*, p. 114).

This book has revealed the acute political duress exerted upon a fragile colonial political economy unexpectedly and disastrously plunged into a full-scale imperial war. In exploring this theme of colonial crisis, moreover, it has been possible to focus not solely upon the declining fortunes of the Northern Rhodesian state but, equally significantly, to uncover the origins of post-war developments in African social, political and economic consciousness.

The First World War had clearly been of momentous importance in the context of the Colonial state's role in Northern Rhodesian society. During the last twelve months of hostilities, and indeed beyond it, the authoritarian institutions of the state suffered a general loss of power and influence unparalleled since the early days of conquest. And yet, in overall terms, the impact of the 'Great War' was ambiguous. If, in the long term, it fully exposed the inherent structural weaknesses of

white authority, in the short term it just as assuredly demonstrated its potential strengths. To meet escalating military imperatives, the state was compelled to rapidly expand its activities and intervene in all sectors of the Colonial economy. Existing mineral resources were utilised far beyond peacetime production levels to facilitate urgent Allied needs for copper and lead. Through lavish government incentives European farmers were inspired to enormously expand cultivation acreages with record crop yields. Above all, and crucial to Northern Rhodesia's survival in the war, African food and labour resources were exploited on a massive, unprecedented scale. Entirely new food and labour areas were forcibly opened up and old areas driven to the point of exhaustion. For a while at least, black Northern Rhodesians were securely harnessed to the rapacious demands of an imperial war machine. In order to facilitate such massive exploitation, the network of Colonial control was necessarily widened and compacted. The greatly magnified political power of the state was expressed through coercive, indeed draconian measures such as the Tanganyika Public Safety Proclamation and the 1916 Administration of Natives Proclamation. Under Clause Seven of the former and the 'reasonable order' clause of the latter, for instance, the political grip of the state over chiefs, headmen and their peoples was immeasurably tightened.

For such extraordinary political and economic pressure exerted upon African society, the state, as we have seen, was to pay an immense political price. The continued success of such wartime extensions of state control now largely rested upon the survival of three main, interdependent forces within the state. Firstly, and most importantly, the role of government (in this case the Colonial Office and the British South Africa Company), as the ultimate guardian of social order which had to be preserved to ensure that demands upon African society remained as equitable as possible under wartime conditions. Secondly, and in the absence of substantial white administration, the roles of traditional elites (African chiefs and headmen) as primary Colonial mediators of war demands had to be protected and sustained. Finally, the viability of the Colonial state in wartime ultimately depended upon the existence and availability of substantial coercive forces to enforce Colonial demands and, if necessary, control and protect Colonial mediators.

During the pre-war period the role of the state had been unusually limited, reflecting Northern Rhodesia's anomalous position as a neglected and declining asset of a commercially-minded British South Africa Company. The responsibilities of social order were disproportionately devolved upon African mediating agencies. Peacetime demands

upon these agencies had remained limited. Indeed, substantial areas of the Territory were left isolated on the periphery of this particular colonial political economy. Minimum administration at minimum cost facilitated such autonomy within the Northern Rhodesian Colonial system; even statutory labour and tax demands could always (as during the major Kasempa disturbances in 1912), be temporarily sacrificed in deference to the overriding policy of social peace and economy.

The outbreak of the First World War would obviously challenge this fragile concept of social order. The state was forced to become directly interventionist on an unprecedented scale in all sectors of African society. And yet, despite growing difficulties, these three pre-conditions for colonial order were preserved for the greater part of the next two years. In what was initially a purely defensive war, the state, despite some setbacks, was able to retain its legitimacy and overall sovereignty over internal social order. Demands could be maintained at a reasonably tolerable level during such a localised conflict. Secondly, it was able to successfully protect and control its collaborators. When, for instance, Ngoni traditional authority was apparently challenged by the nefarious activities of a local mission-educated elite, the state rapidly and successfully intervened to protect the position of its agents as vital wartime collaborators. Above all, the state's political credibility was underpinned and guaranteed by the visible presence of substantial coercive forces.

The 1916 Northey offensive into German East Africa effectively demolished all three legs of the 'colonial stool'. As the War Office displaced the Colonial Office as director of military operations and Northey's columns disappeared deep into German East Africa, the civil government, in turn, slowly but inexorably surrendered its sovereign control over the pace and mounting scale of military demand and, with it, internal social order. Northern Rhodesia found itself in an invidious position as an unwilling designated surrogate for Nyasaland's failing war effort. A tide of African hostility and resistance mounted as indiscriminate and disproportionate food and labour demands grew rapidly, mortality rates along war carrier routes increased and African household production collapsed in many areas. The next stage of disintegration of the Northern Rhodesian Colonial state began with the crumbling of the over-burdened collaborative system. Many chiefs and headmen increasingly defaulted in their role as mediators for rising military demands, as they found themselves deprived of state protection and isolated from their followers, having adopted predominantly exploitative and often repressive wartime roles themselves. This virtual transformation from a civil to a military state had thus destroyed the basis of African

cooperation. The loss of collaboration in turn forced the government to increasingly resort to coercive and repressive tactics. The subsequent departure of the bulk of the Territory's coercive forces to the front lines after 1916, however, deprived it of even this vital resource and thereby initiated the context for the third and decisive element of crisis.

The elements of discord were graphically symbolised by the ensuing bitter struggle between, on the one hand, the Colonial Office and London Wall BSAC Directorate, united in the defence and rescue of social order and, on the other, the predatory military establishment obsessed with securing imperial victory and destructive of social peace. The stark reality of the crisis was made patently clear by the drastic nature of the Colonial Office intervention in September 1918 to ban the use of compulsion for war carrier recruitment; a desperate bid to destroy military domination of the state and salvage the remnants of social order in Northern Rhodesia. As it was, the move came too late. The unexpected German invasion four weeks later fully exposed the myth of colonial power and authority. Watchtower rapidly filled the political vacuum, promising a new world free of colonial repression. It was only the fortuitous arrival of the Armistice, not Colonial Office intervention, which prevented the Northern Rhodesian colonial state from descending into the abyss of total collapse.

If the war had engendered a crisis for white authority it had also precipitated crisis within many sections of African society. Thousands of black Northern Rhodesians had perished on war carrier service, thousands more from war-inspired famine and disease. And yet, if war had proved to be a veritable holocaust for many Africans, for others it had forged new avenues of social, political and economic opportunity and development. Africans had witnessed and appreciated the acute economic dependence of the state upon their resources and skills, African cultivators had skilfully exploited wartime market opportunities. Before 1917, Shila and Lunda cassava-growers had been the mainstay of imperial forces stationed on the north-east border. In the north-west, Tonga and Ila peasant cultivators, for instance, had fully participated in the war-expanded domestic mealie market. African traders and storekeepers had benefited substantially from wartime and post-war trading booms. The wartime paralysis of white mission authority and influence had fostered the expanded role of African evangelists with the opportunity to express independent thought. Through Watchtower, Africans had demonstrated their profound disillusionment with the existing colonial system so repressive in wartime, and the need for change. Despite the impracticalities and idiosyncrasies of Watchtower's conception of

a new, alternative society to the colonial model, its importance as an embryonic forerunner of modern Zambian nationalism must not be underestimated.

Within this framework of a new social and economic awareness, the African military, both *askari* and *tenga-tenga*, appear to have played a distinctive, if not leading role. As we have seen, many became active in post-war anti-colonial movements, both traditionally-based (Butwa) and new (Watchtower). Others, more peacefully integrated into post-war colonial society, set up their own distinctive societies and communities, expressing new awareness of European skills and organisation. *Mbeni* societies, inspired as they had been *by* wartime experiences, were to provide an important vehicle for action and protest during the Copperbelt mining disturbances more than fifteen years later, which heralded Northern Rhodesia's first entry into the world of urban worker consciousness. As Sir Harry Johnston correctly observed when he addressed the African Society in March 1918, the First World War had, indeed, marked the 'beginning of revolt against the white man's supremacy' in Africa.

Glossary

arinoti	low-status dancers in war-inspired <i>mbeni</i> African dance formations
askari	African soldier
bakabilo	priest/councillor
boma	administrative/government post
bwali	African bread/mealie dough balls
bwana	European (term of respect)
capitao	gang supervisor or foreman
chikote	leather/rawhide whip
citemene	mode of agriculture involving tree cutting, burning of branches and ash fertilisation
dagga	marijuana or cannabis
eleusine	finger-millet
impi	regiment
indaba	meeting/assembly
induna	headman
kalela	military/war-inspired dance formations
machila	canvas litter slung along poles
male	red millet
manioc	cassava
manjohni	European/white soldier
manyunsa	chief's messenger or assistant (Ngoni)
marini	high-status dancers in war-inspired <i>mbeni</i> African dance formations
masaka	white millet
mbeni	fast-paced dance with heavy drumming
m'fume	chief/councillor
mitanda	outlying garden huts/settlement
mulandu	case/argument, dispute
mulasa	annual tribute labour obligation to chiefs
musebo	road construction or repair
posho	rations/allowances
ruga-ruga	German-led African/Swahili-speaking irregular troops
sjambok	leather whip
tembe	square, rectangular hut
tenga-tenga	carrier/porter
ujamaa	artificial large communal settlement
ulendo	journey

Notes

1 Pre-War Northern Rhodesia: The Structural Weaknesses of Colonial Control

1. Gouldsbury and Sheane, *The Great Plateau of Northern Rhodesia*, p. 63.
2. National Archives of Zambia (hereafter NAZ), Shelf 17, Box 102. As Ian Henderson has observed, the problem was largely one of access: 'The sulphide ores of the Rhodesian copper belt lay unused because of the technical problems of extraction.' Henderson, *The Limits of Colonial Power*, p. 295. For a detailed discussion of the early problems affecting the Northern Rhodesian copper industry before the technological breakthrough and massive expansion after 1925, see Merle Davis, *Modern Industry and the African*, pp. 139–42.
3. NAZ, Shelf 17, Box 102.
4. Gell Papers (hereafter GP), BSA/10/8, BSAC to Secretary, NCEC, July 1910.
5. GP, BSA/5/465, H. Wilson Fox, *Memorandum containing Notes and Information concerning Land Policy*, 21 June 1912.
6. Rhodes House Library (hereafter RHL), H. Wilson Fox, *Problems of Development and Policy*, 1910.
7. GP, BSA/5/465, H. Wilson Fox, *Memorandum [...] concerning Land Policy*, 21 June 1912. Northern Rhodesia's grossly underdeveloped state contrasted markedly with other neighbouring British Central/East African colonies with both larger settler communities and infrastructure. See, for instance, Lonsdale and Berman, *Unhappy Valley: Conflict in Kenya and Africa*; Samson, *Britain, South Africa and the East African Campaign 1914–18* and Page, *The Chiwaya War: Malawians and the First World War*, *passim*.
8. GP, BSA/5/465, H. Birchenough, *Report on Land Policy and Land Settlement in Northern Rhodesia*, 8 August 1912, p. 99.
9. GP, BSA/4/508; see L. S. Jameson, Transcript of a speech delivered at Salisbury, 22 December 1913, p. 27 (enc. in *Greater Rhodesia*, transcripts of speeches delivered by L. S. Jameson at Salisbury and Bulawayo 1913–14).
10. GP, L. S. Jameson, *Report of the Nineteenth Ordinary General Meeting of the BSAC*, 17 December 1914, p. 13.
11. GP, BSA/3/361. In 1912 Northern Rhodesia's annual administrative deficit stood at £47,620, rising to £51,708 in 1913 and dropping to £48,177 in March 1914, only after a stringent reduction on the Capital/Expenditure Account. See H. Wilson Fox: *Review of the Political and Commercial Policy of the BSAC*, 25 February 1918.
12. GP, L. S. Jameson, *Report of the Nineteenth Ordinary General Meeting of the BSAC*, 17 December 1914, p. 69.
13. See Chanock, *Unconsummated Union: Britain, Rhodesia and South Africa 1900–1945* for a detailed analysis of British strategic policy in the Central African area, especially pp. 62–4.

14. For an analysis of the concept of protecting African welfare embodied in the 'Trust' and its application to the Central African area, see R. E. Robinson, *The Trust in British Central African Policy 1889–1939* (PhD dissertation: Cambridge University, 1951), *passim*.
15. Robinson, *The Trust*, p. 74.
16. Robinson, 'The Moral Disarmament of African Empire 1919–1947', p. 89.
17. Chanock, *Unconsummated Union*, p. 63.
18. Lord Milner to Colonial Office, 5 April 1899 (enc. in Headlam, *The Milner Papers*, p. 22). See also Gann, *A History of Northern Rhodesia: Early Days to 1953*, pp. 129–30.
19. For a discussion of the historical background to Barotseland's unique constitutional position see E. Stokes, 'Barotseland: The Survival of an African State' pp. 261–301. See also below, p. 10. Nevertheless, as A. Roberts succinctly observes, this favoured political status could not ultimately protect the Lozi from the Company's spoliative economic policies; see *A History of Zambia*, pp. 180–1. It was a factor to be devastatingly underlined during the aftermath of the 1915 pleuropneumonia epidemic as thousands of Lozi males were driven out on to wartime labour markets. See Chapter 2, pp. 49–53 and 57–63 for weaknesses of the Colonial Office response to the BSAC's callous handling of the Barotse bovine pleuropneumonia crisis of 1914–15.
20. Palley, *The Constitutional History and Law of Southern Rhodesia*, p. 156.
21. Milner to Selborne, 15 June 1897 (enc. in Headlam, *Milner Papers* Vol. 1, p. 110). After 1898 the hierarchy of administrative control in Northern Rhodesia consisted firstly of the Administrator (a Company appointee) and his executive staff in Livingstone, who were directly answerable to the Board of Directors at London Wall and responsible for the day-to-day running of the Territory. The hierarchy of imperial control then commenced through the office of Resident Commissioner, an imperial appointee, resident in Salisbury with special responsibilities for police, military and African affairs. His duties were supervisory rather than executive although he was *ex officio* member (without a vote) of both the executive and legislative councils of Southern Rhodesia. The Resident Commissioner acted as the local representative for the High Commissioner in South Africa who, theoretically, exercised extensive powers over Company administration in both Rhodesias, including approval of all ordinances and control of the sentence passed by a Rhodesian court. He controlled all appointments to the ranks of Magistrate or Native Commissioner and he could suspend Company officials. African affairs, especially land, were his direct responsibility, and any Company legislation considered discriminatory could be sent to the Secretary of State at the Colonial Office who represented the Supreme authority over both Rhodesias. For further details of the administrative hierarchy, see Duignan, 'Native Policy in Southern Rhodesia 1890–23' (PhD dissertation: Stanford University, 1961), pp. 139–43 and Palley, *The Constitutional History and Law of Southern Rhodesia*, pp. 145–57.
22. *Northern Rhodesia Government Gazette*, Vol. 1(1) (17 August 1911).
23. GP, BSA/10/9, H. Wilson Fox, Memorandum, 'Order in Council for Northern Rhodesia', 15 July 1910.
24. GP, BSA/10/17, L. A. Wallace to BSAC, 27 October 1911.
25. NAZ, Shelf 8, Box 1, DoNA Annual Report 1911–12.

26. NAZ, ZA 1/14, DM Kasama to SNA, 23 December 1913.
27. NAZ, ZA 1/14, Assistant SNA to DM Kasama, 23 January 1914.
28. NAZ, KTB, Solwezi DNB, I, p. 2.
29. The importance of indigenous collaborative agencies as the most viable means for colonial states endowed with limited resources to impose their authority and thereby secure long-term social, economic and political goals has been the focus of several studies over the past half century. See principally Robinson, '*Non-European Foundations of European Imperialism*', pp. 117–44. Also, A. J. Dachs, 'Politics of Collaboration: Imperialism in Practice', in B. Pachai (ed.) *The Early History of Malawi* (London: Longman, 1972), pp. 283–9 and, for a specialised study of their use within the colonial mining industry, van Onselen, 'The Role of Collaborators in the Rhodesian Mining Industry', *passim*.
30. RHL, Williams Papers (hereafter WP), T. R. Williams to Mother, 5 August 1918.
31. GP, BSA/9/54, P. L. Gell to Milton, 17 July 1902. See also Slinn, 'Commercial Concessions and Politics', pp. 368–9.
32. For a comprehensive treatment of many of these studies, see Isaacman, 'Resistance and Collaboration in Southern and Central Africa, c.1860–1920', pp. 31–62.
33. See Bull, 'Lewanika's Achievement', pp. 463–72.
34. See Rennie, 'The Ngoni States and European Intrusion', pp. 324–31. For parallels with Cetschwayo and the defeat and collapse of the Zulu kingdom in 1879, see E. Yorke, *Battle Story: Isandlwana 1879* (Stroud: The History Press, 2011), pp. 18–31.
35. For the devastating socio-economic consequences of Mpeseni's defeat, see J. A. Barnes, *Politics in a Changing Society* (London: Oxford University Press, 1954), pp. 93–6.
36. For a comprehensive treatment of the Company's subjugation of the Bemba and other north-eastern peoples, see Roberts, *History of the Bemba*, pp. 255–92.
37. For the importance of the 'relative timing of an African Society's confrontation with European political ambitions' as a significant variable in the 'politics of conquest', see Lonsdale, 'The Politics of Conquest', p. 844.
38. Roberts, *A History of Zambia*, p. 171.
39. Not until 1916, halfway through the war, was the Company able to persuade Musokantanda to reside in Northern Rhodesia, and only then with the promise of substantial political concessions. See Chapter 5, pp. 130–1.
40. See below, pp. 19–21. The problem was undoubtedly exacerbated by the profound confusion over the validity of the BSAC's authority in the Kasempa salient, fuelling a bitter, long-standing dispute between the Company, the Kaonde and the Lozi. See S. Shaloff, 'The Kasempa Salient: The Tangled Web of British-Kaonde-Lozi Relations', *International Journal of African Historical Studies*, Vol. 5(1) (1972): 22–40.
41. See below p. 18 and Chapter 6, p. 174.
42. See, for instance, Garvey, 'The Development of the White Fathers' Mission among the Bemba-speaking Peoples', especially Chapters 1–5 (PhD dissertation: University of London, 1974).
43. NAZ, ZA 7/1/1/8, Mweru-Luapula District Annual Report 1913–14.

44. The National Archives (hereafter TNA), CO. 879/116, PRO. Wallace to HC, 6 January 1915.
45. NAZ, ZA 7/1/1/1, Awemba Annual Report 1913–14.
46. NAZ, ZA 7/1/1/1, Kasama Annual Report 1913–14.
47. NAZ, ZA 7/1/1/7, Chilanga Annual Report 1913–14.
48. T. O. Ranger, 'European Attitudes and African Realities: The Rise and Fall of the Mataloc Chiefs of South-East Tanzania', *Journal of African History*, Vol. 20(1) (1979): 63–82.
49. See, for instance, T. Beidelman, 'Chiefship in Ukaguru: The Invention of Ethnicity and Tradition in Kaguru Colonial History', *International Journal of African Historical Studies*, Vol. 11(2) (1978): 227–46; J. Tosh, 'Colonial Chiefs in a Stateless Society: A Case Study from Northern Uganda', *Journal of African History*, Vol. 14(3) (1973): 473–90 and J. Vincent, 'Colonial Chiefs and the Making of Class: A Case Study from Teso, Eastern Uganda', *Africa*, Vol. 47(2) (1977): 140–59, for examples of such collaborative misperceptions in colonial Tanganyika and Uganda.
50. NAZ, ZA 7/1/1/8, Mweru-Luapula Annual Report 1913–14.
51. For a detailed discussion of this in the context of the wartime problem with mediators, see Chapter 5, pp. 148–9.
52. NAZ, ZA 2/1/2, District Circ. No. 14, 16 April 1914.
53. NAZ, ZA 7/1/1/1, Mporokoso Annual Report 1913–14.
54. NAZ, ZA 7/1/1/7, Luangwa Annual Report 1913–14.
55. NAZ, ZA 7/1/1/1, Awemba Annual Report 1913–14.
56. NAZ, ZA 7/1/1/4, Petauke Annual Report 1913–14.
57. NAZ, ZA 7/1/1/1, Mporokoso Annual Report 1913–14.
58. GP, BSA/10/5, W. L. Hichens, Report on the Administration of the north-west and north-east Rhodesia, 24 January 1910, p. 40. The BSAC's neglect of chiefly subsidy payments also occurred to a lesser extent in Southern Rhodesia. Headmen 'who performed almost as many services as Chiefs' were not paid until as late as 1912. Duignan, 'Native Policy in Southern Rhodesia', p. 164.
59. NAZ, ZA 7/1/1/9, Fife Annual Report 1913–14.
60. NAZ, ZA 7/1/1/1, Mporokoso Annual Report 1913–14.
61. NAZ, KN1/1, Abercorn *boma*, for instance, administering several local tribal groupings such as the Mambwe, Lungu and Bemba, recruited most of its messenger staff from the latter, reflecting strict 'martial race' criteria. Abercorn DNB, I, pp. 146–8.
62. NAZ, ZA 2/1/2, District Circ. No. 17, 22 May 1914.
63. NAZ, ZA 7/1/1/1, Mporokoso Annual Report 1913–14.
64. NAZ, ZA 7/1/1/4, Petauke Annual Report 1913–14.
65. NAZ, ZA 2/1/2, District Circ. No. 22, 11 June 1914.
66. For a detailed discussion of the role of the various mission societies in the early colonial period, see Rotberg, *Christian Missionaries and the Creation of Northern Rhodesia*, *passim*.
67. NAZ, KDH1/1, Kasama DNB. See, for example, the Kasama Magistrates' dependence upon the local White Fathers of Chilubula Mission for information regarding the Nandola succession dispute, 2 February 1914.
68. NAZ, DoNA Annual Report 1911–12, p. 5.
69. NAZ, ZA 7/1/1/4, Fort Jameson Annual Report 1913–14.

70. NAZ, KSD4/1, Mpika DNB, II, p. 227. The importance of tax evasion and of 'refugee communities in backwater areas' as forms of African resistance to colonial authority has been highlighted in a study by A. and B. Isaacman: 'Resistance and Collaboration in Southern and Central Africa', pp. 49 and 51. In the case of the Unga, Batwa and 'swamp Bisa' it is clear that whole sections of these peoples successfully resisted Company authority by this form of non-confrontation.
71. NAZ, ZA 7/1/1/2, Balovale Annual Report 1913–14.
72. The Lake Bangweulu and Kasempa areas were by no means the only areas which had proved inimical to BSAC authority. In 1907 the Company had mobilised its forces to meet serious discontent amongst the Ila or 'Mashukulumbwe' and rumours of a planned rebellion. More serious was the violent tax rebellion by another 'backwater community', the Gwembe Tonga domiciled in a remote Zambesi gorge. For a detailed discussion of both of these early protests, see Rotberg, *The Rise of Nationalism in Central Africa*, pp. 73–6. Nevertheless, the southern Lunda and Kaonde areas of Kasempa undoubtedly represented the most persistent and recurring trouble spots of the pre-war period.
73. NAZ, KTB, Solwezi DNB, I, p. 2.
74. See Macpherson: *Anatomy of a Conquest*, pp. 161–4 for an exhaustive study of some of the often fruitless coercive pressures applied in the area during the pre-war period.
75. The profound weaknesses of the Company's control in the Lunda division of Kasempa were graphically revealed in a 1914 report. Local officials had been forced to grant extraordinary politico-economic concessions to the Lunda to secure stability in the area including withdrawal of early restrictions on the cross-border trade in rubber, powder and calico, exemption from road-making and even withdrawal of instructions to collect into larger villages. The only major government attempt to stamp its authority had been futile attempts to curb the cross-border arms trade. Even in 1914, the report's author warned against 'any open withdrawal of the Concessions' since this would 'impress the people with a lack of faith'. J. M. Pound, 'Some Notes on the Lunda Division', NAZ, Shelf 16–17, Box 102, Misc. Report, 23 February 1914.
76. TNA, CO. 417/511, DC Kasempa to Administrator, 25 March 1912.
77. TNA, CO. 417/511, Wallace to HC, 30 March 1912.
78. TNA, CO. 417/511, H. W. Just, Minute, 7 May 1912.
79. TNA, CO. 417/511, E. Marsh, Minute, 7 May 1912.
80. TNA, CO. 417/511, H. Lambert, Minute, 7 May 1912.
81. TNA, CO. 417/511, Lord Gladstone, 'Memorandum, re Affairs in the Kasempa District, Northern Rhodesia', 18 April 1912.
82. TNA, CO. 417/511, Wallace to HC, 30 March 1912.
83. NAZ, ZA 7/1/1/6, NZ. Kasempa Annual Report 1913–14. In February 1914, despite some progress, the Kasempa tax record remained one of the worst in the Territory, a situation, which, in the words of one official was, 'only to be expected [...] with two foreign borders and such a people'. Again officials were extremely anxious not to antagonise the Lunda and it was stressed in 1914 that after 1st July 'from Balunda and Wandembo, no further 1913 tax should be asked for'. The 'greater number of defaulters' was,

- predictably, from the 'difficult people [...] situated conveniently near the border'; they would 'have to be carefully dealt with'. J. M. Pound, 'Some notes on the Lunda Division', NAZ, Shelf 16-17, Box 102, Misc. Report, 23 February 1914.
84. NAZ, ZA 7/1/1/6, Solwezi Annual Report 1913-14.
 85. NAZ, ZA 7/1/1/6, Kasempa Annual Report 1913-14.
 86. GP, BSA/8/153, Dr J. C. Spillane, Sleeping Sickness Report No. 9, NE Rhodesia, 6 October 1908.
 87. *Ibid.*
 88. *Ibid.* For a comprehensive description of the BSAC Sleeping Sickness policies in Northern Rhodesia, see Gelfand, *Northern Rhodesia in the Days of the Charter*.
 89. GP, BSA/8/153, BSAC to Admr. NE Rhodesia, undated, November 1908.
 90. GP, BSA/10/20, Dr May, Report on Sleeping Sickness in Northern Rhodesia, December 1910 to February 1912.
 91. NAZ, ZA 7/1/1/8, Mweru-Luapula Annual Report 1913-14.
 92. Significantly, the railway which reached the Congo border in 1909 traversed only the central north-western districts from Victoria Falls, reflecting its primary purpose as a direct link between the Wankie coal-mining area of Southern Rhodesia and the Katanga copper mines, rather than as a catalyst to the internal development of Northern Rhodesia. Nevertheless, the railway line necessarily provided market access for local African and European producers and the only significant zone of development in the whole Territory. See S. E. Katzenellenbogen, 'The Miner's Frontier: Transport and General Economic Development', in L. H. Gann and P. Duignan (eds), *Colonialism in Africa* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969), pp. 360-426 for a succinct examination of the development of the Northern Rhodesian railway system.
 93. Laurel Van Horn, 'The Agricultural History of Barotseland', p.152.
 94. For a definition of the term 'peasant' I have adopted that utilised by C. Bundy, namely, 'a rural cultivator enjoying access to a specific portion of land, the fruits of which he can dispose of as if he owned the land and who, by the use of family labour, seeks to satisfy the consumption needs of his family and to meet the demands arising from his involvement in a wider economic system'. Bundy, 'The Emergence and Decline of a South African Peasantry', p. 371. For other studies of the development of African peasantries during early colonial rule elsewhere in Africa, see, for instance, Arrighi, 'Labour Supplies in Historical Perspective', pp. 212-16 and Lonsdale and Berman, 'Coping with the Contradictions', pp. 494-7. The emphasis of some of these studies upon formal colonial market development as the principal dynamic of African peasantisation has, however, been challenged by M. L. Chanock who significantly stresses the importance of pre-colonial peasant formation in Malawi when 'virtually the whole area was linked to the outside world in a particularly exploitative trading relationship during much of the nineteenth century'. Chanock, 'Agricultural Change', p. 397. It is an argument applicable to large areas of adjoining Northern Rhodesia. See also T. O. Ranger, 'Growing From the Roots: Reflections on Peasant Research in Central and Southern Africa', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol. 5(1) (1978): 99-133 (102-3).

95. NAZ, ZA 7/1/1/3, Magoye Annual Report 1913–14. For parallel intense African commercial activity within the Southern Rhodesian grain market, see J. M. Mackenzie, 'African Labour in the Chartered Company Period', *Rhodesian History*, Vol. 1 (1970): 43–58 (52–3).
96. NAZ, Shelf 8, Box 1, DoNA Annual Reports 1911–12 and 1912–13.
97. NAZ, Shelf 8, Box 1, DoNA Annual Report 1912–13.
98. The *Livingstone Mail*, 18 December 1914.
99. Before the First World War, land could be purchased for prices as low as 3*d.* per acre. Only land along the railway belt reached from 4*s.* 9*d.* to 5*s.* 0*d.* per acre and even this was half the post-war price. See N. C. Rothman, 'African Urban Development in the Colonial Period: A Study of Lusaka, 1905–1964' (PhD dissertation: Northwestern University, 1972), p. 6.
100. See Arrighi, 'Labour Supplies in Historical Perspective', p. 209 for similar observations regarding the influx into Southern Rhodesia of many Afrikaner subsistence cultivators 'indistinguishable by style of life, techniques of production and crops cultivated, from the African peasantry'.
101. The *Livingstone Mail*, 18 December 1914.
102. *Ibid.*
103. NAZ, ZA 7/1/1/5, Mumbwa Annual Report 1913–14.
104. Macpherson, *Anatomy of a Conquest*, p. 208.
105. NAZ, ZA 7/1/1/5, Namwala Annual Report 1913–14.
106. NAZ, Shelf 8, Box 1, DoNA Annual Report 1912–13.
107. NAZ, Shelf 8, Box 1, DoNA Annual Report 1911–12. For the importance of the African cattle industry in the early colonial market of Southern Rhodesia, see Arrighi, 'Labour Supplies in Historical Perspective', p. 201.
108. Nevertheless, as Leroy Vail observes, even in the pre-war period BSAC game, settlement and labour policies were apparently beginning to seriously disturb the ecological balance of parts of the north-east Plateau. See L. Vail, 'Ecology and History: The Example of Eastern Zambia', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol. 3(2) (1977): 129–55 (134–42).
109. GP, J. C. De Josselin de Jong; *Report on the possibilities of Agricultural Development in Northern Rhodesia*, BSA/465.
110. *Ibid.*
111. NAZ, Shelf 9, Box 13. See, for instance, DoNA Annual Report 1913–14.
112. See Musambachime, 'The Agricultural History of Mweru-Luapula Area to 1940', pp. 10–11; Perrings, *Black Mineworkers in Central Africa*, p. 19.
113. NAZ, Shelf 8, Box 1, DoNA Annual Report 1913–14.
114. Although the extent of Ngoni cattle losses to the Company forces in the immediate aftermath of the 1897–8 war remains uncertain, some observers estimate that up to two-thirds of the estimated 20,000 head in Mpeseni's country were expropriated. See J. A. Barnes, *Politics in a Changing Society* (London: Oxford University Press, 1954), pp. 93–4; Rennie, 'The Ngoni States and European Intrusion', p. 330 and Jokonya, 'East Luangwa, 1895–1947', p. 52 for a discussion of this question.
115. For a detailed study of the tribal agricultural systems of both north-west and north-east Rhodesia, see Trapnell and Clothier, *The Soils, Vegetation and Agricultural Systems of North-Eastern Rhodesia* and idem, *The Soils, Vegetation and Agriculture of North-Western Rhodesia: Report of the Ecological Survey* (Lusaka: Government Printer, 1937), *passim*.

116. NAZ, ZA 7/1/1/1, Mpika Annual Report 1913–14.
117. See Gouldsbury and Sheane, *The Great Plateau of Northern Rhodesia*, pp. 300 and 302.
118. For an exhaustive study of the Bemba and their citemene system, see Richards, *Land, Labour and Diet in Northern Rhodesia: An Economic Study of the Bemba Tribe*, pp. 288–300.
119. NAZ, KDH, *Indaba* Report, 9 July 1913, Kasama DNB, II, p. 25.
120. These factors will be discussed in more detail later. See Chapter 6, p. 155.

2 War Labour Recruitment and Mobilisation: The Roots of Crisis

1. Any discussion of Northern Rhodesian labour movements during the pre-war period inevitably suffers from the absence of reliable official figures, particularly in relation to unregistered ‘voluntary’ mine labour leaving the territory and farm labour in general. Consequently, estimates have to be made with an unavoidable degree of inaccuracy. This is particularly true of Northern Rhodesia’s own internal labour consumption, which is almost entirely derived from often inaccurate *boma* estimates. For similar problems encountered with regard to pre-war Central African labour statistics, see Kuczynski, *A Demographic Survey of the British Colonial Empire*, Vol. 2, pp. 442–3 and F. E. Sanderson, ‘The Development of Labour Migration from Nyasaland, 1891–1914’, *Journal of African History*, Vol. 2(2) (1961): 259–271.
2. NAZ, Shelf 8, Box 1, DoNA Annual Report 1911–12. During the year ending 31 March 1912, for example, Southern Rhodesian Government mining returns revealed that a total of 9,446 Northern Rhodesians were employed during that year. Of these only 6,464 were registered through the RNLB, ‘which shows that several thousand labourers have travelled to Southern Rhodesia independently of the Bureau’.
3. C. van Onselen, *Chibaro: African Mine Labour in Southern Rhodesia, 1900–33*, p. 110. See Table 2.2, p. 33.
4. NAZ, Shelf 8, Box 1, DoNA Annual Report 1911–12. In this year, 1912, for instance, the Secretary for Native Affairs reported: ‘It is impossible to determine how many independent Northern Rhodesian natives are working in the south in various capacities other than mining.’
5. The mean number of *recruited* north-eastern Rhodesian Africans working in the Katanga mines was 990 in 1913 and 1,214 in 1914 (no figures for north-west Rhodesia available for those years but probably significantly less). See Table 2.1, p. 31.
6. No figures for unregistered ‘voluntary labour’ are available before 1915. See Tables 2.1 and 2.2, pp. 31–3.
7. See Kuczynski, *Demographic Survey*, p. 438; Gelfand, ‘Migration of African Labourers in Rhodesia and Nyasaland, 1890–1914’, p. 259.
8. See Iliffe, *Agricultural Change in Modern Tanganyika*, p. 16, for examples of small pockets of Bemba, Bisa and Mambwe plantation workers in German East Africa. See also, NAZ, ZA 7/1/1, Abercorn Annual Report 1913–14.

9. See NAZ, ZA 7/1/1/9. Figures approximated on the basis of district labour estimates for 1913 to 1914.
10. *Ibid.*
11. *Ibid.*
12. See NAZ, ZA 7/1/1 and ZA 7/1/2 (enc. relevant district reports). This figure is based on total 1913–14 district estimates of taxable males in the north-west and 1914–15 district estimates for the north-east (census for poll tax purposes was only introduced into the north-east in 1914).
13. See Gelfand, 'Migration of African Labourers', p. 296. He describes the 1907 Sleeping Sickness recruitment ban in the Bangweulu and Mweru districts as a 'serious blow to the industry'.
14. The ban, prompted by the demands of Nyasaland planters for labour protection, incensed Company labour officials. After one heated meeting in August 1911, H. M. Hole attacked the Governor as a 'pompous little bounder, full of self-confidence and without much intelligence'. H. M. Hole to F. J. Newton, 10 August 1911, GP, BSA/7/221. See also H. M. Hole to Sec. BSAC, 7 October 1911, GP, BSA/7/223. For Governor Sharpe's attempts to halt illegal labour migration from Nyasaland, see B. S. Krishnamurthy, 'Economic Policy, Land and Labour in Nyasaland, 1890–1914', in B. Pachai (ed.) *The Early History of Malawi* (London: Longman, 1972), pp. 397–8. Although his pass system failed to significantly stop unauthorised migration it was sufficient to persuade the BSAC to concentrate more heavily on Northern Rhodesia.
15. NAZ, ZA 7/1/1/1/6. See, for instance, Mwinilunga Annual Report 1913–14.
16. GP, BSA/7/217, RNLB Report of the Management and Finance Committee on Future Policy and Finance, 23 June 1910.
17. NAZ, ZA 7/1/1/6, Mwinilunga Annual Report 1913–14.
18. NAZ, ZA 7/1/1/1, SNA to DM Kasama, 1 August 1913 and AM Mpika to SNA, undated (enc. in Mpika Annual Report 1913–14).
19. Perrings, *Black Mineworkers*, p. 15.
20. *Ibid.*, p. 27.
21. GP, BSA/7/219, H. W. Kempster to Birchenough, 19 March 1911. See van Onselen, *Chibaro*, pp. 106–7 for confirmation of these financial constraints upon RNLB recruiting operations. One contemporary, C. N. B. Venables claimed this tended to restrict recruiting to the more accessible southern districts of Northern Rhodesia, *ibid.*, p. 288. This was confirmed by one Abercorn official who, in 1909, blamed the consistent and 'considerable' number of tax defaulters on the fact this remote district was 'exceptionally badly placed as regards facilities for labour', with only a 'small percentage of men' being 'sent to the Mines'. NAZ, KTN 1/1, Abercorn DNB, I, p. 10.
22. NAZ, ZA 7/1/1/5, Namwala Annual Report 1913–14.
23. See Colson, *Marriage and Family Among the Plateau Tonga of Northern Rhodesia*, pp. 64–6, in which the 'absence of any strong labour migration' is stressed, particularly after about 1906 when colonial demand expanded and the Tonga 'discovered the possibilities in cash-cropping'. See also Dixon-Fyle, 'Agricultural Improvement and Political Protest on the Tonga Plateau', p. 581.
24. NAZ, ZA 7/1/1/7, Chilanga Annual Report 1913–14.

25. For the low level of Lozi labour migration for these reasons, forcing labour agents to divert their attention to 'other tribes in the different districts', see Laurel Van Horn, 'The Agricultural History of Barotseland', pp. 155–6.
26. See Perrings, *Black Mineworkers*, pp. 18–20 for a discussion on enhanced commercial activity in these areas and its role as a major obstacle to labour recruitment.
27. For examples of forced labour raids, see van Onselen, *Chibaro*, pp. 104–6 and Macpherson, *Anatomy of a Conquest*, pp. 105–90, but for the reasons given it is highly unlikely such methods were used as frequently as they suggest. The 1912 Kasempa disturbances demonstrated how excessive pressure could be both economically and politically self-defeating, especially with the risk of imperial intervention. See Chapter 1, pp. 19–21.
28. See Palmer, *Land and Racial Domination in Rhodesia*, pp. 80–130 for one major study of this process; see also Arrighi, 'Labour Supplies', pp. 212–14 and I. Phimister, 'Peasant Production and Underdevelopment in Southern Rhodesia, 1890–1914', in R. Palmer and N. Parsons (eds), *The Roots of Rural Poverty in Central and Southern Africa* (London: Heinemann, 1977), pp. 227–8.
29. TNA, CO. 879/116. In May 1915 Harcourt instructed Buxton, in reference to wartime reserve proposals for East Luangwa District, that 'some of the natives are averse to being placed on reserves at present and that in any case no effort should be made to move natives into the reserves in present circumstances'. Harcourt to Buxton, 1 May 1915. For a detailed study of pre-war land policy in this area, see Jokonya, 'East Luangwa, 1895–1947' (PhD dissertation: University of Sussex, 1973). See also Chapter 1, pp. 2–4.
30. Palmer, *Land and Racial Domination*, pp. 104–30.
31. NAZ, ZA 7/1/1/3, Guimbi Annual Report 1913–14.
32. See Roberts, *History of Zambia*, pp. 179–80. See also Chapter 1, pp. 10–11.
33. See, for example, Awemba District Annual Reports 1913–14, NAZ, ZA 7/1/1, recording high levels of labour migration under the auspices of both the RNLB and Robert Williams & Co. At Mpika, geographically closest to the Southern Rhodesian mines, RNLB-registered recruits increased four-fold over the previous year. The exceptional migration was described as a 'serious matter' with villages reduced to 'a few old men' and the food supply seriously affected. Even one Bisa chiefdom in the district, comprising 354 taxable huts, lost 104 men to the mines; Mpika Annual Report 1913–14, NAZ, ZA 7/1/1. See also Roberts, *History of the Bemba*, p. 343. For exceptional migration levels in central and northern Bemba villages, particularly after 1908, resulting in chronic food shortages, see also Garvey, 'The Development of the White Fathers', pp. 208–11.
34. NAZ, ZA 7/1/14. See East Luangwa District Annual Reports 1913–14, in which the escalating migration to Southern Rhodesian mines and farms was highlighted.
35. Strachan, *The First World War, Volume 1: To Arms*, p. 571. Some recent revisionist German historians have recently portrayed Vorbeck's aggressive actions as less than heroic and constituting 'nothing but a military coup'. Stig Förster, 'Imperial Germany: Civil-Military relations', in J. Winter (ed.) *The Cambridge History of The First World War*, Vol. 2, pp. 91–125 (116), and Tanja Bühner, *Die Kaiserliche Schutztruppe für Deutsche-Ostafrika* (Berlin: De

- Gruyter, 2011), pp. 401–77. On the precariousness of Northern Rhodesia's position at the outbreak of war and the consequent immediate need for Belgian assistance, see Paice, *Tip and Run: The Untold Tragedy of the Great War in Africa*, pp. 32–3 and Anderson, *The Forgotten Front: The East African Campaign 1914–18*, p. 46.
36. *Ibid.*, p. 585.
 37. Iliffe, *A Modern History of Tanganyika*, p. 241.
 38. The only other 'hostile' border, that adjoining the Caprivi Zipfel (German south-west Africa), was rapidly secured by Company forces with a virtually bloodless invasion and occupation within six weeks of the outbreak of war.
 39. TNA, CAB 45/14. Sir L. A. Wallace: 'Transport difficulties in the Great War and how the Administrator and his civil servants overcame them'. This critical logistical factor was graphically illustrated by the fate of a single experimental convoy despatched to the north-east border early in the war. Of the 600 oxen drawing thirty wagons loaded with 100 tons of stores despatched from the Railway to Abercorn, not a single animal survived the journey. *Ibid.*
 40. *Ibid.*
 41. *Ibid.*
 42. *Ibid.*
 43. NAZ, ZA 7/1/3/1, Luwingu Annual Report 1915–16.
 44. NAZ, ZA 7/1/3/4, East Luangwa Annual Report 1915–16.
 45. NAZ, ZA 7/1/3/4. See, for example, Namwala Annual Report 1915–16. Similarly, in Kasempa, war labour calls on Kaonde males only commenced later in 1915. Melland, *In Witch-Bound Africa*, p. 27.
 46. NAZ, ZA 7/1/3/4, East Luangwa Annual Report 1915–16.
 47. NAZ, ZA 7/1/3/2, Balovale Annual Report 1915–16.
 48. NAZ, ZA 7/1/2/4, Fort Jameson Annual Report 1914–15.
 49. NAZ, ZA 7/1/3/4, Fort Jameson Annual Report 1915–16.
 50. TNA, CO. 417/585, Wallace to BASC, 14 February 1916.
 51. TNA, CO. 417/588, Wallace to BSAC, 23 June 1916.
 52. TNA, CO. 417/597, PRO. Commandant-General, Report on Military Affairs in Northern Rhodesia, 31 March 1916. For a first-hand albeit brief account of the organisation of the wartime canoe route, see Hughes, *Eighteen Years on Lake Bangweulu*, pp. 85–6, 98, 246 and 256–7. See also, TNA, CO. 417/591, H. C. Marshall, Memorandum, 'Water Transport through the Bangweulu Swamps', 22 November 1916 (enc. in Wallace to HC, 1 October 1917).
 53. TNA, CO. 417/584, Wallace to BSAC, 25 May 1916.
 54. TNA, CAB 45/14, L. A. Wallace: 'Transport Difficulties'.
 55. TNA, CO. 417/585, Wallace to Commandant-General Edwards, 21 August 1916.
 56. *Ibid.*
 57. *Ibid.*
 58. TNA, CO. 417/603, Abercorn Annual Report 1916–17.
 59. TNA, CO. 417/585, Wallace to Commandant-General Edwards, 21 August 1916.
 60. G. T. Pullett, 'Ndola to Chipili', *Central Africa*, No. 419 (November 1917): 246.

61. TNA, CO. 417/591, Wallace to HC, 1 October 1917. See Table 2.3, p. 45 for full war carrier statistics. These Territorial figures for 1914 to 1917, as Wallace admitted, were grossly incomplete due to wartime staff pressures; 'real accuracy' would require the 'inspection of many thousands of documents'. Wallace to HC, 1 October 1917, TNA, CO. 417/591. Moreover, they do not include post-March 1917 war engagement totals which possibly numbered another 150,000 (on the basis of the 1916–17 figures) which, with female and child carriers, could have reached a figure approaching 450,000. With recruits serving three or four times over, this would realise a figure of 100,000 to 150,000 individual carriers used during the whole war period.
62. *Ibid.* Wallace's more precise manpower estimate of 15,000 to 30,000 war carriers serving continuously during 1916, if multiplied by three (to cover the excluded three-and-a-half years before and after 1916) gives a rough estimate of 45,000 to 90,000 war carriers used 'in constant employment'. Female and child carrier labour, and casual short-term male carrier labour again brings the possible total to between 100,000 and 150,000 individual carriers utilised. With other forms of war labour added, for example bridge and road repair, the 'war class' of labour possibly exceeded these estimated totals.
63. TNA, CO. 417/591. Thus war labour figures for north-west Rhodesia for the period August 1914 to March 1917 amounted to a smaller but significant number of 39,094 engagements. Wallace to HC, 1 October 1917.
64. NAZ, BS3/416, Tanganyika Annual Report 1917–18. See also NAZ, Shelf 9, Box 13, DoNA Annual Report 1917–18. This reported a reduced number of 8,622 north-western war carriers deployed during 1917–18, but in the north-east, 79,000 male war carriers were utilised (of whom 24,000 were first-line, serving six months and over) with 28,000 women and children employed on short-distance carrier work.
65. D. P. Gray to Editor, *Livingstone Mail*, 29 October 1915.
66. Report, NWFA Annual Meeting, 1916; *Livingstone Mail*, 8 September 1916.
67. *Ibid.* See also, NAZ, Shelf 9, Box 13, DOA Annual Report 1917–18, which recorded complaints from Magoye farmers regarding the military monopoly of labour as late as March 1918.
68. NAZ, BS3/230, H. Rangeley to DM, Ft Jameson, 22 November 1917.
69. The RNLB restrictions were in fact broadly maintained until the end of the war despite government anger regarding the wastefulness of the planters' 'ticket labour' system. See Chapter 7, p. 195. The Administrator's pledge of 4 August 1917 later became a subject of controversy when planters attempted to use it to secure extended labour privileges during the post-war period. See Chapter 8, pp. 240–2.
70. TNA, CO. 417/584, (Telegram [hereafter Tel.]) Wallace to BSAC, 30 June 1916.
71. NAZ, Shelf 17, Box 102, DoM Annual Report 1915–16.
72. NAZ, Shelf 17, Box 102, DoM Annual Report 1918–19.
73. NAZ, Shelf 17, Box 102, DoM Annual Report 1915–16.
74. TNA, CO. 417/584, T. R. Donald to BSAC, 26 April 1916.
75. TNA, CO. 417/584, Donald to BSAC, 6 May 1916.
76. TNA, CO. 417/584, Donald to BSAC, 15 June 1916.

77. TNA, CO. 417/589, RNLB, Report of Board of Management for year ending December 1916, Salisbury, 14 June 1917.
78. TNA, CO. 417/589, Chairman RNLB, Extract, *Rhodesia Herald*, 18 June 1917.
79. *Ibid.*
80. TNA, CO. 417/589, IRNK Annual Report, Native Labour in Katanga 1916–17.
81. For a brief description of the collapse of 1915–16, see Laurel Van Horn, 'The Agricultural History of Barotseland', pp 156–7. For the socio-economic importance of cattle ownership and trade in Barotseland, see Gluckman, *The Economy of the Central Barotse Plain*, pp. 20–1 and Prins, *The Hidden Hippopotamus*, pp. 77–88.
82. NAZ, ZA 7/1/3/2, Lukona Annual Report 1915–16.
83. NAZ, ZA 7/1/3/2, Lealui Annual Report 1915–16.
84. NAZ, ZA 7/1/3/2, Balovale Annual Report 1915–16.
85. NAZ, ZA 7/1/3/2, Sesheke Annual Report 1915–16.
86. NAZ, ZA 7/1/3/2. As the Secretary for Native Affairs cryptically observed, the cattle trading ban was 'a great blow to the natives of Barotseland' since 'most of the tax was paid by the cattle sales. Now natives can only earn money by work [...] to this they are not accustomed like the natives of other Districts'. NAZ, Shelf 8, Box 1, DoNA Annual Report 1915–16. For a similar observation of its 'educative' impact on the cattle-rich 'loafer', see also NAZ, ZA 7/1/3/2, Lukona Annual Report 1915–16.
87. NAZ, ZA 1/14, VC Report, Meeting of the Lealui Khotla, 26 August 1915.
88. NAZ, ZA 1/14, see VC reports Nampuna Station, Balovale, 7 September 1915; No. 4 Lukona, 9 September 1915 and No. 5 Mankoya, 25 October 1915.
89. NAZ, ZA 7/1/3/2, Mankoya Annual Report 1915–16.
90. NAZ, ZA 1/14, VC Report No. 2 Nalolo, 23 August 1915.
91. NAZ, KSE, 4/1/1, W. Hazel to NC Lunda, 25 August 1915.
92. NAZ, KSE, 1/1/1, R. W. Yule to Bruce Miller, 13 October 1915.
93. *Ibid.*
94. TNA, CO. 417/589, Report of Board of Management of RNLB, year ending December 1916, p. 17, 14 June 1917.
95. TNA, CO. 417/606, RC to HC, 16 December 1918.
96. TNA, CO. 417/586, IRNK Monthly Report, July 1916.
97. TNA, CO. 417/586, IRNK Monthly Report, November 1916.
98. See, for instance, Balovale and Lukona Annual Reports 1915–16. NAZ, ZA 7/1/3/2. At Lukona, RNLB recruits alone numbered 715, 'more than 300 larger than in any previous year', *ibid.*
99. NAZ, Shelf 17, Box 102.
100. See, for example, comments regarding the new and extensive labour opportunities in Barotseland by Mr van Blerk, NWFA Annual Meeting 1916, *Livingstone Mail*, 8 September 1916.
101. See Annual Report Barotseland 1915–16, NAZ, ZA 7/1/3/2, confirming a potential of 2,000 more carriers in addition to the 2,000 already sent to the Luapula war. Wallace's post-war account suggests this potential was probably exceeded. See L. A. Wallace, 'Northern Rhodesia and the Last Phase of the War in Africa', in C. P. Lucas (ed.) *The Empire at War*, Vol. 4 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1926), p. 295.

102. CCWM, LMS, Central Afr. Box 18, W. G. Robertson to Bradford, 11 June 1916.
103. TNA, CO. 417/591, Wallace to HC, 1 October 1917.
104. TNA, CO. 417/603, C. Douglas-Jones to IS, 20 December 1916.
105. TNA, CO. 417/603, Mporokoso Annual Report 1916–17.
106. TNA, CO. 417/591, H. C. Marshall, Memorandum: 'Water Transport through the Bangweulu Swamps', 22 November 1916. See also Luwingu Annual Report 1915–16, NAZ, ZA 7/1/3/1, stressing the 'considerable future advantage' of long-distance heavy transport work for the work-shy Unga and Bisa.
107. In 1915 the Ila cattle population numbered between 70,000 and 90,000. Largely as a result of the 1915 pleuropneumonia epidemic, during the ensuing decade their herds declined to around 40,000. Fielder, 'The Role of Cattle in the Ila Economy', p. 331. See also Smith and Dale, *The Ila-Speaking peoples of Northern Rhodesia*, Vol. 1, p. 130.
108. See CMD 8547 (1897), BSAC's territories: report by Sir R. E. R. Martin on the African administration of the BSAC.
109. See CMD 1200 (1902), Southern Rhodesia: Correspondence relating to the Regulation and Supply of Labour in Southern Rhodesia, concerning the imperial exposure of labour excesses by Southern Rhodesian Native Commissioners, as revealed by reports of 1899 district *indabas*.
110. TNA, CO. 879/116. See, for example, SoS to HC, 24 April 1915, in which CMD 1200 was cited as the precedent for intervention in regard to illegal labour recruiting methods employed in the Kasama and Mporokoso sub-districts of Northern Rhodesia during 1913 to 1914.
111. See Chapter 1, pp. 4–7.
112. GP, BSA/7/197, H. H. Castens to RC, 20 February 1907 (enc. Special report on health conditions on the Sabiwa Mine, dated 23 February 1907). The enquiry exposed the poor recruiting conditions of north-eastern Rhodesian labourers (in transit) and implemented improvements such as a pay rise from 10s. *Od.* to 12s. *Od.*, improved medical facilities and so on.
113. For voluminous correspondence concerning this issue and the subsequent major enquiry see files in TNA, CO. 417/550–60, 1913–14. The value of the imperial connection as a decisive protecting influence over Central African labour has been seriously challenged by C. van Onselen ('Black Workers in Central African Industry', p. 232). As discussed earlier the trusteeship role was clearly deficient in many respects. Nevertheless specifically Northern Rhodesian labour issues were treated as a special case because of the Territory's overwhelmingly black population and, as the Sabiwa case illustrates, decisive interventions did occur. Overall, the imperial presence was undoubtedly a deterrent compared to the more brutal labour practices common to adjacent Belgian and Portuguese territories.
114. See Hordern, *Military Operations in East Africa*, Vol. 1, p. 188.
115. TNA, CO. 417/583, H. N. Tait, Minute, 30 March 1916.
116. TNA, CO. 417/586, (Tel.) Governor Nyasaland to Admr, 26 January 1917.
117. *Northern Rhodesian Government Gazette*, Vol. 6(7) (1 July 1916).
118. TNA, CO. 417/586, (Tel.) Wallace to Governor Nyasaland, 26 January 1917. In similar telegrams to both the Resident and High Commissioners, Wallace reiterated that he did 'not expect anything approaching sufficiency of

- volunteers' and that 'a little pressure' would, he hoped, 'be sufficient to persuade very many without great opposition'. Wallace to HC (repeated to RC), 26 January 1917, TNA, CO. 417/586.
119. TNA, CO. 417/586, (Tel.) Buxton to Wallace, 27 January 1917.
 120. TNA, CO. 417/586, RC to HC, 27 January 1917.
 121. NAZ, BS3/266. A large proportion of the 1,000 officially recorded Ngoni war carrier dead perished along this route during the period March 1917 to November 1918. See DM Ft Jameson to SNA, 27 January 1921.
 122. TNA, CO. 417/586, (Tel.) Buxton to Wallace, 27 January 1917.
 123. *Ibid.*
 124. TNA, CO. 417/586, H. Davies, 19 March 1917.
 125. TNA, CO. 417/586, W. Long, 19 March 1917.
 126. TNA, CO. 417/602, RC to HC, 15 January 1918.
 127. TNA, CO. 417/602, HC to RC, 31 January 1918.
 128. TNA, CO. 417/602, H. N. Tait, 26 March 1918.
 129. TNA, CO. 417/602, H. L. Lambert, 27 March 1917.
 130. TNA, CO. 879/116. See SoS to HC, 24 April 1915, in which the Colonial Secretary ruled against illegal forms of labour pressure, including pressure on headmen's subsidies to secure labour recruits and direct official involvement in civil labour recruitment.
 131. TNA, CO. 417/587, IRNK Monthly Report, December 1916.
 132. TNA, CO. 417/586, IRNK Monthly Report, October 1916.
 133. TNA, CO. 417/589, IRNK Annual Report, 1916–17.
 134. TNA, CO. 417/587, IRNK Monthly Report, December 1916.
 135. TNA, CO. 417/587, IRNK Monthly Report, January 1917.
 136. TNA, CO. 417/589, IRNK Annual Report, 1916–17.
 137. TNA, CO. 417/598, IRNK Monthly Report, October 1916.
 138. TNA, CO. 417/589, IRNK Annual Report, 1916–17. In October 1916 the Star Mine experienced a correspondingly high number of Lozi deserters amongst the eighty-eight deserters from the Rhodesian labour force of 1072 (of the latter total, forty-three perished that same month). TNA, CO. 417/587, IRNK Monthly Report, October 1916.
 139. TNA, CO. 417/587, IRNK Monthly Report, December 1916.
 140. TNA, CO. 417/587, IRNK Monthly Report, January 1917.
 141. RHL, WP, T. R. Williams to Mother, 5 February 1917.
 142. TNA, CO. 417/587, A. Pearson, 'Medical Report on Sickness epidemic among natives at Lubumbashi, commencing September 1916'.
 143. TNA, CO. 417/587, J. C. C. Coxhead, Memorandum, 23 February 1917. For the devastating consequences for raw Angolan labour caused by the recruitment switch to Portuguese West Africa, see Perrings, 'Good Lawyers but Poor Workers: Recruited Angolan Labour in the Copper Mines of Katanga, 1871–1921', pp. 237–59.
 144. TNA, CO. 417/597, (Tel.) J. G. Watson to R. W. & Co., 7 March 1917.
 145. TNA, CO. 417/597, R. W. & Co. to BSAC, 19 March 1917.
 146. TNA, CO 417/587, RC to HC, 6 March 1917.
 147. *Ibid.*
 148. TNA, CO. 417/587, (Tel.) Wallace to BSAC, 28 February 1917.
 149. TNA, CO. 517/587, RC to HC, 6 March 1917.
 150. *Ibid.*

151. TNA, CO. 417/602, RC to HC, 8 January 1918.
152. TNA, CO. 417/602, HC to RC, 16 January 1918.
153. TNA, CO. 417/602, H. N. Tait, 5 March 1918. See also RC to HC, 19 June 1917, TNA, CO. 417/589, in which the high wartime mortality rate occurring amongst 'north-west Rhodesian boys, especially the Barotse and Mashulukumbwe' on Southern Rhodesian mines was attributed to the fact that they were 'physically and in other respects better suited for farm work than for mine labour'. The north-eastern recruit was 'probably a healthier and better workman but at present the Bureau and the other employers have to take what they can get'. Similarly, in Katanga, as well as the Lozi, the smaller amounts of raw Kasempa labour diverted northwards, rather than to the war front, suffered similar, though less appalling consequences. See IRNK Annual Report, 1916–17, TNA, CO. 417/589, in which the death and sick rate amongst 'Kasempa natives' reached 'very high' levels.

3 Advent of a 'White Man's War': Early Implications for the Survival of White Supremacy

1. GP, BSA/10/11/19, P. L. Gell to Sec., Church of Livingstone, undated 1911.
2. LACA, Presidential Address, Northern Rhodesia Missionary Conference, June 1914, Livingstone Station Record Book.
3. Gann, *History of Northern Rhodesia*, p. 148.
4. RHL, WP, T. R. Williams to Father, 15 December 1914.
5. BNL, 'Quo Vadis', *Livingstone Mail*, 20 November 1914.
6. NAZ, ZA 7/1/2/5, Mwenga Annual Report 1914–15.
7. GP, BSA/4/513, Extract. BSAC Exec. Committee Report, 27 April 1915.
8. RHL, HCP, SoS to HC, 16 July 1915. See also, GP, H. Lambert to BSAC, 4 May 1915, BSA/4/513, promising *not* to forward commissions to Rhodesian district officers without prior consultation with the Administrator.
9. TNA, CO. 417/583, Wallace to BSAC, 16 November 1915.
10. *Ibid.*
11. TNA, CO. 417/584, Wallace to BSAC, 17 March 1916.
12. *Ibid.*
13. TNA, CO. 417/584, H. Price Powell, Memorandum: Northern Rhodesia District Staff, BSAC Exec. Mins., 8 May 1916.
14. TNA, CO. 417/584, Wallace to BSAC, 17 March 1916.
15. TNA, CO. 417/584, Wallace to BSAC, 16 May 1916.
16. TNA, CO. 417/584, J. W. Sharratt-Horne, Report, 'Manufacture of Gunpowder' (enc. in R. Goode to BSAC, 30 May 1916).
17. LP, 947/468, Chaplin to Long, 14 September 1915.
18. RHL, WP, T. R. Williams to Evelyn, 10 May 1915.
19. NAZ, HM7, Cu/1/1/2, C. Boyd-Cunningham; Notes on North-east Border and German East African South Campaign, Undated, ff. 243–54.
20. As early as November 1914, for instance, one Fife official reported that as a result of German raids villages fifteen miles south of the border were 'deserted' with 'approximately 2,000 natives [...] homeless and feeling the pinch of hunger'. NC Fife to DC Abercorn, 24 November 1914, NAZ, BS3/108.
21. CCWM, LMS, Central Afr. Box 17, Wareham to Hawkins, 29 August 1915.

22. CCWM, LMS, Central Afr. Box 17, W. Draper to Hawkins, 6 March 1915.
23. CCWM, LMS, Central Afr. Box 17, Wareham to Hawkins, 19 July 1915.
24. RHL, WP, T. R. Williams to Father, 28 July 1915.
25. Langham, 'Memories of the 1914–18 Campaign with Northern Rhodesian Forces', *Northern Rhodesia Journal*, Vol. 2(1) (1953): 49–60 (60).
26. NAZ, ZA 7/1/3/9, Tanganyika Annual Report 1915–16.
27. NAZ, ZA 7/1/3/9, Fife Annual Report 1915–16. For a vivid recollection of the evacuation and establishment of a new wartime *boma* at Chunga (also known as Chinungu), see A. Chelemu, 'Memories of Abandoned Bomas: Chinungu, 1914–18 Wartime Boma', *Northern Rhodesia Journal*, Vol. 15(5) (1960): 347–9, housed in NAZ.
28. NAZ, BS3/108. See also DC Tanganyika to Secretary, Livingstone, 31 December 1914, in which it was confirmed that German successes had 'created a bad impression on the native mind and [...] shaken their confidence in our ability to deal with the situation'.
29. NAZ, HM7, Cu/1/1/2. Extract, captured German letter, unsigned typed translation, Mbosi, 13 January 1916. See also, NC Abercorn to DM Abercorn, 19 December 1914, NAZ, BS3/108, in which it was reported that Chieftainess Waitwika and the Inamwanga 'beg that the Awemba be removed' with 'numerous complaints by local natives of their bullying and thieving propensities'.
30. GP, BSA/4/504, A. H. M. Edwards to Winchester, 15 December 1914.
31. NAZ, ZA 7/1/2/8, Chienji Annual Report 1914–15. See also, DC Tanganyika to SLA, 31 December 1914, NAZ, BS3/108 for further details of serious offences perpetrated within Northern Rhodesian territory by Belgian units.
32. RHL, WP, T. R. Williams to Mother, 14 November 1915.
33. WFA, Chilubula MD, 14 March 1916.
34. WFA, Chilubula MD, 23 September 1915.
35. RHL, WP, T. R. Williams to Father, 17 June 1915. See also WFA, Chilonga MD, 18 January 1915, for similar comments regarding the misconduct of white NRR recruits from Broken Hill.
36. CCWM, LMS, Central Afr. Box 17, Wareham to Hawkins, 17 April 1915.
37. GP, BSA/10/27, (Tel.) C-General to Wallace, 17 November 1914.
38. GP, BSA/10/27, (Tel.) Wallace to C-General, 17 November 1914.
39. GP, BSA/4/510, Wallace to BSAC, 24 November 1914.
40. GP. See H. W. Just to BSAC, 2 January 1915, BSA/4/511 in which the Colonial Office strictly forbade any offensive action on the north-east border. For similar Colonial Office 'restraint' upon the Company's occupation of the Caprivi Zipfel, see Wallace to Birchenough, 3 December 1914, GP, BSA/10/28, in which Wallace protested that the High Commissioner had 'taken over the Caprivi Zipfel' and that 'we are not allowed to have anything to do with it'.
41. NAZ, ZA 7/1/3, Tanganyika Annual Report 1915–16.
42. *Petit Echo*, No. 24, September 1915.
43. CCWM, LMS, Central Afr. Box 3, Kawimbe Mission Annual Report 1915.
44. NAZ, ZA 7/1/3/9, Tanganyika Annual Report 1915–16.
45. NAZ, KSL, 3/1, DNB, I, p. 326. See Tables 3.1 (p. 74) and 4.1 (p. 109) for details of losses and for the decline of livestock in neighbouring Abercorn sub-district.
46. NAZ, ZA 7/1/3/9, Abercorn Annual Report 1915–16.

47. NAZ, ZA 7/1/3/9, Tanganyika Annual Report 1915–16. See Chapter 6, pp. 155–60 for more details of agricultural disruption.
48. NAZ, ZA 7/1/2/9, Tanganyika Annual Report 1914–15.
49. *Ibid.*
50. NAZ, KTN, 1/1, Abercorn DNB, I.
51. NAZ, ZA 7/1/3/9, Abercorn Annual Report 1915–16.
52. NAZ, ZA 7/1/2/9, Tanganyika Annual Report 1914–15.
53. Hordern, *Military Operations in East Africa*, Vol. 1, p. 189.
54. BP, Bonar Law to Buxton, 3 September 1915. See also Strachan, *First World War; To Arms*, p. 600.
55. Strachan, *First World War; To Arms*, p. 600. See also Samson, *Britain, South Africa and the East African Campaign*, pp. 94–117.
56. TNA, CO. 417/583, H. C. Marshall: Memorandum (Conf.) with reference to anticipated successful advance and the capture of the German Territory lying immediately to the north of Northern Rhodesia and the Nyasaland Protectorate (enc. in Wallace to BSAC, 21 March 1916).
57. TNA, CO. 417/583, Wallace to BSAC, 21 March 1916.
58. TNA, CO. 417/583, W. C. Bottomley, Minute, 4 April 1916.
59. TNA, CO. 417/584, Sec BSAC to SoS Colonies, 20 May 1916.
60. TNA, CO. 417/584, Wallace to BSAC, 27 March 1916.
61. TNA, CO. 417/584, G. E. Grindle, Minute, 31 May 1916.
62. TNA, CO. 417/585, (Tel.) L. P. Chesnaye to Norforce 22(?) June 1916.
63. *Ibid.*
64. TNA, CO. 417/585, Norforce to Chesnaye, 22 June 1916.
65. *Ibid.*
66. *Ibid.*
67. *Northern Rhodesia Government Gazette*, Vol. 6(5) (2 May 1916).
68. *Ibid.*
69. TNA, CO. 417/585, Wallace to BSAC, 21 August 1916.
70. TNA, CO. 417/603, Fife Annual Report 1916–17.
71. NAZ, BS3/254, Northern Rhodesian Yearly Military Returns, December 1917 to April 1922.
72. See, for example, Sec. for Defence to Dr Rubusana, 2 November 1914 (enc. in Plaatje, *Native Life in South Africa*, pp. 263–4), rejecting Rubusana's offer of 5,000 black volunteers to fight against German forces in south-west Africa.
73. See W. R. Nasson, 'The Bite of the "Black Mosquito": Black Participation in the South African War 1899–1902 and Social Control in the Cape Colony', and Bill Nasson, *The War for South Africa: The Anglo-Boer War 1899–1902* (Stroud: History Press, 2011), *passim*.
74. Editorial, *East Rand Express*, 'Coloured Troops in the War' (enc. in Plaatje, *Native Life*, p. 283).
75. TNA, WO. 106/259, Smuts, 'Problems in South Africa', p. 281. The potential threat to white supremacy from European-trained black *askari* was also highlighted in wartime military intelligence reports. The 'existence in the villages of large numbers of trained men' (after discharge) was perceived as a 'very real danger' especially when linked to Pan Islamism or Pan Africanism, movements which were themselves believed to have been expanded by the intermixing of tribes through military service. J. E. Philipps Memorandum:

- 'Africa for the Africans'. See also P. McLaughlin, 'The Legacy of Conquest: African Military Manpower in Southern Rhodesia During the First World War', in Page, *Africa and the First World War*, pp. 115–36 (117–8) for a succinct appraisal of white settler fears of arming Africans in Southern Rhodesia.
76. GP, BSA/3/349, L. Michell to P. L. Gell, 19 May 1916.
 77. Gouldsbury and Sheane, *The Great Plateau of Northern Rhodesia*, pp. 11–12.
 78. *Ibid.*
 79. For similar divisive strategies pursued in Southern Rhodesia, see Duignan, 'Native Policy in Southern Rhodesia', pp. 158–60.
 80. TNA, CO. 417/584. See BSAC Exec. Mins., 15 May 1916.
 81. See van Onselen, 'The Role of Collaborators in the Rhodesian Mining Industry 1900–1935', p. 405, for the importance of their role.
 82. TNA, CO. 417/583, C-General, Report, Defence of Northern Rhodesia, year ending 31 March 1915.
 83. TNA, CO. 417/597, C-General, Report, Defence of Northern Rhodesia, year ending 31 March 1916, reveals that the Bemba provided the 560 recruits of the new KAR Battalion and 'without doubt' were 'the backbone of the Native Forces'.
 84. NAZ, BS3/254, Northern Rhodesia; Yearly Military Return, 31 December 1917. For a detailed history of the NRP and the NRR, see Brelsford, *The Story of the Northern Rhodesian Regiment* and Wright, *The History of the Northern Rhodesia Police*.
 85. NAZ, HM7, Cu/1/1/2, NRR Resolution (enc. in F. A. Hodson to Boyd-Cunningham, 14 February 1915), ff. 26.
 86. NAZ, HM7, Cu/1/1/2, NRR petition to Hodson, undated, ff. 37.
 87. NAZ, HM7, Cu/1/1/2, C. Boyd-Cunningham to Edwards, 15 February 1916.
 88. NAZ, HM7, Cu/1/1/2, Boyd-Cunningham to Wallace, 3 March 1915.
 89. NAZ, HM7, Cu/1/1/2, Hodson to Boyd-Cunningham, 3 March 1915.
 90. NAZ, HM7, Cu/1/1/2, Hodson to Edwards, 15 February 1915.
 91. NAZ, HM7, Cu/1/1/2, Edwards to Boyd-Cunningham, 4 March 1915.
 92. NAZ, HM7, Cu/1/1/2, Wallace to Boyd-Cunningham, 31 March 1915.
 93. NAZ, HM7, Cu/1/1/2, Edwards to Boyd-Cunningham, 14 April 1915.
 94. NAZ, HM7, Cu/1/1/2, Boyd-Cunningham to R. Gordon, 10 May 1915.
 95. NAZ, HM7, Cu/1/1/2, Edwards to Boyd-Cunningham, 17 June 1915.
 96. NAZ, HM7, Cu/1/1/2, Wallace to Boyd-Cunningham, 16 September 1915.
 97. One officer serving in East Africa thus observed the 'importance' of this 'distinction in [...] status' with the 'bearing of arms' creating 'a grading, a caste of its own with a tendency on the part of the African soldier to overbear or overlord other Africans not of his class, especially followers'. Keane, 'The African Native Medical Corps', p. 298.
 98. See earlier pp. 70 and 72.
 99. TNA, WO. 106/259 and Langham, 'Memories of the 1914–18 Campaign with Northern Rhodesian Forces', Part II, p. 81. Nevertheless, even the socially inferior, unarmed carrier corps was seen by some as a potential political threat to white rule (though much less so than their *askari* counterparts). The mere intermingling of thousands of carriers outside their home territories could, it was argued, facilitate a wide dissemination of political grievances and other 'dangerous' observations, including, for instance, the

- 'distance [...] they [...] have been brought from home to hardship and [...] the killing of white by black [...] before their eyes'. J. E. Philipps, 'Africa for the Africans', 15 July 1917.
100. TNA, CO. 417/584, Norforce to OC Northern Border, 5 April 1916.
 101. TNA, CO. 417/584, OC Northern Border to Norforce, 6 April 1916.
 102. See Chapter 2, pp. 41 and 44.
 103. NAZ, ZA 7/1/3/9, Luwingu Annual Report 1915–16.
 104. RHL, WP, Williams to Mother, 2 April 1916.
 105. TNA, CO. 418/584. See (Tel.) OC Border to Defence, Salisbury, 8 April 1916, referring to the use of border farmers as carrier supervisors.
 106. NAZ, ZA 7/7/1, NC Ft Jameson to DM Ft Jameson, 3 May 1915.
 107. NAZ, ZA 7/7/1, AM Ft Jameson to SNA, 3 May 1915.
 108. *Ibid.*
 109. NAZ, ZA 7/7/1, Wallace to HC, 7 June 1915.
 110. NAZ, ZA 7/7/1, RC to HC, 18 June 1915.
 111. NAZ, ZA 7/7/1, Extract Governor Nyasaland to SoS, 20 February 1915 (enc. in Buxton to Wallace, 12 July 1915).
 112. NAZ, ZA 7/7/1, Buxton to Wallace, 12 July 1915.
 113. NAZ, ZA 7/7/1, Wallace to Buxton, 20 July 1915.
 114. NAZ, ZA 7/7/1, NC Ft Jameson to DM Ft Jameson, 11 August 1915.
 115. NAZ, ZA 7/7/1, ANC Ft Jameson to DM Ft Jameson, 26(?) September 1915.
 116. *Ibid.*
 117. *Ibid.*
 118. The 'crisis' was exacerbated by rumours, soon proved unfounded, that some Ngoni chiefs were themselves implicated in the Chilembwe conspiracy. This provided an additional motive for wooing and reaffirming their much needed wartime cooperation by suppressing any challenge to their authority. See Wallace to DM Ft Jameson, 17 July 1915, NAZ, ZA 7/7/1 in which Wallace sanctioned Mpeseni's visit to Livingstone to enhance and safeguard collaborative ties.
 119. NAZ, ZA 7/7/1, ANC Ft Jameson to DM Ft Jameson, 26 September 1915.
 120. *Ibid.*
 121. NAZ, ZA 7/7/1, NC Ft Jameson to DM Ft Jameson, 5 October 1915.
 122. *Ibid.*
 123. NAZ, ZA 7/7/1, DM Ft Jameson to NC Ft Jameson, 12 October 1915.
 124. NAZ, ZA 7/7/1, DM Ft Jameson to Principal DRM, 6 October 1915.
 125. NAZ, ZA 7/1/2/3, Lundazi Annual Report 1914–15.
 126. WFA, Kapatu MD, 25 October 1914.
 127. WFA, Kapatu MD, 8 October 1917.
 128. WFA, Kapatu MD, 14 October 1917.
 129. WFA, Chilonga MD, 22 August 1917.
 130. CCWM, LMS, Central Afr. Box 3, Kawimbe Mission Annual Report 1916.
 131. CCWM, LMS, Central Afr. Box 3, Kambole Mission Annual Report 1917.
 132. CCWM, LMS, Central Afr. Box 17, W. Freshwater to Hawkins, 11 August 1916.
 133. CCWM, LMS, Central Afr. Box 3, Mporokoso Mission Annual Report 1917.
 134. NAZ, BS3/80, Wallace to HC, 9 May 1917.
 135. See CCWM, LMS, Central Afr. Box 18 for full provisions of Circular No. 15 of 1917. See copy enclosed in W. G. Robertson to Hawkins, 18 January 1918.

136. *Northern Rhodesia Government Gazette*, Vol. 8(5) (16 April 1918).
137. CCWM, LMS, Central Afr. Box 18, J. A. Ross to F. Lenwood, 24 December 1917.
138. WFA, Chilonga MD, 27 October 1917.
139. LACA, Chipili Mission Logbook, 4 April 1918.
140. CCWM, LMS, Central Afr. Box 18, W. G. Robertson to Hawkins, 19 February 1918. Missionary protests mounted when the Proclamation was promulgated without any official consideration of a major critique of the measures drawn up at a special conference held on 5 April 1918. For details of this critique, see LACA, E. H. L. Poole, 'Conference of the Heads of the Missions held on 5 April 1918'.
141. CCWM, LMS, Central Afr. Box 18, W. G. Robertson to Hawkins, 24 September 1918.
142. NAZ, BS3/261, SNA to DM Kasama, 11 April 1918.
143. NAZ, BS3/261, DM Kasama to SNA, 2 May 1918.
144. CCWM, LMS, Central Afr. Box 17, W. Freshwater (Sec. Dist. Committee LMS) to Admr, 8 September 1918.
145. CCWM, LMS, Central Afr. Box 17, W. Freshwater to HC, 8 September 1918. Such relentless missionary pressure did eventually convince the local and imperial authorities of the need to repeal the 1918 Proclamation. In September 1919 a government-sponsored conference of ten of the thirteen Mission Societies substituted a number of amendments chiefly designed to distinguish between 'educational' and 'religious' work (for details, see NAZ, BS3/424). With wartime pressures removed, most were accepted and embodied in the new 'Native Schools Proclamation' of 1921. *Northern Rhodesia Government Gazette*, Vol. 12(1) (18 January 1922). However, after the experience of the 'Watchtower' disturbances (see Chapter 8, pp. 212–28, esp. 218–19) the crucial principle of ultimate Government control of African education remained firmly entrenched.
146. NAZ, BS3/84, Wallace to HC, 11 October 1918.

4 Colonial Dependence and African Opportunity: The Indigenous Response to War Exigencies

1. For numerous examples of district war carrier wage rates, see NAZ, ZA 1/9/27/10. Carrier wages averaged 10s. *Od.* a month rising as high as 17s. *6d.* for elite first-line porters, while at least £1 0s. *Od.* could be earned as *askari*. In some districts the much revered calico cloth was issued as partial payment or as a bonus, e.g. Serenje sub-district, where men received six yards of calico and 5s. *Od.* cash per month and boys 'carrying half loads', three yards of calico and 2s. *6d.* cash. NAZ, ZA 1/9/27/10, DM Serenje to SNA, 21 July 1916.
2. Interview, Fikizolo Jere, 16 May 1980.
3. LACA, St Pauls Log Book, Ft Jameson, 15 February 1915.
4. NAZ, ZA 7/1/2/9, Abercorn Annual Report 1914–15.
5. NAZ, ZA 7/1/2/1, Mporokoso Annual Report 1914–15. This was despite the fact that carriers had been paid on credit for the first two months as *boma* cash reserves had expired.

6. Interview, Fikizolo Jere, 16 May 1980.
7. Interview, Nathaniel Jabanda, 15 May 1980.
8. See Chapter 1, p. 10 and Roberts, *History of Zambia*, pp. 179–80.
9. WFA, *Petit Echo*, No. 25, October 1915.
10. NAZ, ZA 7/1/3/7, Serenje Annual Report 1915–16.
11. NAZ, ZA 7/1/3/4, Namwala Annual Report 1915–16.
12. *Ibid.*
13. NAZ, ZA 7/1/3/8, Fort Rosebery Annual Report 1915–16. For the strength of Unga, Batwa and 'swamp' Bisa resistance to carrier work later in the war, see Chapter 6, pp. 174 and 175–7.
14. NAZ, ZA 7/1/3/6, Kasempa Annual Report 1915–16.
15. LACA, J. C. C. Coxhead, 'The Natives of Northern Rhodesia and the War', May 1920, handwritten manuscript. See also, Page, *Chiwaya War*, p. 110 for the role of extreme cold in rapidly rising mortality rates, resulting in hundreds of cases of pneumonia and other respiratory ailments.
16. *Ibid.*
17. Interview, Njombolo Muvulu, 22 May 1980. See also Page, *Chiwaya War*, pp. 109–13 for impact of food shortages on Nyasa front-line carriers, which in turn encouraged 'pilfering of loads' to avoid starvation.
18. Interview, Ndezemani Phiri, 22 May 1980.
19. NAZ, ZA 7/1/3/4, Lundazi Annual Report 1915–16.
20. J. H. Venning, 'Mwanawina III and the First World War', *Northern Rhodesian Journal*, Vol. 4(1) (1959): 83–6 (83).
21. NAZ, KDG, 1/1/1, E. H. L. Poole, Confidential Report, 29 May 1918. Desperate measures were resorted to to alleviate the food crises. Private Walker of the Southern Rhodesian Column recalled frantically hunting game in East Africa to feed his starving *tenga-tenga*; 'Shot eland and dished out to boys' was the cryptic comment in his diary. Wright collection, Walker Diary. Deneys Reitz of the South African contingent in German East Africa recalled, 'living under famine conditions'; 'we killed four giraffe by galloping alongside them and firing shot after shot, until the poor brutes rolled over dead, still the men and carriers required food and thus they were supplied', Reitz, *Trekking On*, pp. 132 and 141.
22. Interview, Ndezemani Phiri, 22 May 1980.
23. NAZ, KDG, 1/1/1, E. H. L. Poole, Confidential Report, 29 May 1918.
24. *Ibid.* For an extended discussion of specifically Ngoni response to war labour recruitment, see Rau, 'Mpeseni's Ngoni of Eastern Zambia, 1870–1920', pp. 356–68.
25. TNA, CO. 879/116. See Mwengwa Annual Report 1913–14; HC to SoS, 16 June 1915 and SoS to HC, 24 June 1915.
26. Interview, Fikizolo Jere, 16 May 1980.
27. Interview, Nathaniel Jabanda, 15 May 1980.
28. RHL, WP, Williams to Mother, 14 November 1915.
29. NAZ, KDG, 1/1/1, E. H. L. Poole Confidential Report, 29 May 1918.
30. Interview, Ndezemani Phiri, 22 May 1980.
31. LACA, T. F. Sandford to Bishop A. May, 3 December 1921.
32. LACA, Coxhead, 'The Natives of Northern Rhodesia and the War', May 1920.

33. *Ibid.*
34. NAZ, BS3/416, Mweru-Luapulu Annual Report 1917–18.
35. NAZ, BS3/416, Kawambwa Annual Report 1917–18.
36. NAZ, BS3/416, Mweru-Luapula Annual Report and NAZ, ZA 7/1/4/7, Lundazi Annual Report 1919–20. In view of the rapidly deteriorating service conditions during the subsequent period of June 1917 to November 1918, the last recorded figure of 3.06 per cent may well have doubled or even tripled. Indeed one post-war report from Lundazi recorded a local war carrier mortality rate of nearly 5.4 per cent or 7.2 per cent when missing porters were included. See NAZ, ZA 7/1/4/7, Lundazi Annual Report 1919–20.
37. LACA, Coxhead, 'The Natives of Northern Rhodesia and the War', May 1920.
38. Private Walker's Diary, Wright Collection.
39. G. W. T. Hodges, 'African Manpower Statistics for the British Forces in East Africa 1914–18', p. 116 and Wallace, 'Northern Rhodesia and the Last Phase of the War in Africa', p. 309.
40. NAZ, BS3/266, DC Fort Jameson to SNA, 27 January 1921. The Ngoni carrier death toll may have been considerably higher than this official figure. A post-war report listed 'native casualties on military transport in the German East African campaign' as one major reason for the dramatic decline of the Ngoni male population by a total of 1,650 adults during the period 1918–21. E. Lane-Poole, Report on Ngoni Reserve Areas, 1922, NAZ, Shelf 16–17, Box 102, Misc. Report, pp. 8–9.
41. Hodges, 'African Manpower Statistics', pp. 115–16. See also Paice, *Tip and Run*, pp. 278–90 for more details on carrier conditions, numbers and mortality rates in the GEA campaign as a whole.
42. WFA, Kaputa MD, 15 January 1915.
43. WFA, *Petit Echo*, No. 61, November 1918.
44. *Ibid.*
45. CCWM, LMS, Central Afr. Box 18, M. C. R. B. Draper to E. H. Clark, 4 April 1918.
46. CCWM, LMS, Central Afr. Box 3, Kawimbe Mission Annual Report 1918. Returning sick carriers undoubtedly introduced diseases into their home villages with unknown numbers of civilian deaths. For the 'numerous' wartime deaths from dysentery in Abercorn district, see Abercorn Annual Report 1916–17, TNA, CO. 417/603. In Lundazi, a 'severe form of dysentery' was 'introduced [...] by military porters' into villages along their return route resulting in 'several deaths'. NAZ, BS3/416, Lundazi Annual Report 1917–18.
47. Interview, Ndezemani Phiri, 16 May 1980.
48. Venning, 'Mwanawina III and the First World War', pp. 85–6.
49. Interview, Njombolo Mvulu, 22 May 1980.
50. Interview, Ndezemani Phiri, 26 May 1980. Compare death gratuities paid to Nyasaland next of kin ranging from £3 for *tenga-tenga* to £24 for a KAR NCO, in Page, *Chiwaya War*, p. 131.
51. Interview, Nathaniel Jabanda, 15 May 1980.
52. Rennie, 'The Ngoni States and European Intrusion', pp. 307–8.

53. NAZ, HM7, Cu/1/1/2, Boyd-Cunningham to Hodson, 13 March 1915.
54. *Ibid.*
55. Walker Diary, Wright Collection.
56. NAZ, HM7, Cu/1/1/2, Boyd-Cunningham, 'Notes on the North-east Border and German East African Campaign', undated (1916?). Handwritten manuscript.
57. NAZ, HM7, Cu/1/1/2, Hodson to Boyd-Cunningham, 14 May 1915.
58. *Ibid.*
59. RHL, WP, Williams to Mother, 14 November 1915.
60. WFA, Ipusukilo MD, 3 July 1916.
61. WFA, Chilubula MD, 28 March 1916.
62. WFA, Chilubula MD, 23 November 1916.
63. WFA, Kayambi MD, 10 April 1916.
64. NAZ, ZA 7/1/3/4, Fort Jameson Annual Report 1915–16.
65. NAZ, KDG 1/1/1, E. Lane-Poole, Confidential Report, 29 May 1918. For examples of African evasion of war levies by enrolment on European farms and plantations elsewhere in Central and East Africa, see Savage and Forbes Munro, 'Carriers Corps Recruitment in the British East Africa Protectorate, 1914–1918', pp. 329–30; J. Lonsdale, 'Political Associations in Western Kenya' in R. Rotberg and A. Mazrui (eds), *Protest and Power in Black Africa* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970), p. 592. M. E. Page asserts that some Nyasaland planters actually encouraged this strategy in order to protect their own labour supply; Page, 'Malawians in the Great War and after, 1914–25' (PhD dissertation: Michigan State University, 1977), pp. 67–8. Such motives probably lay behind the strong opposition of north-east Rhodesian planters to government attempts to reform the 'ticket system' in 1917. See Chapter 7, pp. 194–5.
66. WFA, Chilonga Mission Annual Report 1917–18. For other examples of the growing illegal labour exodus, see WFA, Lubwe MD, 3 March 1916 and Chibote MD, 23 September 1918.
67. WFA, Chilonga MD, 16 October 1918.
68. *Ibid.*
69. WFA, *Petit Echo*, No. 44, May 1917.
70. See pp. 111–12.
71. WFA, Chilubula MD, 27 January 1917. For close parallels with British East Africa, see Savage and Forbes Munro, 'Carrier Corps Recruitment in British East Africa', p. 329.
72. WFA, Chilonga MD, 11 June 1917.
73. WFA, Chilubi MD, 19 February 1916.
74. WFA, Chilubula MD, 10 May 1918.
75. TNA, CO. 417/587, Justice Beaufort, Report: 'Whipping returns June to December 1916', 12 April 1917.
76. White monopoly of the wartime Katanga mealie export market was officially established by Government Notice No. 97 of 1914 which permitted the export of only 'Farm Grown' grain or meal, a discriminatory measure designed to conserve internal African food supplies for the war effort, *Northern Rhodesia Government Gazette*, Vol. 4(6) (11 November 1914). See also, 'Beef and Mealies', *Livingstone Mail*, 18 December 1914.
77. TNA, CO. 417/583, Wallace to BSAC, 8 February 1916.

78. TNA, CO. 417/583, Wallace to BSAC, 27 March 1916.
79. WFA, Chibote MD, 16 June 1916. For similar observations of intense commercial activity involving streams of people transporting *manioc* and flour 'from Lubingu and Mansa' for sale at Abercorn, see WFA, Kapatu MD, 1 November 1914.
80. TNA, CAB 45/14, L. A. Wallace, 'Transport Difficulties in East Africa during the Great War'.
81. WFA, Chilonga MD, 18 April 1915. See also, Mpika *indaba* notes, 18 April 1915, NAZ, KSD, 4/1, Mpika DNB, I, p. 437.
82. WFA, Kapatu MD, 13 October 1914.
83. CCWM, LMS, Central Afr. Box 3, Mbereshi Mission Annual Report 1915.
84. Interview, Kamzimbi Mwanza, 22 May 1980.
85. CCWM, LMS, Central Afr. Box 3, Kawimbe Mission Annual Report 1916.
86. TNA, CO. 417/585, Wallace to Edwards, 21 August 1916.
87. *Ibid.*
88. As T. O. Ranger succinctly observes: 'There was more than one way of exploiting a certain type of environment and factors such as the degree of political organisation and the economics and cultural heritage of groups [...] helped to determine the nature of the agricultural systems'. T. O. Ranger, *The Agricultural History of Zambia* (Lusaka: Historical Association of Zambia, 1971), p. 6. See also Hellen, *Rural Economic Development in Zambia, 1890-1964*, pp. 81-3.
89. For descriptions of the unusual productivity of this area, in stark contrast to other areas of the Plateau, and the consequent stability and density of settlement, see Cunnison, *The Luapula Peoples of Northern Rhodesia*, pp. 19-23 and Allan, *The African Husbandmen*, pp. 14-47.
90. NAZ, ZA 7/1/3/8, Kawambwa Annual Report 1915-16.
91. *Ibid.*
92. NAZ, ZA 7/1/2/2, Chienji Annual Report 1914-15.
93. NAZ, ZA 7/1/2/1, Luwingu Annual Report 1914-15.
94. *Ibid.*
95. *Ibid.* For details of food supplies to the military in other districts see Table 4.1, p. 109.
96. NAZ, ZA 7/1/2/8, Fort Rosebery Annual Report 1914-15.
97. *Ibid.*
98. TNA, CO. 417/585, Wallace to Edwards, 21 August 1916.
99. *Ibid.*
100. NAZ, ZA 7/1/2/2, Mweru-Luapula Annual Report 1914-15.
101. NAZ, ZA 7/1/3/9, Mporokoso Annual Report 1915-16.
102. NAZ, ZA 7/1/3/1, Kasama Annual Report 1915-16.
103. See Chapter 6, pp. 155-6 and 158-9.
104. NAZ, ZA 7/1/3/9, Abercorn Annual Report 1915-16.
105. TNA, CO. 417/584. See R. M. Smith to Major R. F. Murray, 10 February 1916 (enc. in BSAC Exec. Mins., 2 May 1916) admitting to the prosperity of white ranchers on the border despite some war losses.
106. CCWM, LMS, Central Afr. Box 17, Dr Wareham to Hawkins, 10 October 1915.
107. NAZ, ZA 7/1/3/9, Tanganyika Annual Report 1915-16.
108. *Ibid.*

109. TNA, CO. 417/603, Abercorn Annual Report 1916–17.
110. For a discussion of the importance of the Plateau salt trade in the pre-colonial period, see Roberts, 'Pre-Colonial Trade in Zambia', pp. 725–6.
111. WFA, Chilonga MD, 16 October 1914.
112. RHL, WP, Williams to Mother, 14 November 1915.
113. NAZ, ZA 7/1/2/2, Chienji Annual Report 1914–15.
114. TNA, CO. 417/585, Wallace to Edwards, 21 August 1916.
115. Brelsford, *Fishermen of the Bangweulu Swamps*, p. 79.
116. NAZ, ZA 7/1/3/9, Tanganyika Annual Report 1915–16.
117. TNA, CO. 417/603, Tanganyika Annual Report 1916–17.
118. NAZ, Shelf 19, Box 13, DoA Annual Report 1916–17.
119. *Ibid.*
120. NAZ, Shelf 19, Box 13, DoA Annual Report 1915–16.
121. NAZ, Shelf 19, Box 13, DoA Annual Report 1914–15.
122. NAZ, Shelf 19, Box 13, DoA Annual Report 1915–16.
123. NAZ, Shelf 19, Box 13, DoA Annual Report 1918–19.
124. NAZ, Shelf 19, Box 13, DoA Annual Report 1916–17.
125. NAZ, Shelf 19, Box 13, DoA Annual Report 1916–17.
126. NAZ, Shelf 19, Box 13, DoA Annual Report 1917–18. The prosperous state of European agriculture was reflected by the exceptional wartime investment in farm improvements. Although heavy farm machinery and many fertilisers were expensive and difficult to import in wartime, new windmills, light farm machinery etc. were purchased with profits realised from wartime crop sales.
127. NAZ, Shelf 19, Box 13, DoA Annual Report 1915–16.
128. NAZ, ZA 7/1/3/7, Chilanga Annual Report 1915–16.
129. GP, BSA/10/34, Wallace to Birchenough, 12 May 1918.
130. TNA, CO. 417/602, VC Report *indaba*, Magoye, 6 January 1918.
131. NAZ, ZA 7/1/3/7, Chilanga Annual Report 1915–16.
132. NAZ, ZA 7/1/3/7, Ndola Annual Report 1915–16.
133. *Ibid.*
134. *Ibid.* Such enterprise displayed by African cultivators, particularly along the line-of-the-rail, gives considerable credence to L. H. Gann's assertion that the war acted as a major stimulant to the emergence of Northern Rhodesia's 'earliest African *kulaks*' (property-owning Russian peasant). Gann, *History of Northern Rhodesia*, pp. 165–6. The pre-war enterprise demonstrated by Ila farmers, for instance, was undoubtedly consolidated by wartime market opportunities. See Chapter 1, pp. 24–9.
135. TNA, CO. 417/585, P. J. Baird, Memorandum, 23 October 1916.
136. TNA, CO. 417/603, Abercorn Annual Report 1916–17.
137. NAZ, ZA 7/1/3/8, Mweru-Luapula Annual Report 1915–16.
138. NAZ, ZA 7/1/3/8, Fort Rosebery Annual Report 1915–16.
139. *Ibid.*
140. NAZ, ZA 7/1/3/8, Kawambwa Annual Report 1915–16.
141. NAZ, ZA 7/1/2/8, Chienji Annual Report 1914–15. See, for instance, E. Booth's expanded commercial activity in Bemaland, around Kapatu, including attempts to establish stores at Mikomba, Kasama and Kawambwa. WFA, Kapatu MD, 17 August 1916. In an article published in the *Bulawayo Chronicle*, H. Rangeley, a prominent north-east Rhodesian settler, revealed

- that 'native stores, owned by Europeans' earned from £20 0s. 0d. to £100 0s. 0d. a month. The African *capitaos* employed to run them in outlying areas earned from 12s. 6d. to 30s. 0d. a month. See extract, article by H. Rangeley concerning the amalgamation of Northern and Southern Rhodesia, *Bulawayo Chronicle*, 21 July 1917 (enc. in RC to HC, 6 October 1917), TNA, CO. 417/591.
142. TNA, CO. 417/603, Fife Annual Report 1916–17.
 143. TNA, CO. 417/603, Tanganyika Annual Report 1916–17. Asian traders and storekeepers, particularly Banyan Traders based at Fort Jameson, also undoubtedly benefited from the wartime trading boom. See article by H. Rangeley, *Bulawayo Chronicle*, 21 July 1917 (enc. in RC to HC, 6 October 1917), TNA, CO. 417/591. At Serenje, a major war carrier depot, one 'Indian' was significantly convicted twice for breaking hawkker licencing regulations. NAZ, ZA 7/1/3/7, Serenje Annual Report 1915–16.
 144. TNA, CO. 417/603, Abercorn Annual Report 1916–17.
 145. *Ibid.*
 146. See *Northern Rhodesia Government Gazette*, Vol. 7(6 and 14) (1917).
 147. For the activities of one such African storekeeper near Kapatu Mission, see WFA, Kapatu MD, 29 April 1917.
 148. TNA, CO. 417/603, Kawambwa Annual Report 1916–17. In Kawambwa district, for instance, in early 1917 as scores of military porters returned with 'well lined pockets' two 'local natives' secured General Dealers licences and numbers of hawkers rapidly escalated, 'all hawkers' being 'local natives from round about Mbereshi Mission'. For the role of specifically Mwenzo African mission teachers as hawkers, see Guthrie, 'The Emergence and Decline of a Mission-Education Elite in North-East Zambia' (PhD dissertation: Indiana University, 1978), p. 159.
 149. TNA, CO. 417/603. Of the estimated 150 African-owned stores in Kawambwa district, for instance, 69 were 'attached to Mbereshi Mission' and were significantly 'owned by clerks, capitaos, artisans, traders etc.', Kawambwa Annual Report 1916–17.
 150. CCWM, LMS, Central Afr. Box 17, W. Freshwater to Hawkins, 17 June 1916. There is some evidence of friction between the LMS and wealthy local African traders which may have prompted this ruling. At Mbereshi, for instance, one missionary deprecated the refusal of one 'native trader' who 'can afford £5 0s. 0d. for a license', but who refused to pay 6d. for medical treatment at the mission. CCWM, LMS, Central Afr. Box 3, Mbereshi Mission Annual Report 1916.
 151. See Louise Pirouet, 'East African Christians and World War I', pp. 117–30.
 152. SOAS, Central Afr. Box 1140. See, for example, PMS, Quarterly Report (Kasempa and Namwala), 11 March 1915 to 14 May 1915. *Ibid.*
 153. NAZ, ZA 7/1/2/1, Luwingu Annual Report 1914–15.
 154. 'Anniversary Speeches', *Central Africa*, Vol. 36(428) (August 1918): 142.
 155. SOAS, WMS, Central Afr. Box 614, Rev S. D. Gray: 'Report of Work in the Rhodesia District', 1918.
 156. CCWM, LMS, Central Afr. Box 17, Wareham to Hawkins, 28 May 1915.
 157. CCWM, LMS Central Afr. Box 3, Kawimbe Mission Annual Report 1916.
 158. NAZ, ZA 7/1/3/1, Kasama Annual Report 1915–16.
 159. WFA, Chilubula Mission Rapport Annuel 1917–18.

160. WFA, Kapatu Mission Rapport Annuel 1917–18.
161. CCWM, LMS, Central Afr. Box 17, H. C. Nutter to Hawkins, 10 January 1915.
162. SOAS, CCWM, 'Chilikwa (Chipili) Post Bag', *Central Africa*, Vol. 34(405) (16 August 1916): 264.
163. CCWM, LMS, Central Afr. Box 17, Dist. Committee Minutes, June 1915.
164. CCWM, LMS, Central Afr. Box 17. See, for instance, Wareham to Hawkins, 4 November 1916.
165. WFA, Chilonga MD, 9 November 1914.
166. CCWM, LMS, Central Afr. Box 17, W. Draper to Hawkins, 6 November 1916.
167. CCWM, LMS, Central Afr. Box 17, W. G. Robertson to Hawkins, 6 September 1916.
168. CCWM, LMS, Central Afr. Box 17, W. Draper to Hawkins, 13 May 1916.
169. CCWM, LMS, Central Afr. Box 17, W. Draper to Hawkins, 5 August 1916.
170. NAZ, ZA 7/1/3/1, Luwingu Annual Report 1915–16.
171. WFA, Kayambi MD, 9 September 1915.
172. CCWM, LMS, Central Afr. Box 3, Mporokoso Mission Annual Report 1916.
173. CCWM, LMS, Central Afr. Box 3, Kawimbe Mission Annual Report 1917.
174. CCWM, LMS, Central Afr. Box 3, Kambole Mission Annual Report 1917.
175. CCWM, LMS, Central Afr. Box 17, C. R. B. Draper to W. Freshwater, undated (enc. in W. Freshwater to Lenwood, 18 September 1917).
176. WFA, Chilubula MD, 17 July 1917. In a wartime address to the Royal African Society, General Northey himself paid glowing tribute to the missionary role in his successful campaign. He revealed that 'most' of his carrier transport work 'was done by Missionaries belonging to the different British Societies and [...] the White Fathers'; the latter were 'among the best' of his carrier-transport conductors. E. Northey, 'The East African Campaign', p. 85.
177. WFA, Chilonga MD, 6 April 1915. See also, NAZ, ZA 7/1/3/1, Mpika Annual Report 1915–16 for an official tribute to their work.
178. 'Wastage of War', *Central Africa*, No. 420(34) (December 1917): 274.
179. CCWM, LMS, Central Afr. Box 18, J. A. Ross to Lenwood, 24 December 1917.
180. See Chapter 8, pp. 218–19.
181. Louise Pirouet, 'East African Christians and World War I', p. 118.
182. CCWM, LMS, Central Afr. Box 3, Kawimbe Mission Annual Report 1915.
183. *Ibid.*
184. *Ibid.*
185. CCWM, LMS, Central Afr. Box 17, W. Draper to Hawkins, 27 October 1915.
186. CCWM, LMS, Central Afr. Box 3, Kambole Mission Annual Report 1915.
187. WFA, *Petit Echo*, No. 24, September 1915.
188. WFA, *Petit Echo*, No. 29, February 1916.
189. WFA, *Petit Echo*, No. 44, May 1917.
190. SOAS, WMS, Central Afr. Box 614, Rev S. D. Gray, 'Report on NW Rhodesia during 1918'.
191. WFA, Chilubula MD, 18 October 1914.
192. WFA, Kayambi MD, 2 November 1914.
193. LACA, Chipili Mission Log Book, 25 June 1917.
194. LACA, Chipili Mission Log Book, 2 September 1918.

195. LACA, Chipili Mission Log Book, 2 June 1918.
196. CCWM, LMS, Central Afr. Box 17, J. A. Ross to Hawkins, November 1916.
197. CCWM, LMS, Central Afr. Box 18, B. R. Turner to Hawkins, 4 September 1918.
198. CCWM, LMS, Central Afr. Box 18, Wareham to Hawkins, 12 January 1918.
199. CCWM, LMS, Central Afr. Box 3, Mbereshi and Kafakula Mission Report 1916.
200. *Ibid.*
201. *Ibid.*
202. CCWM, LMS, Central Afr. Box 3, Kawimbe Mission Annual Report 1917.

5 Crumbling Foundations of the Colonial Edifice: Chiefs and Headmen at War

1. NAZ, ZA 7/1/3/1, Awemba Annual Report 1915–16.
2. For details of Marshall's appointment, including the imperial perspective, see NAZ, ZA 2/3/2. H. C. Marshall had been one of the first Administrative officials stationed in the north-east border area (Abercorn) in 1893.
3. NAZ, ZA 7/1/2/3, Lundazi Annual Report 1914–15.
4. NAZ, ZA 7/1/2/1, Chinsali Annual Report 1914–15.
5. NAZ, ZA 7/1/2/4, East Luangwa Annual Report 1915–16.
6. NAZ, ZA 1/9/27/10, NC to DM Ft Jameson, 13 November 1916.
7. *Ibid.*
8. NAZ, ZA 7/1/3/2, Barotse Annual Report 1915–16.
9. J. H. Venning, 'Mwanawina III and the First World War', *Northern Rhodesian Journal*, Vol. 4(1) (1959): 83–86 (84).
10. TNA, CO. 417/603, Chinsali Annual Report 1916–17.
11. NAZ, ZA 7/1/2/8, Mweru-Luapula Annual Report 1914–15.
12. NAZ, ZA 7/1/3/1, Mpika Annual Report 1915–16.
13. WFA, Chilubula MD, 19 September 1915.
14. WFA, Chilubula MD, 28 September 1915.
15. *Ibid.*
16. NAZ, KDG, 1/11/1, DM Fort Jameson, *indaba* notes, 8 November 1915, p. 1.
17. *Ibid.*, p. 2.
18. NAZ, ZA 7/1/3/4, Lundazi Annual Report 1915–16.
19. TNA, CO. 417/559, Wallace to Buxton, 24 February 1915.
20. NAZ, KSD, 4/1, Mpika DNB, I, p. 442. See, for example, Mpika *indaba* notes, 23 October 1915.
21. NR No. 8 of 1916 (NRGG, Vol. 6) (1 July 1916). The political reinforcement to chiefly power was illustrated by, for instance, Clause 20, which rules that any 'native [...] guilty of insolence or of contemptuous behaviour towards a Chief', would be liable 'to a fine not exceeding five pounds or, in default of payment, to imprisonment for a period not exceeding three months with or without hard labour'.
22. TNA, CO. 417/603, Kawambwa Annual Report 1916–17.
23. NAZ, ZA 7/1/3/4, East Luangwa Annual Report 1915–16. See also Chapter 3, pp. 86–92, esp. 87–9.
24. NAZ, HM7, Cu/1/1/2, J. J. O'Sullivan to Lts. Sillitoe, Molyneaux & Burton, 12 February 1915.

25. Siwale, 'Autobiographical Sketch', p. 367.
26. NAZ, HM7, Cu/1/1/2, OC NRR to OC Northern Forces, 19 March 1915, and F. A. Edwards to OC, NRR, 8 March 1915.
27. NAZ, HM7, Cu/1/1/2, J. J. O'Sullivan to Lts. Sillitoe, Molyneaux & Burton, 12 February 1915.
28. Siwale, 'Autobiographical Sketch', p. 367.
29. *Ibid.*
30. NAZ, ZA 1/9/27/1A, DM Tanganyika to SNA, 12 July 1918.
31. TNA, CO. 417/590, VC Report, Abercorn *indaba*, 21 July 1917.
32. TNA, CO. 417/486, H. C. Marshall, Memorandum re. Musokantanda, 27 November 1916. See also NAZ, ZA 7/1/3/6, Kasempa District Annual Report 1915–16.
33. TNA, CO. 417/616, Kafue Annual Report 1917–18. The late wartime vacuum of Company power and influence in those north-western districts which facilitated such bold political intrusions was, as G. L. Caplan observes, undoubtedly enhanced by rumours of the Company's intention to hand over sovereignty to the British government, enabling a 'restoration of proper Lozi rights'. See Caplan, *The Elites of Barotseland*, p. 21.
34. *Ibid.* In view of their proven importance as reliable wartime allies, the provocative behaviour of the Lozi elite after Lewanika's death posed a major dilemma for the Livingstone authorities. As Wallace observed later in the war, while it was essential that on the one hand, the influence of the Lozi elite 'should not diminish too rapidly in the Barotse', on the other hand, 'any support to their claims outside the district would make Administration very difficult and might be a danger'. NAZ, BS3/414, Wallace to HC, 29 October 1918.
35. TNA, CO. 417/635, Barotse Annual Report 1918–19.
36. Although as G. L. Caplan postulates there was a fundamental divergence between the selfish 'reactionary' policies of the Lozi educated elite and their 'progressive' counterparts elsewhere, both occupied common ground by virtue of their fierce opposition to the institution of Company rule. Caplan, *The Elites of Barotseland*, p. 122.
37. For Wallace's post-war crackdown upon Yeta III's political interference outside Barotseland, see Stokes, 'Barotseland: The Survival of an African State', p. 298.
38. NAZ, ZA 7/1/2/9, Mweru-Luapula Annual Report 1914–15.
39. NAZ, KTA, 1/1/1, AM Ft Rosebery to Goodall, 26 June 1916.
40. NAZ, KTA, 1/3/1, H. B. Goodall to Miller, undated, December 1917.
41. *Ibid.* For fuller details of war payments to chiefs in this area and other areas of Northern Rhodesia, see Table 5.2, p. 133. NAZ, KTA, 1/3/1, H. B. Goodall to Miller, undated, December 1917. For other voluminous lists of presents dispensed to Mpika and Luwingu chiefs, see NAZ, ZA 1/9/27/10, NC Mpika to DC Kasama, 14 September 1916 and NAZ, ZA 1/9/27/10, AM Luwingu to DM Kasama, 30 September 1916.
42. NAZ, HM7, Cu/1/1/2, OC NRR to OC Northern Forces, 20 March 1915.
43. NAZ, BS3/78, VC Report, Kawambwa *indaba*, 10 July 1916.
44. *Ibid.*
45. Brelsford, *Fishermen of the Bangweulu Swamps*, p. 69.
46. TNA, CO. 417/590, VC Report, Kawambwa *indaba*, 23 June 1917.

47. TNA, CO. 417/590, VC Report, Chienji *indaba*, 2 July 1917.
48. *Ibid.*
49. NAZ, BS3/78, VC Report, Kawambwa *indaba*, 10 July 1916.
50. TNA, CO. 417/590, PRO, VC Report, Kasama *indaba*, 21 August 1917.
51. *Ibid.*
52. NAZ, KSD, 4/1, Mpika DNB, I, p. 443. Notes: Mpika *indaba*, 3 August 1917.
53. NAZ, KSD, 4/1, VC Report, Serenje *indaba*, 15 May 1916. See also NAZ, BS3/77, Notes: Mpika *indaba*, 18 April 1915, Mpika DNB, p. 441.
54. For a discussion of the background to the introduction and socio-economic importance of firearms in north-east Rhodesia, see Roberts, 'Firearms in North-Eastern Zambia before 1900', *passim*. Though apparently playing a belated, limited role in the 19th century expansion of, for instance, Bemba power, they were commonly traded and used in raiding by the 1890's. See also Roberts, *History of the Bemba*, pp. 201–5.
55. TNA, CO. 417/590, VC Report, Chinsali *indaba*, 11 August 1917.
56. TNA, CO. 417/590, VC Report, Kasama *indaba*, 21 August 1917.
57. WFA, Chilubula MD, 15 September 1914.
58. NAZ, KSD, 4/1, Mpika DNB, I, p. 441. Notes: Mpika *indaba*, 18 April 1915.
59. Hailey, *African Survey*, p. 453.
60. WFA, Chilonga MD, 3 June 1915.
61. WFA, Chilonga MD, 24 November 1915.
62. NAZ, ZA 7/1/3/1, Luwingu Annual Report 1915–16.
63. NAZ, ZA 7/1/3/1, Awemba Annual Report 1915–16.
64. WFA, Ipusukilo MD, 21 September 1915.
65. NAZ, BS3/84, Wallace to HC, 7 September 1917.
66. TNA, CO. 417/616, Chinsali Annual Report 1917–18.
67. *Ibid.*
68. NAZ, ZA 1/9/27/1B, DM Kafue to AM Namwala, undated, 1918.
69. NAZ, ZA 1/9/27/1B, NC Livingstone to SNA, 13 June 1918.
70. NAZ, ZA 1/9/27/1B, DC Batoka to SNA, 27 July 1918.
71. NAZ, ZA 1/9/27/1E, DC Serenje to SNA, 22 January 1918.
72. NAZ, ZA 7/1/3/5, Kafue Annual Report 1915–16.
73. *Ibid.*
74. TNA, CO. 417/579, H. N. Tait, Minute, 30 January 1917.
75. TNA, CO. 417/579, RC to IS, 5 December 1916.
76. WFA, Chilubi MD, 16 February 1916.
77. NAZ, KTA, 1/2/1. See, for instance, voluminous correspondence between NC Msumbu Island and DC Kasama during 1916 and 1917 regarding this intractable problem.
78. NAZ, ZA 1/9/27/4, Lundazi Annual Report 1914–15. See also NAZ, ZA 1/9/27/10, NC Mpika to DC Kasama, 15 September 1916, in which the Mpika official ruled against any special war rewards for 'valley chiefs' in view of their poor recruiting record.
79. NAZ, ZA 1/9/27/10, DC Solwezi to SNA, 13 September 1916.
80. For parallel examples of wartime antipathy towards traditional elites elsewhere in Africa, see Page, 'The War of Thangata: Nyasaland and the East African Campaign, 1914–18', p. 89; J. Lonsdale, 'Political Associations in Western Kenya', in R. Rotberg and A. Mazrui (eds), *Protest and Power in Black*

- Africa*, pp. 592–3, and Killingray, 'Repercussions of World War I in the Gold Coast', pp. 41–2.
81. NAZ, ZA 7/1/3/5, Namwala Annual Report 1915–16.
 82. TNA, CO. 417/616, Chienji Annual Report 1917–18.
 83. TNA, CO. 417/603, Abercorn Annual Report 1916–17.
 84. Interviews: Sgt. Kamzimbi Mwanza, 22 May 1980 and Fikizolo Jere, 16 May 1980.
 85. NAZ, KDG, 1/1/1, Anon. to Chief Mpeseni, undated, 1917 (translation).
 86. NAZ, KDG, 1/1/1, NC to DM, East Luangwa, 4 January 1918.
 87. *Ibid.*
 88. *Ibid.*
 89. WFA, Ipusukilo MD, 2 September 1918.
 90. RHL, WP, Williams to Mother, 11 March 1917.
 91. TNA, CO. 417/616, Kafue Annual Report 1917–18.
 92. *Ibid.*
 93. TNA, CO. 417/616, C. Douglas-Jones to Buxton, 27 January 1919.
 94. TNA, CO. 417/616, Kafue Annual Report 1917–18.
 95. NAZ, ZA 7/1/3/1, Awemba Annual Report 1915–16.
 96. NAZ, ZA 7/1/2/4, Petauke Annual Report 1914–15.
 97. NAZ, ZA 7/1/3/1, Awemba Annual Report 1915–16.
 98. WFA, Chilubi MD, 28 December 1916.
 99. WFA, Chilubi MD, 21 February 1916.
 100. NAZ, ZA 1/9/27/1E, NC Fife: List of chiefs and headmen recognised at date of Promulgation of Proclamation 8 of 1916 (enc. in Acting DC Tanganyika to SLA, 28 February 1918).
 101. TNA, CO. 417/603, Kawambwa Annual Report 1916–17.
 102. NAZ, KSD, 4/1, Notes: Mpika *indaba*, 18 April 1915, Mpika DNA, I, p. 487.
 103. TNA, CO. 417/591, VC Report, Kawambwa *indaba*, 21 August 1917.
 104. NAZ, ZA 1/9/27/10, NC Mpika to DC Kasama, 17 August 1916.
 105. TNA, CO. 417/590, VC Report, Kawambwa *indaba*, 23 June 1917.
 106. As R. E. Robinson succinctly observes: 'When mediators were not given enough cards to play, their authority with their own people waned, crisis followed, and the expanding powers had to choose between scrapping their interests or intervening to promote them directly.' Robinson, 'Non-European Foundations of European Imperialism', p. 121. The infusion of large numbers of these recent Administration-created class of mediator can thus be seen as a direct intervention designed to prop up beleaguered traditional elites and resolve the growing wartime 'crisis of mediation'.
 107. TNA, CO. 417/616, Kafue Annual Report 1917–18.
 108. NAZ, ZA 2/1/2, D. Circ. No. 2, 1916 (2 February 1916).
 109. *Ibid.*
 110. *Ibid.*
 111. *Ibid.*
 112. NAZ, ZA 7/1/3/3, Guimbi Annual Report 1915–16.
 113. NAZ, ZA 2/1/2, D. Circ. No. 2, 1916 (2 February 1916).
 114. NAZ, ZA 7/1/3/5, Namwala Annual Report 1915–16.
 115. TNA, CO. 417/603, Mwangwa Annual Report 1916–17.
 116. TNA, CO. 417/603, Mumbwa Annual Report 1916–17. For an extensive list of divisional headmen appointed in the Kafue District since July 1916, see AM Kafue to SNA, 5 March 1918, NAZ, ZA 1/9/27/10.

117. NAZ, ZA 1/9/27/10, AM Petauke to DM East Luangwa, 24 August 1916.
118. TNA, CO. 417/603, Mporokoso Annual Report 1916–17.
119. TNA, CO. 417/603, Fort Rosebery Annual Report 1916–17.
120. TNA, CO. 417/603, Awemba Annual Report 1916–17.
121. TNA, CO. 417/603, Abercorn Annual Report 1916–17.
122. CCWM, LMS, Central Afr. Box 3, W. Govan Robertson, Annual Letter to LMS Friends, undated, September 1916.
123. TNA, CO. 417/590, VC Report, Ft Rosebery *indaba*, 14 June 1917.
124. NAZ, KDG, 1/1/1, NC Fort Jameson to DM East Luangwa, 23 January 1918.
125. *Ibid.*
126. According to J. A. Barnes, this ‘distortion’ in the Ngoni political system during the post-conquest period resulted from mistaken British recognition of lieutenants or other dependants (then only acting as intermediaries, to negotiate peace and reconstruction) as rightful heads of ‘segments’. Barnes, *Politics in a Changing Society* pp. 115–16.
127. NAZ, KDG, 1/1/1, NC Ft Jameson to DM East Luangwa, 23 January 1918.
128. *Ibid.*
129. *Ibid.*
130. *Ibid.*
131. NAZ, KDG, 1/1/1, T. F. Sandford to DM Ft Jameson, 25 June 1918.
132. NAZ, KDG, 1/1/1, SNA to DM Ft Jameson, 26 March 1918.
133. RHL, WP, Williams to Mother, 3 September 1917.
134. TNA, CO. 417/635, Solwezi Annual Report 1918–19.
135. NAZ, ZA 1/9/27/10. At Serenje, for instance, in regard to war work it was strikingly revealed that chiefs ‘have not done much actively; it is rather upon the Divisional Headmen that the burden [...] has fallen’, DM Serenje to SNA, 26 September 1916.
136. TNA, CO. 417/635, Lundazi Annual Report 1918–19.
137. TNA, CO. 417/635, Ndola Annual Report 1918–19.
138. TNA, CO. 417/635, Solwezi Annual Report 1918–19.
139. TNA, CO. 417/635, Kasempa District Annual Report 1918–19.
140. TNA, CO. 417/635, Kafue Annual Report 1918–19.
141. NAZ, BS3/78, VC Report, Kawambwa *indaba*, 10 July 1916.
142. TNA, CO. 417/586, VC Report, Mwinilunga *indaba*, 13 October 1916.
143. WFA, Kayambi MD, 14 August 1915.
144. NAZ, ZA 7/1/1/1, Abercorn Annual Report 1913–14.
145. TNA, CO. 417/603, Abercorn Annual Report 1916–17.
146. TNA, CO. 417/588, VC Report, Mkushi *indaba*, 18 May 1917.
147. TNA, CO. 417/616, Serenje Annual Report 1917–18.
148. See Chapter 2, pp. 52–4 and NAZ, BS3/414, Wallace to HC, 29 October 1918. The unprecedented exodus of Lozi labour to war and, in particular, civil labour markets after 1915, appears to have similarly seriously undermined the free labour services afforded to even the Lozi aristocracy.
149. TNA, CO. 417/590, VC Report, Mporokoso *indaba*, 12 July 1917.
150. TNA, CO. 417/591, VC Report, Fife *indaba*, 3 August 1917.
151. *Ibid.*
152. TNA, CO. 417/591, VC Report, Kasama *indaba*, 21 August 1917. The Bemba traditional elite were not the only important wartime ally to be affected. Aside from the impact of the 1915 pleuropneumonia epidemic upon the Lozi cattle trade, the grave financial crisis facing the Lozi aristocracy at the

- end of the war was also undoubtedly exacerbated by the ravages of wartime inflation. See Stokes, 'Barotseland, The Survival of an African State', p. 297.
153. TNA, CO. 417/602, VC Report, Guimbi *indaba*, 17 December 1917.
 154. For a post-war perspective on the continued importance of reward distribution for Bemba chiefly prestige and problems under colonial rule, see A. Richards, *Tribal Government in Transition: The Babemba of North-Eastern Rhodesia* (London: Macmillan, 1935), pp. 15–21. Such problems were undoubtedly accentuated by wartime conditions.
 155. TNA, CO. 417/590, VC Report, Abercorn *indaba*, 21 July 1916.
 156. TNA, CO. 417/590, VC Report, Abercorn *indaba*, 21 July 1917.
 157. *Ibid.*
 158. *Ibid.*

6 The Strain of Total War: A Colonial State in Retreat

1. For a detailed analysis of ecological patterns and of tribal agricultural systems on the Plateau see Trapnell, *The Soils, Vegetation and Agriculture of North-Eastern Rhodesia, passim*.
2. As one observer has stressed, any estimate depends upon a 'constellation of factors [...] the ages of absentees, length of time away, social organisation of the people concerned, type of tribal economy and finally, the agricultural system and the division of labour between the sexes'. Watson, *Tribal Cohesion in a Money Economy*, p. 110.
3. One study of an Ushi village, for instance, revealed that in the division of labour between the sexes men comprised 98.5 per cent of the tree-cutting labour force. Kay, *Chief Kalaba's Village*, p. 47.
4. See Acland, *East African Crops*, pp. 114–16.
5. Audrey Richards suggested that a male absentee rate of more than 40 per cent to 50 per cent would seriously undermine Bemba food production. Richards, *Land, Labour and Diet in Northern Rhodesia*, p. 404. Similarly, in Watson's study of the Mambwe (one section of whom practise *citemene*) he estimates that even with mutual aid through common work practices, 'the absence of 50 per cent of the active men might be expected to produce a serious effect on the subsistence economy'. Watson, *Tribal Cohesion in a Money Economy*, p. 110. D. U. Peters estimates that an absence of up to 55 per cent of able-bodied Lala males can be tolerated but even then the 45 per cent remainder 'must be instrumental in providing the whole resident population'. Peters, *Land Usage in the Serenje District*, p. 77.
6. See Acland, *East African Crops*, pp. 33–8; also see Chapter 4, p. 86, for the socio-historical and environmental background to the development of these diverse agricultural systems.
7. Richards, *Bemba Marriage and Present Economic Conditions*, p. 35. See also Watson, *Tribal Cohesion*, pp. 112–13.
8. WFA, Kayambi MD, 17 September 1914.
9. WFA, Chilonga MD, 2 October 1914.
10. NAZ, ZA 7/1/2/1, Luwingu Annual Report 1914–15.
11. NAZ, ZA 7/1/2/1, Chinsali Annual Report 1914–15.
12. WFA, Lettre de Bishop Larue, *Petit Echo*, No. 25, October 1915.

13. WFA, Chilonga MD, 16 September 1915.
14. CCWM, LMS, Central Afr. Box 17, W. Draper to Hawkins, 21 December 1915.
15. *Ibid.*
16. CCWM, LMS, Central Afr. Box 17, W. Draper to Hawkins, 2 September 1916.
17. CCWM, LMS, Central Afr. Box 17, W. G. Robertson to LMS Friends, September 1916.
18. WFA, Chilubula Mission Rapport Annuel 1915–16. For alleged over-selling in nearby wartime Nyasaland, see also Page, *Chiwaya War*, p. 133.
19. Precise statistics of absentee male labour from individual villages are, of course, virtually non-existent. However, at Chilonga mission village it was revealed in 1918 that 53 male tax payers were absent (26 since the war's outbreak). Only 110 male tax payers remained and these included old men. This suggests an absence of well over one-third of the able-bodied men. Nearer the border this percentage was probably much larger. WFA, Chilonga MD, 24 April 1918.
20. WFA, Lubwe MD, 14 September 1915.
21. CCWM, LMS, Central Afr. Box 3, Kawimbe Mission Annual Report 1915.
22. CCWM, LMS, Central Afr. Box 3, Mporokoso Mission Annual Report 1917.
23. WFA, Kayambi MD, 24 June 1915.
24. WFA, Kayambi MD, 15 April 1916.
25. Interview, Ndezemani Phiri, 16 May 1980. Confirmed by Fikizolo Jere, 16 May 1980. See also Page, *Chiwaya War*, pp. 134–5 for the adverse impact of the war on the gender division of labour.
26. CCWM, LMS, Central Afr. Box 3, Kawimbe Mission Annual Report 1915.
27. WFA, Chilubi MD, 16 April 1917.
28. WFA, Chilubi MD, 8 April 1917.
29. NAZ, ZA 7/1/2/6, Kasempa Annual Report 1914–15.
30. CCWM, LMS, Central Afr. Box 17, W. Draper to Hawkins, 2 February 1917.
31. TNA, CO. 417/603. The 'stupendous destruction of crops [...] by elephants' in Mporokoso sub-district led one official to fiercely attack Company inaction in view of the 'severe hardships' caused, especially 'during these war days when each year we buy large quantities of the natives' food'. Mporokoso Annual Report 1916–17.
32. NAZ, BS3/416. Only late in the war, as game depredations assumed gigantic proportions, were firearm restrictions slightly relaxed, e.g. in Abercorn sub-district where a 'few guns' were 'lent to headmen'. Abercorn Annual Report 1917–18.
33. TNA, CO. 417/603, Kasama Annual Report 1916–17. The lack of game control enhanced Administration fears of a major Rinderpest epidemic, exacerbated by the breakdown of Anglo-German Rinderpest controls after war was declared in August 1914. In February 1917, with news of the spread of the disease south of the Ruaha River, Wallace set up a Rinderpest Commission consisting of special messengers (no police were available) and local settlers. The Commission was given extensive powers to control game and cattle on both sides of the north-east border including quarantine zones and the destruction of the animals, if proved infected. Wallace justified this drastic action (which undoubtedly increased the hardships of African border cattle-owners) with emphasis on the fear that should

- animals become infected, 'nothing could be done to combat the disease until it has passed into cattle areas much further south – areas that carry cattle without a break through Southern Rhodesia and Bechuanaland to the Union'. Wallace to BSAC, 27 February 1917. TNA, CO. 417/597. See also Wallace to HC, 26 February 1917, *ibid*.
34. TNA, CO. 417/603, Kawambwa Annual Report 1916–17. It was a problem that persisted in acute form as a result of the heavy post-war civil labour migration. In 1938 the Pim Commission confirmed that a 'great deal of damage' was caused to African crops by game 'owing to the absence of a large proportion of the men and the resulting neglect to construct protective fences, which are men's not women's work'. Sir A. Pim and S. Milligan (Commissioners), *Report of the Commission Appointed to Enquire into the Financial and Economic Position of Northern Rhodesia* (London: HMSO, 1938), p. 305.
 35. WFA, Kayambi MD, 24 November 1915.
 36. WFA, P. Peuth to Magister Superintendent, *Petit Echo*, No. 32, May 1916.
 37. *Ibid*.
 38. WFA, Kapatu MD, 20 February 1916.
 39. CCWM, LMS, Central Afr. Box 17, W. Draper to Hawkins, 8 March 1916. Precise mortality figures for the disastrous 1915–16 famine in the South, Central and Northern Plateau, and later famines will never be known. The Abercorn official cryptically recorded 'numbers of natives died of starvation (no statistics)', during the first three months of 1916. Abercorn Annual Report 1916–17. TNA, CO. 417/603. By contrast, the above-mentioned Missionary sources suggest deaths reached the hundreds, if not thousands.
 40. *Ibid*.
 41. CCWM, LMS, Central Afr. Box 17, W. Freshwater to Hawkins, 11 March 1916.
 42. TNA, CO. 417/603, Luwingu Annual Report 1916–17.
 43. TNA, CO. 417/603, Kawambwa Annual Report 1916–17.
 44. NAZ, ZA 7/1/3/1, Awemba Annual Report 1915–16.
 45. TNA, CO. 417/603, Awemba Annual Report 1916–17.
 46. TNA, CO. 417/603, Chinsali Annual Report 1916–17.
 47. TNA, CO. 417/591, Wallace to HC, 1 October 1917. See Table 4.1, p. 109 for the decline of African food sales after 1916.
 48. NAZ, BS3/425, Ft Rosebery Annual Report 1918–19.
 49. NAZ, BS3/425, Mweru-Luapula Annual Report 1918–19.
 50. TNA, CO. 417/603, Fife Annual Report 1916–17.
 51. NAZ, BS3/425, Serenje Annual Report 1918–19.
 52. NAZ, Shelf 16–17, Box 102, Misc. Report (1922), E. H. Lane-Poole, 'Report on Ngoni Reserve Areas'. For similar market development under early colonial rule elsewhere in Africa, see Arrighi, 'Labour Supplies', pp. 212–16; Bundy, 'The Emergence and Decline of a South African Peasantry', esp. pp. 368–81 and Lonsdale and Berman, 'Coping with Contradictions', pp. 494–7.
 53. NAZ, Shelf 16–17, Box 102, E. H. Lane-Poole, 'Report on Ngoni Reserve Areas'.
 54. TNA, CO. 417/603, Abercorn Annual Report 1916–17.
 55. *Ibid*.

56. TNA, CO. 417/603, Fife Annual Report 1916–17.
57. NAZ, ZA 1/9/74, NC Kalomo to DC Batoka, 22 May 1916, enclosing Tour report, 22 April to 7 May 1916.
58. NAZ, ZA 1/9/74, NC Kalomo, undated, Tour report, 13 May to 25 May 1916.
59. NAZ, BS3/425, Ndola Annual Report 1918–19.
60. NAZ, ZA 1/9/74, DC Batoka to SNA, 9 August 1916. As the Magistrate vainly argued: 'The true solution of the present difficulty lies in the opening up of the sale of native cattle [...] if this can be done the food question will automatically solve itself'. AM Magoye to DC Batoka, 28 August 1916.
61. NAZ, ZA 1/9/74. See numerous correspondences exchanged between the Livingstone executive and District officials of Batoka, Kafue and Sesheke districts, confirming severe famine outbreaks during the months January–March 1916.
62. TNA, CO. 417/585, Wallace to BSAC, 13 July 1916.
63. See earlier, Chapter 2 and Chapter 4.
64. TNA, CO. 417/585, Wallace to BSAC, 13 July 1916.
65. *Northern Rhodesia Government Gazette*, Vol. 6(7) (July 1916).
66. The Proclamation extended the earlier discriminatory Proclamation No. 12 of 1914 which had prohibited the wartime export of African grain. Predictably, in the draft Proclamation, Wallace recommended the issue of permits for selected individuals, notably white farmers, 'who will buy some native grain for their own use keeping the farm-grown grain for the markets which demand the better quality'. Admr to HC, 11 May 1916. NAZ, BS3/77.
67. NAZ, ZA 1/9/74, SNA to DM Batoka, 7 July 1916.
68. NAZ, ZA 1/9/74, AM Magoye to DC Batoka, 28 August 1916.
69. NAZ, ZA 1/9/74, NC Kalomo to DC Batoka, 28 August 1916.
70. NAZ, ZA 1/9/74, AM Kalomo to DC Batoka, 16 January 1918.
71. NAZ, ZA 1/9/74, DC Batoka to SNA, 25 January 1918. Relief debts remained unpaid even after the advent of Crown administration in 1924. In February 1927, over ten years after the 1916–17 famines, the Acting Governor finally approved the 'writing off' of the remaining £344 2s. 5d. of these relief debts. Chief Sec. to Hon. Treasurer, undated, February 1927. NAZ, ZA 1/9/74.
72. For full details of wartime district travelling statistics, see Table 6.1, p. 166.
73. NAZ, ZA 7/1/2/9, Abercorn Annual Report 1914–15.
74. NAZ, ZA 7/1/2/1, Kasama Annual Report 1914–15. See also Mporokoso Annual Report 1914–15, NAZ, ZA 7/1/2/1, where the high touring figure of 163 days was, revealingly, mostly spent upon 'war work' with 'little civil work' achieved.
75. NAZ, ZA 7/1/2/1, Luwingu Annual Report 1914–15. In Kasempa, with staff levels halved by transfers to the north-east war zone the situation was even more serious. In Kasempa sub-district, for instance, one half of the villages were 'unvisited' during 1915–16. NAZ, ZA 7/1/3/6, Kasempa Annual Report 1915–16.
76. TNA, CO. 417/603, Luangwa Annual Report 1916–17.
77. NAZ, KSG, 3/1, Kawambwa DNB, III, pp. 17–18.
78. NAZ, KSL 3/1, Fife DNB, I, p. 33.
79. TNA, CO. 417/603, Abercorn Annual Report 1916–17. See also Fife Annual Report 1916–17, TNA, CO. 417/603, in which it was reported that the

- 'whole of the eastern part' comprising the Tambo, Lambya, Wandya, Yombe, Wenya, Nyika and Fungwe groups were left un-toured.
80. TNA, CO. 417/603. See Fort Rosebery Annual Report 1916–17 and Kasempa Annual Report 1916–17.
 81. See Table 6.1. For a vivid recollection by a former Tanganyika district official of the serious wartime staff crisis by 1918, see G. Stokes, 'Notes', *Northern Rhodesia Journal*, Vol. 1(6) (1952): 64.
 82. NAZ, ZA 1/9/27/10, AM Petauke to DM Ft Jameson, 26 September 1916.
 83. TNA, CO. 417/603, Ndola Annual Report 1916–17.
 84. NAZ, BS3/77, VC Report Kasama, 5 June 1916.
 85. NAZ, ZA 2/1/2. See District Circ. No. 4/1917, Parts I and II, which laid down improved conditions of service (incl. pay rises) for messengers in both north-west and north-east Rhodesia.
 86. TNA, CO. 417/603, Abercorn Annual Report 1916–17.
 87. RHL, WP, Williams to Mother, 9 December 1914.
 88. TNA, CO. 417/603, Fife Annual Report 1916–17.
 89. TNA, CO. 417/603, Ndola Annual Report 1916–17.
 90. WFA, Chilubi MD, 13 May 1916.
 91. NAZ, ZA 2/1/2, District Circs. 4A and 4B of 1916.
 92. NAZ, Shelf 8, Box 1, DoNA Annual Report 1914–15.
 93. *Ibid.*
 94. NAZ, Shelf 8, Box 1, DoNA Annual Report 1915–16 and DoNA Annual Report 1916–17.
 95. TNA, CO. 417/603, Kasama Annual Report 1916–17. Similarly, at Mporokoso in 1916 it was revealed that the massive rise in tax arrears from £25 5s. *Od.* in 1914 to £142 10s. *Od.* was 'mostly due' from Africans 'with the forces in East Africa'. *Ibid.*, Mporokoso Annual Report 1916–17.
 96. NAZ, Shelf 8, Box 1, tax returns year ending March 1918 (enc. in DoNA Annual Report 1917–18).
 97. NAZ, BS3/416, Ft Jameson Annual Report 1917–18. See also Ft Rosebery Annual Report 1917–18.
 98. TNA, CO. 417/585, Wallace to BSAC, 28 August 1916.
 99. TNA, CO. 417/585, AM Lundazi to DM Ft Jameson, 31 July 1916 (enc. in Wallace to BSAC, 28 August 1916).
 100. NAZ, ZA 7/1/3/7, Ndola Annual Report 1915–16.
 101. *Northern Rhodesia Government Gazette*, Vol. 6(7) (1 July 1916).
 102. See especially Sections 3 to 8, Northern Rhodesia No. 3 of 1913, *Northern Rhodesia Government Gazette*, Vol. 3(6) (31 May 1913).
 103. See especially Section 16, subsec. (1) to (3), Northern Rhodesia No. 8 of 1916, *Northern Rhodesia Government Gazette*, Vol. 6(7) (1 July 1916).
 104. Section 17, subsec. (1), Northern Rhodesia No. 8 of 1916, *Northern Rhodesia Government Gazette*, Vol. 6(7) (1 July 1916).
 105. TNA, CO. 417/603, Kasempa Annual Report 1916–17.
 106. TNA, CO. 417/603, Solwezi Annual Report 1916–17.
 107. NAZ, BS3/145, Wallace to HC, 18 May 1916. See also H. Stanley to Buxton, 29 April 1916.
 108. The Rules laid down under the 1908 King's Regulations obliged chiefs to defend north-east Rhodesia and to suppress disorder and rebellion only within its borders. It applied only to the north-east and entailed no specific

- obligations to defence or war service on the part of their subjects. *Northern Rhodesia Government Gazette*, Vol. 6(7) (31 December 1908).
109. RHL, WP, Williams to Mother, 25 February 1916.
 110. TNA, CO. 417/586, Northern Rhodesia Whipping Sentences, half year ending 30 June 1916.
 111. TNA, CO. 417/587, L. P. Beaufort; Report on whipping sentences in Northern Rhodesia for half year ending 31 December 1916, 12 April 1917 (case records of whipping sentences enclosed).
 112. NAZ, ZA 7/1/3/7, Serenje Annual Report 1915–16.
 113. TNA, CO. 417/603, Kawambwa Annual Report 1916–17.
 114. NAZ, KTA, 1/1/1, AM Ft Rosebery to Goodall, 26 June 1916.
 115. For a similar interpretation of ‘crime’ as a ‘rational and conscious attempt to avoid exploitation’, in this case by African workers within Southern Rhodesian mining compounds, see van Onselen, *Chibaro*, pp. 239–40.
 116. TNA, CO. 417/603, Ndola Annual Report 1916–17.
 117. See Chapter 4, p. 97.
 118. TNA, CO. 417/597, Wallace to BSAC, 15 January 1917. For a recollection by a former ‘water route’ official of the serious disruption to war carrier supplies caused by such large-scale pilfering, as well as the Government organisation of the route, see Lobb, ‘The Transport Depot at Chiwutuwutu, 1914–18’, p. 197.
 119. NAZ, KTA, 1/2/11. See NC Kasama to G. H. Lobb, 15 January 1917; S. P. L. Lloyd to H. B. Goodall, 15 January 1917 and H. B. Goodall to S. P. L. Lloyd, 20 January 1917.
 120. NAZ, KTA, 1/2/1, Goodall to DC Kasama, 21 January 1917.
 121. NAZ, KTA, 1/2/1, Croad to Legal Advisor, 1 February 1917.
 122. NAZ, KTA, 1/2/1, Legal Advisor to DC Kasama, 5 March 1917.
 123. NAZ, KTA, 1/2/1, Croad to Goodall, 1 February 1917.
 124. TNA, CO. 417/603, Chilanga Annual Report 1916–17.
 125. *Ibid.*
 126. TNA, CO. 417/602, VC Report Chilanga, 12 December 1917 and VC Report Magoye, 6 January 1918.
 127. NAZ, Shelf 9, Box 13. To secure more prosecutions, angry farmers even demanded that African growers be denied ‘European’ strains of grain such as the Hickory King variety, and be restricted to more easily detectable strains such as flint or yellow mealie. In this they fell victim to their own selfish practices. As one official ironically observed, in many cases Hickory King seed was supplied to African growers by white farmers themselves ‘which seed is planted [...] and the crop resulting [...] bought by traders or farmers and sold as farm grain mealies!’ DoA Annual Report 1917–18.
 128. *Northern Rhodesia Government Gazette*, Vol. 8(8) (2 July 1918).
 129. TNA, CO. 417/605, RC to HC, 29 June 1917.
 130. NAZ, KTA, 1/3/1, Goodall to Miller, 19 September 1916.
 131. NAZ, KTA, 1/3/1, Miller to Goodall, 10 October 1916.
 132. NAZ, KTA, 1/2/1, Croad to Registrar, High Court, 24 October 1916.
 133. NAZ, KTA, 1/2/1, Goodall to Croad, 15 November 1916. J. E. Hughes, a key Company official involved in the pioneering and development of the wartime Bangweulu ‘water route’ later confirmed the widespread success

- of Batwa evasion of war service. After the establishment of the Kapofu war depot on Chiruwi Island 'all the Watwa were frightened away from Chanama [island] [...] most [...] vanished to join their comrades in the practically unexplored big marsh [...] between the [...] Lulimala and the Lumbatwa Rivers'. Hughes, *Eighteen Years on Lake Bangweulu*, p. 98.
134. NAZ, KTA, 1/2/1. Toroba, the main culprit, received twenty-four lashes and six months imprisonment with hard labour; Muwanga, the lesser sentence of three months imprisonment. Women 'imprisoned, starved and ill-treated' and husbands of raped women were awarded 5s. 0d. compensation. L. P. Beaufort, Minutes, 20 November 1916.
 135. NAZ, KTA, 1/2/1, L. P. Beaufort, Minutes, 20 November 1916.
 136. *Ibid.*
 137. NAZ, ZA 1/10, Acting DC to SLA, 11 July 1919.
 138. NAZ, KTA, 14/1/1, P. W. Jelf to Goodall, 6 October 1916.
 139. NAZ, BS3/110, Col. Murray to Defence, Salisbury, 6 October 1916.
 140. NAZ, BS3/110, R. B. Draper to Admr, 19 October 1916.
 141. NAZ, BS3/110, Draper to Col. Murray, 18 October 1916.
 142. NAZ, BS3/110, (Tel.) Draper to Wallace, 28 October 1916. This 'crisis of official integrity' was strikingly and tragically underlined when it was also revealed that many 'deserters' had innocently reported back to their home *bomas* believing that their contracts had legally expired, only to be summarily punished by hitherto trusted company officials. See H. C. Marshall, 'Memorandum re Military Porters on the Northern Border' (11 April 1916 to 31 January 1917), 2 February 1917.
 143. NAZ, BS3/110, (Tel.) Draper to Norforce, 4 December 1916.
 144. NAZ, BS3/110, (Tel.) Northey to Draper, 6 December 1916.
 145. NAZ, BS3/110, Draper to Northey, 9 December 1916.
 146. NAZ, BS3/110, Wallace to BSAC, 12 February 1917.
 147. TNA, CO. 417/597, BSAC to USoS, 5 April 1917.
 148. TNA, CO. 417/597, H. N. Tait, Minute, 9 April 1917.
 149. TNA, CO. 417/597, C. T. Davis, Minute, 11 April 1917.
 150. TNA, CO. 417/597, W. C. Bottomley, Minute, 11 April 1917.
 151. TNA, CO. 417/597, H. Lambert to Secretary WO, 16 April 1917.
 152. TNA, CO. 417/583, BSAC Directors Minutes, 24 February 1916. In early 1916, for instance, after one advance of £100,000 the Colonial office reminded London Wall that the advance was 'made upon the same terms as vote of credit loans to the Dominions and colonies'. The rate of interest charged would be 'no less than 5% per annum'. BSAC Directors Minutes, 24 February 1916, TNA, CO. 417/583.
 153. TNA, CO. 417/583, E. Grindle, Minute, 21 January 1916.
 154. TNA, CO. 417/583, Lambert, Minute, 21 January 1916.
 155. TNA, CO. 417/583, Wallace to BSAC, 8 February 1916.
 156. TNA, CO. 417/583, BSAC to USoS, 30 October 1916.
 157. TNA, CO. 417/583, Wallace to BSAC, 18 April 1916.
 158. TNA, CO. 417/583, Governor Nyasaland to Wallace, 10 January 1916. See also TNA, CO. 417/583, Wallace to Governor Nyasaland, 3 February 1916.
 159. TNA, CO. 417/584, Wallace to BSAC, 27 March 1916.

160. TNA, CO. 417/585, BSAC to USoS, 30 October 1916.
161. BSAC, *Report on the Nineteenth Ordinary General Meeting of Shareholders*, 17 December 1914.
162. BSAC, *Report on the Twentieth Ordinary General Meeting of Shareholders*, 6 April 1916.
163. GP, BSA/3/349, L. Michell to P. L. Gell, 19 May 1916.
164. TNA, CO. 417/598, BSAC Directors Minutes, 19 June 1917.
165. GP, BSA/3/356, H. Wilson Fox to P. L. Gell, 14 December 1917. The war expenditure problem continued to haunt London Wall until well into the post-war period. It was only finally settled in 1923 when the imperial authorities accepted full liability as part of the political agreement with the Company for the transfer of Northern Rhodesia to Crown control. See CMD 1914 (1923), *Rhodesia: correspondence regarding a proposed settlement of various outstanding questions relating to the BSAC's position in Southern and Northern Rhodesia*.
166. BSAC, *Report on the Twentieth Ordinary General Meeting of Shareholders*, 6 April 1916.
167. TNA, CO. 417/584, BSAC to Admr, 17 May 1916.
168. TNA, CO. 417/584. See, for example, SLA to G. H. Lobb, 30 March 1916.
169. GP, BS3/361, H. Wilson Fox, *Review of the Political and Commercial Policy of the BSAC*, 25 February 1918.
170. *Ibid.*
171. *Ibid.*
172. For a discussion of the amalgamation issue including an analysis of the motivation behind settler opposition both north and south of the Zamebsi, see J. B. Stabler, 'The British South Africa Company Proposal for Amalgamation of the Rhodesias, 1915–1917. Northern Rhodesia Reaction', *African Social Research*, Vol. 7 (June 1969): 499–527.
173. For an analysis of wartime imperial strategy in Central Africa see Chanock, *Unconsummated Union*, pp. 108–19, esp. p. 117; Strachan, *First World War: To Arms*, pp. 569–643; Anderson, *Forgotten Front*, pp. 13–29 and Paice, *Tip and Run*, pp. 26–34.
174. GP, BSA/361, H. Wilson Fox, *Review of the Political and Commercial Policy of the BSAC*, p. 4, 25 February 1918.

7 The Nadir of Colonial Power in Northern Rhodesia

1. TNA, CO. 417/597, (Tel.) Chaplin to BSAC, 2 April 1917.
2. For the causes, organisation, aims and results of the Makombe rebellion, see particularly, T. O. Ranger, 'Revolt in Portuguese East Africa: The Makombe Rising of 1917', in K. Kirkwood (ed.), *African Affairs No. 2* (London: Chatto & Windus, St Anthony Papers No. 15, 1963), pp. 54–80. See also Isaacman, *The Tradition of Resistance in Mozambique: Anti-Colonial Activity in the Zambesi Valley, 1850–1921*, pp. 156–85. Both sources confirm contemporary fears that rebel grievances regarding Portuguese war labour impressment policies played a major role in the initial outbreak of the uprising.
3. TNA, CO. 417/597, D. O. Malcolm to H. Lambert, 7 April 1917.
4. TNA, CO. 417/596, BSAC to USoS, 9 April 1917.

5. See Chapter 2, pp. 55–6.
6. TNA, CO. 417/588, C. F. Molyneux to SLA, 17 June 1917.
7. TNA, CO. 417/588, A. Kraupa to RM, Feira, 11 June 1917 (enc. in C. F. Molyneux to SLA, 17 June 1917).
8. For the causes, organisation, aims and results of the Southern Rhodesian 1896–7 rebellions, see Ranger, *Revolt in Southern Rhodesia, 1896–7: A Study in African Resistance, passim*. Ranger emphasises the crucial role of spirit mediums in the rebellions' organisation. His thesis has, however, been challenged by Cobbing in 'The Absent Priesthood: Another Look at the Rhodesian Risings of 1896–1897', and by Beach in "'Chimurenga": The Shona Rising of 1896–97'.
9. TNA, CO. 417/588, E. March, Minute, 10 July 1917.
10. TNA, CO. 417/588, VC Report, Luangwa, 28 May 1917.
11. TNA, CO. 417/588, C. F. Molyneux to DC Broken Hill, 9 March 1917.
12. TNA, CO. 417/598, DM Ft Jameson to Admr, 2 May 1917.
13. TNA, CO 417/598, Admr to DM Ft Jameson, 3 May 1917.
14. NAZ, BS3/110, Admr to BSAC, 20 March 1917.
15. NAZ, BS3/110, Admr to BSAC, 17 April 1917.
16. TNA, CO. 417/589, C. F. Molyneux to DC Broken Hill, 9 July 1917.
17. TNA, CO. 417/588. See, for instance, C. F. Molyneux to DC Broken Hill, 28 May 1917.
18. LP, 947/540/27, Chaplin to Long, 13 February 1917.
19. LP, 947/540/27, Long to Chaplin, 14 April 1917.
20. BP, Buxton to Bonar Law, 30 September 1916.
21. LP, 947/540/27. See, for instance, Chaplin to Long, 13 February 1917.
22. TNA, CO. 417/587, Admr to HC, 19 April 1917.
23. TNA, CO. 417/589, A. H. M. Edwards, 'Appreciation of Situation in East Africa consequent on invasion of Portuguese East Africa by enemy forces and the Rebellion in that Territory', 2 July 1917.
24. TNA, CO. 417/587, HC to Admr, 27 April 1917.
25. TNA, CO. 417/588. See HC to G-General, Lourenco Marques, 29 June 1917, providing for a loan by the Southern Rhodesian Administration of two obsolete machine guns, 200 rifles and 250,000 rounds of ammunition, to the Mozambique Company.
26. NAZ, BS3/416, Petauke Annual Report 1917–18.
27. TNA, CO. 417/588. See, for instance, (rebel) Chief Mpangula to Father Moskopp (n.d.) assuring him he had 'nothing against the British, but against our white people [...] because the English protect well the black people and are not avenged on them' (enc. in Molyneux to Sec. Admin. Liv., 28 May 1917).
28. NAZ, BS3/110, Admr to BSAC, 12 February 1917.
29. TNA, CO. 417/597, BSAC to SoS, 13 April 1917.
30. TNA, CO. 417/597, E. G. S. Machtig, Minute, 16 April 1917.
31. TNA, CO. 417/597, H. J. Read to BSAC, 19 April 1917. See also Page, *The Chiyawa War: Malawians and the First World War*, esp. Chapters 5 and 6, pp. 125–59.
32. TNA, CO. 417/597, Malcolm to Lambert, 25 April 1917. See also, enclosed, Wallace to H. Wilson Fox, 26 March 1917.
33. TNA, CO. 417/497, C. T. Davis, Minute, 4 May 1917.

34. TNA, CO. 417/597, E. A. Grindle, Minute, 1 May 1917.
35. TNA, CO. 417/597, Long to Governor Nyasaland, 8 May 1917 and also Lambert to BSAC, 16 June 1917, TNA, CO. 417/598.
36. TNA, CO. 417/598, Minutes of C. T. Davis, 11 June 1917 and F. G. A. Butler, 12 June 1917.
37. TNA, CO. 417/598, E. A. Grindle, Minute, 11 June 1917.
38. TNA, CO. 417/589, IRNK Annual Report 1916–17. On the wage scale of Robert Williams and Co., first term labourers received 15s. *Od.* per month and second term boys 20s. *Od.* Wage levels later rose even higher with the introduction of Portuguese labour after the suspension of recruitment in north-east Rhodesia after February 1917. See also Perrings, 'Good Lawyers but Poor Workers: Recruited Angolan Labour in the Copper Mines of Katanga, 1871–1921'. By contrast, first-line war carriers received only an average of 10s. *Od.* to 15s. *Od.* a month and second-line carriers an average of 7s. *Od.* to 10s. *Od.* a month.
39. TNA, CO. 417/603. See, for instance, Fort Rosebery Annual Report 1916–17 in which the wartime shortage of manpower and associated border control difficulties were stressed.
40. TNA, CO. 417/591, IRNK Monthly Report, 20 August 1917.
41. *Ibid.*
42. *Ibid.*
43. *Ibid.*
44. TNA, CO. 417/591, RC to HC, 4 October 1917.
45. TNA, CO. 417/591, HC to Admr, 18 October 1917. See also HC to Long, 4 December 1917.
46. TNA, CO. 417/592, Admr to HC, 8 November 1917.
47. TNA, CO. 417/591, RC to HC, 4 October 1917.
48. TNA, CO. 417/592, Admr to HC, 8 November 1917.
49. NAZ, BS3/438. In a report for the year ending March 1918, for instance, Thompson estimated that during the previous twelve months there was an average of 4,500 to 5,000 unregistered black Rhodesians working in the Katanga, 'exclusive of those employed by L'Union Minière'. Many worked for unscrupulous independent contractors with poor food, low wages and poor accommodation. Many others worked as domestic or casual labour in Elizabethville and the surrounding areas. IRNK Annual Report 1917–18, pp. 5–6.
50. NR No. 1 of 1917, NRRG, Vol. 7(6) (18 April 1917), esp. Sections 14–21.
51. NAZ, BS3/230, DM Ft Jameson to Admr, 30 March 1917.
52. NAZ, BS3/230, Secretary NERACA to DM Ft Jameson, 22 March 1917. See Minutes of Farmers Deputation enclosed.
53. TNA, CO. 417/600, Wallace to BSAC, 2 October 1917.
54. TNA, CO. 417/591, Admr to HC, 12 October 1917.
55. TNA, CO. 417/600, Wallace to BSAC, 2 October 1917.
56. *Ibid.* By late 1917 prices of some basic commodities in the North had quadrupled; salt had risen from 2*d.* to 6*d.* to 9*d.* per lb and soap from 6*d.* to 2s. *Od.* or more.
57. NAZ, BS3/411 (enc. in Wallace to BSAC, 2 October 1917, TNA, CO. 417/600) and TNA, CO. 417/591, Wallace to HC, 1 October 1917, H. C. Marshall: 'Memorandum: Recognition of services rendered by Chiefs, Headmen and

- People during the period of war on the Northern Border', 28 September 1917.
58. *Ibid.*
 59. TNA, CO. 417/600, Wallace to BSAC, 2 October 1917.
 60. NAZ, BS3/411, Marshall, 'Memorandum: Recognition of services rendered by Chiefs, Headmen and People during the period of war on the Northern Border', 28 September 1917.
 61. TNA, CO. 417/600, Wallace to BSAC, 2 October 1917.
 62. *Ibid.*
 63. *Ibid.*
 64. TNA, CO. 417/600, BSAC to USoS, 24 November 1917.
 65. TNA, CO. 417/591, Buxton to Long, 12 October 1917.
 66. TNA, CO. 417/600, H. N. Tait, Minute, 3 November 1917.
 67. TNA, CO. 417/600, E. G. S. Machtig, Minute, 8 December 1917.
 68. TNA, CO. 417/600, W. C. Bottomley, Minute, 10 December 1917.
 69. TNA, CO. 417/600, C. T. Davis, Minute, 8 December 1917.
 70. TNA, CO. 417/591, Wallace to HC, 1 October 1917.
 71. NAZ, BS3/511, B. R. Cubitt to USoS, 26 January 1918.
 72. NAZ, BS3/411, T. C. Heath to USoS, 9 February 1918.
 73. NAZ, BS3/411, Cubitt to USoS, 28 March 1918.
 74. NAZ, BS3/411, Admr to HC, 23 May 1918.
 75. *Ibid.*
 76. *Ibid.*
 77. NAZ, BS3/411, H. J. Stanley, Minute, 28 May 1918.
 78. NAZ, BS3/411, (Tel.) HC to SoS, 29 May 1918.
 79. TNA, CO. 417/603, H. Lambert to Sec. Treasury, 3 June 1918. See also *ibid*, H. Lambert to Sec. WO.
 80. TNA, CO. 417/604, Wallace to Birchenough, 12 May 1918 (enc. in Malcolm to Lambert, 5 July 1918).
 81. TNA, CO. 417/604, D. O. Malcolm to Lambert, 5 July 1918.
 82. NAZ, BS3/85, VC Report, Kasama *indaba*, 5 June 1918.
 83. NAZ, BS3/85, VC Report, Abercorn *indaba*, 14 June 1918.
 84. NAZ, BS3/85, VC Report, Kawambwa *indaba*, 6 July 1918.
 85. NAZ, BS3/85, VC Report, Luwingu *indaba*, 2 July 1918. See also NAZ, BS3/85, H. C. Marshall's reports of *indabas* held at Abercorn, 14 June 1918; Fort Rosebery, 15 July 1918 and Mporokoso, 25 June 1918.
 86. *Ibid.*
 87. NAZ, BS3/415, VC Report, Solwezi *indaba*, 18 September 1918.
 88. NAZ, BS3/415, NC Solwezi to DC Solwezi, 26 September 1918 (enc. in VC Report, Solwezi *indaba*, 18 September 1918).
 89. See Chapter 1, pp. 12–13.
 90. NAZ, BS3/274. See, for example, DC Serenje to Coxhead, 12 August 1915.
 91. WFA, Chilubula MD, 22 and 23 March 1918.
 92. WFA, Chilubula MD, 23 April 1918.
 93. NAZ, BS3/85, VC Report, Mporokoso *indaba*, 25 June 1918.
 94. *Ibid.*
 95. WFA, Kapatu MD, 21 August 1918.
 96. NAZ, BS3/274, D. Circ., J. C. C. Coxhead to DM's Kawambwa, Kasama and Abercorn, 31 August 1918.

97. NAZ, BS3/274, DC Awemba to SNA, 14 October 1918.
98. NAZ, BS3/425, Luwingu Annual Report 1918–19.
99. TNA, CO. 417/602, (Tel.) Buxton to SoS, 26 July 1918.
100. TNA, CO. 417/604, SoS to Milner, 1 August 1918.
101. TNA, CO. 417/604, I. Macpherson to Long, 3 September 1918.
102. TNA, CO. 417/604, C. T. Davies, Minute, 6 September 1918.
103. TNA, CO. 417/604, H. Lambert, Minute, 9 September 1918.
104. TNA, CO. 417/604, Long to I. Macpherson, 19 September 1918.
105. TNA, CO. 417/604, H. Lambert, Minute, 25 September 1918.
106. TNA, CO. 417/604, Long to Macpherson, 26 September 1918.
107. TNA, CO. 417/604, (Tel.) SoS to HC, 28 September 1918.
108. NAZ, BS3/413. For the depth of the carrier supply crisis engendered by the Colonial Office ban during October 1918, see Wallace to HC, 11 October 1918; (Tel.) Wallace to HC, 17 October 1918 and (Tel.) HC to SoS, 22 October 1918. In his 22 October telegram, the High Commissioner revealed that the Abercorn and Kasama Magistrates considered that 'not a single man will volunteer as first line carrier'.
109. See Chapter 3, pp. 75–7.
110. NAZ, BS3/210, (Tel.) Defence, Salisbury to Norforce, 5 November 1918.
111. NAZ, BS3/210, (Tel.) Admr to Defence, Salisbury, 6 November 1918.
112. NAZ, HM6, Co 3/4/1, A. Copeman, Memoirs. For the similar duration and impact of the influenza virus on Nyasaland *askari* and *tenga-tenga* forces, the disease having massively expanded by demobilisation to home villages see Page, *Chiwaya War*, pp. 149 and 171–6.
113. NAZ, BS3/210, (Tel.) Admr to Defence, Salisbury, 6 November 1918.
114. NAZ, BS3/210, (Tel.) HC to Admr, 8 November 1918.
115. NAZ, BS3/210, (Tel.) Admr to HC and Defence, Salisbury, 9 November 1918.
116. See Chapter 3, pp. 68–78.
117. TNA, CO. 417/616. See Draper to Admr, 28 November 1918, for the widespread looting of African villages (particularly of food stores, i.e. meal and beans) by German units. The invasion also sparked off a major Rinderpest scare due not only to the estimated 600 cattle illegally brought in by von Lettow's troops, but also to some 200 head imported by pursuing KAR units, *ibid.*
118. NAZ, BS3/210, (Tel.) Defence, Salisbury to Admr, 31 October 1918.
119. *Ibid.*
120. See Chapter 3, p. 73 and Chapter 6, p. 157.
121. NAZ, BS3/210, Acting DC Tanganyika to Admr, 1 November 1918.
122. Interview, Ndezemani Phiri, 16 May 1980.
123. NAZ, BS3/210, Acting DC Tanganyika to Admr, 19 November 1918.
124. WFA. See, for instance, Kayambi MD, 2 November 1918 and Chilonga MD, 14 November 1918.
125. NAZ, BS3/222, DC Awemba to Admr, 24 November 1918.
126. General von Lettow-Vorbeck, *My Reminiscences of East Africa*, p. 314.
127. NAZ, KDH, 2/1. See, for example, DC Kasama to Lt Sibold disclosing an incident in which administrative offices were burned and valuable district records lost. The drunken behaviour of several Europeans during the last hours of the evacuation of Kasama also undoubtedly contributed to the prevailing chaos and disorder.

128. General von Lettow-Vorbeck, *My Reminiscences of East Africa*, p. 314.
129. *Ibid.*
130. NAZ, BS3/22, Croad to Admr, 24 November 1918.
131. WFA, Chilubula MD, 7 November 1918.
132. WFA, Ipusukilo MD, 14 November 1918.
133. WFA, Chilonga MD, 14 November 1918.
134. WFA, Chilonga MD, 15 November 1918.
135. WFA, Chilubula MD, 18 November 1918.
136. NAZ, BS3/222, DC Awemba to Admr, 24 November 1918.
137. *Ibid.*
138. *Ibid.*
139. *Ibid.*
140. 'The Unknown African', *The Listener*, 13 April 1938.
141. WFA, Chilubula MD, 13 November 1918.
142. WFA, Chilubula MD, 15 November 1918.
143. *Ibid.*
144. NAZ, BS3/425, Luwingu Annual Report 1918–19.
145. NAZ, BS3/425, Nsumbu Island Annual Report 1918–19.
146. GP, BSA/4/580, R. Goode to Sec. BSAC, 19 November 1918.

8 Reconquest and Reconstruction

1. For the historical and ideological background to the growth of the Watchtower Movement in Central Africa, see mainly Cross, 'The Watchtower Movement in South and Central Africa, 1908–1945' (PhD dissertation: Oxford University, 1973), *passim*. See also G. Shepperson and T. Price, *Independent African: John Chilembwe and the Origins, Setting and Significance of the Nyasaland Native Rising of 1915*, pp. 323–30. Chilembwe's insurrection was closely linked by the Nyasaland authorities (Shepperson and Price argue erroneously so), to the American Watchtower Movement, *ibid.*, p. 324.
2. Shepperson and Price, *Independent African*, p. 420.
3. It was a phenomenon strikingly observed by the Chilubula White Fathers who, in 1915, had noted the dearth of any organised, traditionally-based resistance to war demands amongst the local Bemba. See Chapter 4, p. 97.
4. NAZ, KTQ, 2/1, Chinsali DNB, II, p. 68, Chinsali Quarterly Report October–December 1918.
5. *Ibid.*
6. Although the first African Welfare Association had been established at Mwenzo in 1912, the organisation remained embryonic and appears to have collapsed during the wartime disruption of the mission. One of its founders, Peter Sinkala, died of influenza at Mwenzo in December 1918 and the Association was not decisively revived until 1923. Its lack of influence during these years undoubtedly helped create a political void for the more radical Watchtower Movement to fill. See D. J. Cook, 'The Influence of the Livingstonia Mission on the Formation of Welfare Associations in Zambia, 1912–13', pp. 108–10.
7. NAZ, KTZ, 2/1, Chinsali DNB, II, p. 68. Chinsali Quarterly Report October–December 1918.

8. The 1918–19 Watchtower disturbances in Northern Rhodesia have been examined by two other major sources: Cross, 'The Watchtower Movement', pp. 188–200 and H. S. Meebelo, *Reaction to Colonialism: A Prelude to the Politics of Independence in Northern Zambia 1893–1939*, Chapter IV, pp. 133–85. Both also stress the role of wartime social disruption as a catalyst to the expansion of Watchtower.
9. NAZ, BS1/148, C. R. B. Draper to AM Fife, 10 April 1919.
10. CCWM, LMS, Central Afr. Box 17, H. Edwards to Hawkins, 22 January 1917. See also Kawimbe Mission Annual Report 1918, CCWM, LMS, Central Afr. Box 3, in which it was reported that African villagers 'feel that they have been made to suffer hardships through no fault of theirs and they somewhat resent it [...] the character of most European soldiers has been so immorally bad that [...] a bad impression has been made on the men who acted as servants and porters to them'.
11. NAZ, ZA 1/10/1, P. J. Macdonell to Wallace, 5 May 1919. See also Strachan, *First World War: To Arms*, p. 600 for the telling observation that 'the brutality of the Belgian askaris had not contributed to good order in Rhodesia'.
12. NAZ, ZA 1/10/1, Wallace to P. J. Macdonell, 3 June 1918. Macdonell's report also attracted the wrath of an embarrassed London Wall. See NAZ, ZA 1/10/1, F. B. Philip to Wallace, 5 December 1919.
13. NAZ, ZA 1/10/1, DC Kasama to SLA, 23 June 1919.
14. NAZ, ZA 1/10/1, Acting DC Tanganyika to SLA, 11 July 1919.
15. See Table 6.1, p. 166.
16. NAZ, KSL, 3/1 Fife DNB, I, p. 33, for details of the wartime disruption of staff levels at Fife *boma*.
17. See Table 6.1, p. 166.
18. See Table 8.1, p. 215. As the Fife tax records clearly show, during 1918 arrears massively increased reflecting both the wartime disruption to Administrative control and the impact of Watchtower exhortations not to work for Europeans or pay taxes. Significantly, the Iwa division, the centre of Watchtower activity, had one of the worst records for non-payment of taxes.
19. NAZ, ZA 1/10/1, Acting DC Tanganyika to SLA, 11 July 1919.
20. *Ibid.*
21. *Ibid.*
22. NAZ, BS1/148, Lt. E. C. Castle to DC Tanganyika, 24 February 1919.
23. NAZ, KTQ, 2/1, Chinsali DNB, II. See also, for instance, NAZ, KTZ, 2/1, Chinsali Quarterly Report October–December 1918.
24. NAZ, ZA 1/10/1. Macdonell to Wallace, 5 May 1919. For an interesting parallel in Kenya, see A. Wipper, *Rural Rebels: A Study of Two Protest Movements in Kenya*, p. 82. Professor Wipper identifies the German invasion of Kisii and the temporary exit of the British as an important catalyst to the expansion of the Mumbo protest movement. The invasion 'probably confirmed for some the Seventh Day Adventist prediction of a coming millennium as well as Mumbo's similar prophecy' and 'cast doubts about the invulnerability of the British'.
25. NAZ, ZA 1/10/1, Chunga *indaba* notes, 30 December 1918, p. 6.
26. *Ibid.*
27. NAZ, ZA 1/10/1, Chunga *indaba* notes, 30 December 1918, p. 9.

28. NAZ, ZA 1/10/1, Draper to Admr, 19 January 1919. This confirms, to some extent, wartime military intelligence fears that even the low-status carrier corps could be a potential vehicle for the expression of anti-colonial grievances. See Chapter 3, pp. 84–6 and note 99, pp. 275–6. See also Wipper, *Rural Rebels*, pp. 79 and 82 in which the forced impressments of young men into the Carrier Corps is considered as a further catalyst to membership of the Mumbo cult.
29. NAZ, ZA 1/10/1. See Draper to Admr, 29 January 1919.
30. NAZ, ZA 1/10/1, Chunga *indaba* notes, 30 December 1918, p. 9.
31. CCWM, LMS, Central Afr. Box 17, W. Draper to F. Lenwood, 17 August 1917.
32. NAZ, ZA 1/10/1, Chunga *indaba* notes, 30 December 1918, p. 7.
33. TNA, CO. 417/603, Fife Annual Report 1916–17.
34. For a brief discussion of the calamitous wartime void in European mission authority at Mwenzo, see also J. McCracken, *Politics and Christianity in Malawi, 1875–1940*, pp. 221–2.
35. NAZ, BS1/147, Unsigned note enclosed in D. MacKenzie-Kennedy to NC Fife, 13 November 1918.
36. NAZ, ZA 1/10/1, (Tel.) Draper to Admr, 16 January 1919.
37. Although the Movement clearly vastly expanded in numbers during the invasion period, there is no evidence to suggest that it initiated violence. Moreover, the early pacifist tactics of the Watchtower Movement provide an interesting parallel with the strategies deployed by militant workers during the later 1935 and 1940 Copperbelt disturbances, where ‘most of the violence [...] came from the security authorities’ and there was an ‘astonishing lack of retaliatory violence against whites’, I. Henderson, ‘Early African Leadership: The Copperbelt Disturbances of 1935 and 1940’, pp. 96–7.
38. See earlier, pp. 75–7.
39. NAZ, KSL, 3/1, Fife DNB, I, p. 33. Confirmed in NAZ, ZA 1/10/1, Macdonell to Admr, 5 May 1919.
40. TNA, CO. 417/603. Significantly, Kafwimbe’s Iwa division had suffered the most from wartime famines affecting Fife sub-district, famines closely linked to excessive war labour extraction. Fife Annual Report 1916–17. This probably helps to explain the area’s role as the hotbed of Watchtower radicalism in 1918.
41. NAZ, ZA 1/10/1, Draper to Admr, 19 January 1919.
42. *Ibid.*
43. NAZ, ZA 1/10/1, Chunga *indaba* minutes, 30 December 1918, p. 7. At Chunga, Kafwimbe maintained his antagonistic and provocative stance asserting that the Watchtower people were ‘the very ones who should be sent to finish off war work’, *ibid.*, p. 3.
44. NAZ, ZA 1/10/1, Draper to Admr, 19 January 1919.
45. In some senses Watchtower posed a greater threat to mission authority than to that of the Government. By its offer of immediate social status through instant baptism the Movement clearly threatened the very basis of mission spiritual control, since baptism into any of the European missions took several years. For a vivid description of one Watchtower baptism, see WFA, Chilonga MD, 13 December 1918.

46. WFA, Chilubula MD, 6 February 1919.
47. WFA, 'Meeting of the Missionaries in Northern Rhodesia', Rapport Annuel 1918.
48. NAZ, BS1/148. Statement by Father Tanguy (enc. in D. Mackenzie-Kennedy to NC Fife, 13 November 1918.)
49. NAZ, ZA 1/10/1, DC Kasama to Admr, 18 February 1919, in which Dewhurst protested that the Judge's ruling that his order was 'unlawful' had rendered his anti-Watchtower efforts 'abortive'. Draper's Chunga order to 'stop preaching and teaching' was similarly ruled unlawful, sparking off a major row between the Secretary of Native Affairs and the Registrar. See also NAZ, ZA 1/10/1, SNA to the Registrar, Livingstone, 14 February 1919. The Secretary argued that the Judge's ruling that 'no steps should be taken to prevent Watchtower meetings, but that offences arising as a consequence of those meetings should be dealt with as they arise' was a serious undermining of an administration lacking substantial police forces. *Preventive orders were essential: 'we cannot apply the principles of laws applicable to civilised countries', ibid.* This confusion and conflict between the major institutions of white authority regarding appropriate strategies towards Watchtower was, in one sense, a tribute to the Movement's initially pacifist tactics.
50. NAZ, ZA 1/10/1, Chunga *indaba* notes, 31 December 1918, p. 5.
51. NAZ, ZA 1/10/1, P. J. Macdonell: Memorandum, 17 January 1919. Draper's action here had clearly violated the unwritten doctrine or policy of minimum force, a policy underpinning the credibility of all colonial administrations which generally lacked substantial coercive forces. See Kirk Greene, 'The Thin White Line: the Size of the British Colonial Service in Africa', pp. 38–44 and L. H. Gann and P. Duignan, *The Rulers of British Africa 1870–1914*, p. 215.
52. NAZ, ZA 1/10/1, *ibid.* See also Chunga *indaba* notes, p. 10.
53. NAZ, ZA 1/10/1, *ibid.* See also Chunga *indaba* notes, p. 10.
54. NAZ, ZA 1/10/1, Macdonell to Admr, 5 May 1919.
55. *Ibid.*
56. NAZ, ZA 1/10/1, Draper to Admr, 19 January 1919.
57. Kirk-Greene, 'The Thin White Line', p. 42.
58. NAZ, ZA 1/10/1, Draper to Admr, 19 January 1919.
59. NAZ, ZA 1/10/1, NC Chinsali to DC Kasama, 22 January 1919.
60. NAZ, ZA 1/10/1, Draper to Admr, 22 January 1919.
61. NAZ, ZA 1/10/1, NC Chinsali to DC Kasama, 22 January 1919.
62. *Ibid.*
63. NAZ, KTQ, 2/1, Chinsali DNB, I, p. 63, Chinsali Quarterly Report October–December 1918. Apprehension over Watchtower's expansion into Bembaland were matched by fears of its penetration into the Serenje and Mkushi sub-districts where the six Watchtower 'leaders' had initially preached before their arrival in Tanganyika District. See Draper to Admr, 19 January 1919, NAZ, ZA 1/10/1 and SNA to DM Abercorn, 2 April 1919, *ibid.* G. Stokes, a Tanganyika district official, later recalled that the Serenje District Magistrate had in fact deported all six men because the Lala 'believed them and [...] were not thinking it worthwhile to make gardens', confirming that Watchtower influence had become a significant threat to

- boma* control there. See, G. Stokes, 'Memories of Old Abandoned Bomas, No. 12: Old Fife', p. 347.
64. See Chapter 7, pp. 205–11, esp. pp. 207–10.
 65. Meebelo, *Reaction to Colonialism*, p. 137.
 66. NAZ, ZA 1/10/1, Macdonell to Admr, 5 May 1919. Significantly, Macdonell recalled Draper's observation that many Bemba chiefs only 'Chimba-ed' when it was clear that *boma* authority was being decisively reasserted. It confirmed that some, at least, were 'sitting on the fence' awaiting the result of the Watchtower/*boma* confrontation, underlining the potential gravity of Watchtower's threat to Company control.
 67. NAZ, ZA 1/10/1, Report by Lt. Sibold, 10 January 1919 (enc. in Acting Govr. Nyasaland to Admr, undated, February 1919). On the basis of this report, his commanding officer insisted that it was a 'matter of necessity that the Watchtower Movement should be checked'. Lt. Col. L. H. Soames to Act. Chief Secretary Zomba, 6 January 1919, *ibid.*
 68. Interview, Ndezemani Phiri, 16 May 1980.
 69. NAZ, BS1/148. See statement by Father Tanguy recording Watchtower exhortations to 'stop tree-cutting' and 'leave your cattle' (enc. in D. Mackenzie-Kennedy to NC Fife, 13 November 1918). See also, NAZ, ZA 1/10/1, C. Dewhurst to DC Kasama, 17 March 1919, comparing the resultant near-famine disaster to the calamitous cattle-killing in South Africa in the 1850s.
 70. NAZ, ZA 1/10/1, Wallace to HC, 9 December 1918.
 71. *Northern Rhodesia Government Gazette*, Vol. 7(6) (1 July 1916). Section 7 laid down: 'The Administrator may, with the approval of the High Commissioner [...] call upon chiefs to supply men for the defence of the territory and for the suppression of disorder and rebellion within its borders and may call upon such chiefs personally to render such services'.
 72. NAZ, BS3/438, H. M. Stanley, Minute to Buxton, 17 December 1918.
 73. *Ibid.*
 74. *Ibid.*
 75. *Ibid.*
 76. NAZ, BS3/438, Buxton to W. H. Long, 28 December 1918.
 77. TNA, CO. 417/616. See Long to Buxton, 13 February 1919.
 78. GP, BSA/10/37, Wallace to Birchenough, 14 October 1918.
 79. WFA, Vicariat Apostolique du Bangweolo, Rapport Annuel 1918–19.
 80. WFA, *Petit Echo*, No. 66, April 1919.
 81. WFA, Kayambi Rapport Annuel 1918–19.
 82. RHL, WP, Williams to Mother, 21 November 1918. For recent studies of the disastrous impact of influenza elsewhere in Central Africa, see, especially, H. Philips and D. Killingray (eds), 'Introduction' in *The Spanish Influenza Pandemic of 1918–19: New Perspectives* and J. G. Ellison, "'A Fierce Hunger": Tracing the impact of the 1918–1919 Influenza Pandemic in Southwest Tanzania', *ibid.*
 83. D. Barrett, for instance, identifies 'natural disasters' such as the 1918 Spanish influenza pandemic as a potent catalyst to the expansion of some independent Church movements in Africa. Barrett, *Schism and Renewal in Africa: An Analysis of Six Thousand Contemporary Religious Movements*, p. 73.
 84. WFA, Kayambi Rapport Annuel, 1918–19.

85. NAZ, ZA 1/10/1, Draper to Admr, 19 January 1919.
86. NAZ, ZA 1/10/1, VC Report, 'Some notes upon the Watchtower Movement in Northern Rhodesia'.
87. NAZ, ZA 1/10/1, Draper to Admr, 22 January 1919, reporting the 'rescue' by his supporters of one arrested Watchtower leader from Fife hospital!
88. NAZ, ZA 1/10/1. For a vivid description of this operation, see Draper to SLA, 29 January 1919. To the end, the Livingstone executive maintained rigid control over their local subordinates (in stark contrast to the pre-Chunga period), and the Terefya police operation was conducted with extreme caution. Draper's somewhat hysterical calls for 'at least 100 men with European officers and a maxim' and his request for a 'free hand' for instance, were firmly rejected. See also, *ibid.* (Tel.) Draper to Admr, 16 January 1919 and (Tel.) Admr to Draper, DC Kasama and Col. Stennett, 17 January 1919.
89. NAZ, ZA 1/10/1. See Cross, 'The Watchtower Movement', p. 200. Full details of the Kasama trials and sentences awarded can be seen in P. J. Macdonell, 'Memorandum to Admr', 5 May 1919.
90. NAZ, ZA 1/10/1, Macdonell to Admr, 5 May 1919. Despite this major crackdown upon Watchtower activity, the movement merely appears to have been driven underground during the ensuing 1920s. See Cross, 'The Watchtower Movement', p. 200. M. G. Billing, an official stationed at Abercorn during the early 1930s recalled that the movement remained 'largely dormant' and it was 'no more than "bogey man"' although he admitted that there were 'occasional meetings' and books and speeches 'tended to be anti-authority and anti-Church'. M. G. Billing to author, 24 January 1983. In fact, further south on the Copperbelt, Watchtower did later play an important 'galvanising role' in the 1935 strike, although its impact was lessened in this more sophisticated urban environment and by its rejection by many Catholic Bemba workers. See Henderson, 'Early African Leadership: The Copperbelt Disturbances of 1935 and 1940', pp. 88 and 90.
91. *Ibid.* As in wartime, however, government control over the repressive activities of chiefs proved difficult. Despite the Kasama trial examples, some chiefs maintained a violent persecution of Watchtower adherents. Chief Chewe, for instance, was fined in June 1919 for beating former convicts and forcing them to work an extra four days *mulasa* for him. See NAZ, ZA 1/120/1, C Dewhurst to DC Kasama, 25 June 1919.
92. *Ibid.*
93. NAZ, ZA 1/10/1, Wallace to BSAC, 23 June 1919.
94. NAZ, ZA 1/10/1, P. J. Macdonnell to Admr, 5 May 1919.
95. This was apparently because the movement had 'died out' by 1959. See Cunnison, *The Luapula Peoples of Northern Rhodesia*, p. 204.
96. D. Campbell, 'A Few Notes on Butwa: An African Secret Society', p. 80. For a further description of Butwa see Gouldsbury and Sheane, *The Great Plateau of Northern Rhodesia*, pp. 259–62. This is partly based upon Campbell's account and also includes a description of the Society's ceremonies by H. T. Harrington, Assistant Magistrate of the Luapula district (p. 260).
97. NAZ, KTN, 1/1, Abercorn DNB, I, p. 70, unsigned entry, 1906.
98. Campbell, 'A Few Notes', p. 80.
99. *Ibid.*

100. Cunnison, *The Luapula Peoples of Northern Rhodesia*, p. 207. This was specifically a comparison between Jehovah's Witnesses and Butwa, but it is also applicable to the indigenous Watchtower Movement.
101. NAZ, KTN, 1/1, Abercorn DNB, I, p. 70.
102. Campbell, 'A Few Notes', p. 80. By 1910 a form of Butwa appears to have also infiltrated the Katanga mining compounds where it acted as a worker association or mutual aid society. Perrings, *Black Mineworkers*, p. 213.
103. CCWM, LMS, Central Afr. Box 3, Kambole Mission Annual Report 1919.
104. *Ibid.*
105. *Ibid.*
106. *Ibid.*
107. One veteran, for instance, vividly recalled the traumatic experience of killing one white Sergeant-Major with his bayonet: 'after I killed him I had to take the number [...] take that gun belt, take that bolt and leave the whole gun'. Interview, Ndezemani Phiri, 16 May 1980. For parallels in adjacent Nyasaland, see Page, *Chiwaya War*, pp. 102–5.
108. Interview, Nathaniel Jabanda, 15 May 1980.
109. NAZ, ZA 1/10/1, DC Kasama to SLA, 23 June 1919.
110. NAZ, ZA 1/10/1, DC Tanganyika to SLA, 11 July 1919.
111. See below, pp. 238–9.
112. See below, p. 238.
113. WFA, Chilubula Rapport Annuel 1918–19.
114. WFA, Chilonga MD, 1 April 1919.
115. NAZ, ZA 2/1/3. See, for example, D. Circ. No. 2 of 1919, 'Native Tax: Scale of punishment'.
116. NAZ, BS3/425. See, in particular, Tanganyika Annual Report 1918–19.
117. See Table 6.1, p. 166 for a comparison of pre-war and post-war touring levels.
118. NAZ, ZA 2/1/2, D. Circ. No. 11 of 1919, 16 September 1919. This circular probably also reflected the earlier criticism directed at the misuse of the 'reasonable orders' clause during the Watchtower disturbances.
119. NAZ, ZA 2/1/2, Circular Letter No. 3 of 1919, 20 February 1919.
120. NAZ, KTN, 1/1, Abercorn DNB, I, pp. 151–65.
121. NAZ, ZA 7/1/3/1, Luwingu Annual Report 1919–20.
122. WFA, Chilubula MD, 14 August 1919.
123. WFA, Chilubula MD, 17 June 1919.
124. WFA, Chilubula MD, 9 March 1919.
125. WFA, Ipusukilo Rapport Annuel, 1918–19.
126. NAZ, KTN, 1/1, Abercorn DNB, I, pp. 151–65.
127. WFA, Chilubula Rapport Annuel 1919–20.
128. WFA, Ipusukilo Rapport Annuel 1918–19.
129. NAZ, ZA 7/1/4/1, Nsumbu Island Annual Report 1919–20.
130. NAZ, BS3/427, AM Fort Rosebery to Public Prosecutor, 7 January 1920.
131. WFA, Chilubula MD, 14 August 1919. See also Kapatu MD, 19 August 1919.
132. See Langham, 'More about Man-eaters', p. 70, for details of these patrols in the early 1920s.
133. NAZ, BS3/423. See *indaba* reports for Kasama (undated March 1919), Chinsali (30 March 1919), Kasama (1 and 8 April 1919), Chinsali (22 April 1919), Abercorn (13 May 1919) and Nsumbu Island (8 June 1919).

134. NAZ, BS3/423, Abercorn *indaba* report, 13 May 1919, pp. 1–3.
135. CCWM, LMS, Central Afr. Box 3, Mporokoso Mission Annual Report 1919. For parallels in neighbouring Nyasaland see Page, *Chiwaya War*, pp. 177–80.
136. WFA, Chilubula Rapport Annuel 1918–19. For a vivid description of the economic impact of the post-war ‘deluge of new wealth’ in Fife sub-district caused by military food sales and discharged carrier cash wages, see also Guthrie, ‘The Emergence and Decline of a Mission-Educated Elite’, pp. 156–7.
137. Interview, Fikizolo Jere, 16 May 1980.
138. Interview, Ndezamani Phiri, 16 May 1980.
139. NAZ, ZA 7/1/4/5. See Fort Jameson, Lundazi and Petauke Annual Reports 1919–20.
140. NAZ, ZA 7/1/4/5, Kafue Annual Report 1919–20.
141. NAZ, ZA 7/1/4, Kasempa, Mwinilunga and Solwezi Annual Reports 1919–20. The post-war trading boom was reflected also in the renewed intense commercial activity of African hawkers and storekeepers, the latter, in the words of one Mbereshi missionary, travelling the country, ‘something after the manner of the old Scotch draper and with something of the same ambitions’. One enterprising young hawker had gone from Abercorn to Dar es Salaam ‘with £100 in capital to purchase native trade goods for sale in our district’. African mission staff were again heavily involved, the Mbereshi deacon running a flourishing store ‘well stocked with [...] calico sheeting, fancy clothing, shirts, vests, blouses, hats and caps, soap, matches, candles, cigarettes and tobacco’. See CCWM, LMS, Central Afr. Box 3, Central Africa Mission Decennial Report, 1919–20.
142. WFA, Chilubula Mission Rapport Annuel 1918–19. The establishment of similar distinct communal settlements by military veterans was observed elsewhere in Africa. In Mozambique, defeated German *askari* established ‘a series of miniature native republics’ outside the control of their new British masters in Tanganyika. Iliffe, *A Modern History of Tanganyika*, p. 248. In Guinea, returning *anciens combattants* relinquished their pre-war status as serfs and set up new villages outside chiefly control. A. Summers and R. W. Johnson, ‘World War I Conscription and Social Change in Guinea’, *Journal of African History*, Vol. 19(1) (1978): 25–38 (34).
143. NAZ, KTN, 1/1, Abercorn DNB, I, p. 70.
144. J. C. Mitchell, *The Kalela Dance*, p. 12. For a full description of *mbeni*, the forerunner of Kalela, see pp. 10–18. See also Ranger, *Dance and Society in Eastern Africa 1890–1970*, esp. pp. 45–76. Ranger contends that Mitchell underestimates the socio-political importance of *mbeni*. See also *ibid*, p. 74.
145. Interview, Nathaniel Jabanda, 15 May 1980. Another informant, Ndezamani Phiri, recalled the introduction of Nyau dances into some Ngoni villages by war carriers returning from Nyasaland. Interview Ndezamani Phiri, 16 May 1980. See also Page, *Chiwaya War*, pp. 185–9, for Nyasaland examples of war-inspired Nyau societies.
146. NAZ, KTN, 1/1, Abercorn DNB, I, p. 70.
147. Farther north, the sudden appearance of *mbeni* dance societies in 1919 was regarded with more suspicion by some elements of the colonial military establishment. Whilst noting that the ‘native society [...] of Ardenote (or Alinote) ya Marini’ was ‘not anti-British’ or ‘antagonistic to

- constituted authority', one KAR Commander nevertheless considered it a 'possible future danger, for in the event of a personality or personalities [...] attempting to organise Pan-Ethiopianism in Central East Africa they would [...] find in this society machinery already prepared'. Major C. E. Muggeridge, GSO (2) KAR to Commissioner of Police Nairobi, 29 July 1919, TNA, WO. 106/259. In the event, these fears were to some extent realised when, over fifteen years later, the *mbeni* society played an important political role in the 1935 Copperbelt disturbances in Northern Rhodesia. Although cleared as a subversive organisation, its leaders were deeply implicated. *Evidence taken by the Commission appointed to enquire into disturbances in the Copperbelt, 1935*, p. 51. For the role of *mbeni* leaders, who were significantly predominantly Bemba, the people probably most intensively exploited by the mining and military establishment before, during and after the Great War, see I. Henderson, 'Early African Leadership: The Copperbelt Disturbances of 1935 and 1940', pp. 83–97.
148. See Chapter 2, pp. 52–3.
 149. Twenty years later the Pim Commission reported: 'The war of 1914–18 gave a great stimulus, as [...] many thousands of carriers employed in [...] the East African Campaign wished, after its completion, to continue to earn the wages which they had learned to value as enabling them to meet new wants'. *Pim Report*, p. 25. See also ZP I/1, Report, Native Reserves Commission, 1923–4, para. 28, which again confirmed the military stimulus to post-war labour migration.
 150. WFA, Chilubula Mission Rapport Annuel 1918–19. See also, WFA, Ipusukilo Mission Rapport Annuel 1919–20 for observations of the huge post-war labour exodus by Bemba, 'accustomed to being well-clothed with the enormous salaries of wartime'.
 151. Interview, Fikizolo Jere, 16 May 1980.
 152. Interview, Ndezemani Phiri, 16 May 1980.
 153. CCWM, LMS, Central Afr. Box 3, Mbereshi Mission Annual Report 1919.
 154. WFA, Chilubula Mission Rapport Annuel 1918–19.
 155. CCWM, LMS, Central Afr. Box 3, Mporokoso Mission Annual Report 1919.
 156. *Ibid.*
 157. Thus one Ngoni veteran recalled how returning servicemen chose to go to the mines 'to obtain a reasonable amount of money because here on the farms they were getting 7s. 0d. [...] On mines they were getting £4'. Interview, Ndezemani Phiri, 16 May 1980.
 158. NAZ, BS3/423. In a letter to the High Commissioner, for instance, the NWRFA Chairman had dismissed the government's argument that RNLB recruitment still left substantial labour in this populous area, since the majority of Africans were 'grain growers and owners of cattle from which they derive all the income they desire'; they were 'independent [...] and refuse to accept employment under any conditions'. Chairman NWRFA to HC, 4 August 1919.
 159. NAZ, BS3/418, RC to HC, 13 March 1919.
 160. NAZ, BS3/418, Secretary NERACA to DM Ft Jameson, 13 November 1918.
 161. NAZ, BS3/418, DM Ft Jameson to Secretary NERACA, 13 November 1918.
 162. NAZ, BS3/418, DM Ft Jameson to Secretary NERACA, 16 November 1918.
 163. NAZ, BS3/418, Secretary NERACA to RC, 29 November 1918.

164. NAZ, BS3/418, RC to HC, 13 March 1918. See also Acting Admr to RC, 6 February 1919, NAZ, BS3/418.
165. *Ibid.*
166. NAZ, BS3/418. See RC to Secretary NERACA, 22 April 1919, communicating Buxton's firm rejection of the Association's argument.
167. TNA, CO. 417/597. See Chapter 7, pp. 194–5 and SNA to Secretary, NWFA, 31 January 1917, attacking the farmers' refusal to supply crop statistics to the Company.
168. GP, BSA/10/33. London Wall had taken elaborate constitutional precautions to ensure that the Council did not assume the political influence of its Southern Rhodesia counterpart by, for instance, depriving it of any legislative power and avoiding *official* elections. See (Tel.) BSAC to Wallace, 1 January 1918 and (Tel.) Wallace to BSAC, 24 January 1918, *ibid.* Nevertheless, the vehement attacks launched upon Company Administration at its first session in September 1918 enraged many Directors and led one to protest that 'Wallace's Council [...] was going to prove an unmitigated nuisance to him and to us [...] surely we never agreed to set up a body with these powers?' L. Michell to P. L. Gell, 10 October 1918, GP, BSA/4/565.
169. NAZ, ZA 7/1/4/7, Luangwa Annual Report 1919–20.
170. NAZ, ZA 7/1/4/6, Kasempa Annual Report 1919–20.
171. NAZ, BS3/423. See, for instance, *indaba* reports for Abercorn (13 May 1919) and Nsumbu Island (8 June 1919). At Nsumbu Island, in response to Marshall's explanation of high prices, one headman made the telling riposte: 'Who will be alive when goods are cheaper?'
172. CCWM, LMS, Central Afr. Box 3, Mporokoso, Kawimbe and Kambole Mission Annual Reports 1920.
173. NAZ, ZA 7/1/4/7, Serenje Annual Report 1919–20.
174. NAZ, ZA 1/10/1, *ibid.* The shortages and high prices of manufactured goods apparently fuelled Watchtower's predictions of imminent Armageddon. Aware of this, Draper made a concerted attempt to explain the problem at the fateful Chunga *indaba*, refuting Watchtower assertions that 'cloth and all wealth' came 'directly from God and was not made by the hand of man'. Chunga *indaba* minutes, 30 December 1918.
175. CCWM, LMS, Central Afr. Box 3, Central Africa Mission Decennial Report 1910–20.
176. NAZ, ZA 7/1/4/5, Solwezi Annual Report 1919–20. See also Serenje Annual Report 1919–20, NAZ, ZA 7/1/4/7. Store cash takings there fell from nearly £3,700 in 1918–19 to approximately £1,500 in 1919–20 owing to the 'large sums' paid for war work being 'exhausted' and to the 'much inflated prices charged'.
177. NAZ, ZA 7/1/4/9, Tanganyika Annual Report 1919–20. Discontent regarding the lack of compensation for wartime crop, livestock and property losses was strongly reiterated at post-war *indabas* e.g. Abercorn (13 May 1919), NAZ, BS3/423.
178. CCWM, LMS, Central Afr. Box 3, Kambole Mission Annual Report 1919. Predictably, only chiefs and leading headmen were allowed permanent possession of firearms. During 1919 those of Tanganyika, Mweru-Luapula, Awembe, Serenje and East Luangwa districts received their long-promised reward of 200 Martini-Henry rifles and 100,000 cartridges. See NAZ,

- ZA 1/9/27, SNA to DM'S Ft Jameson, Serenje and Abercorn, 29 August 1919. Elsewhere, some chiefs were awarded cash payments etc. at Peace or Armistice *indabas* e.g. Solwezi where £65 was distributed in recognition of war services. NAZ, ZA 7/1/4/6, Solwezi Annual Report 1919–20. As if to underline the inequalities of colonial rewards, the long-suffering route carriers, the backbone of the British victory, were denied even token bronze medals by an ungenerous War Office. Despite protests from district officials (see e.g. DC Ft Jameson to SNA, 27 January 1921, NAZ, BS3/266) only *askari* and the carrier elite (machine-gun porters, stretcher bearers and signalling equipment porters) were exempted from this ruling. This cruel injustice undoubtedly increased post-war disillusionment with the colonial system. See NAZ, BS3/266, Chief Staff Officer Defence, Salisbury to SLA, 9 March 1921.
179. NAZ, ZA 7/1/4/9, Abercorn Annual Report 1919–20.
 180. GP, BSA/3/356, P. L. Gell to H. Wilson Fox, 4 January 1918.
 181. Despite fierce settler opposition led by Leopold Moore, an income tax was finally imposed by the BSAC in 1921 (see S. R. Denny, 'Leopold Moore versus the Chartered Company', pp. 335–6) but this, of course, did nothing to alleviate the crippling new tax burden shouldered by the north-east African population.
 182. NAZ, BS3/427, HC to RC, 20 February 1920.
 183. NAZ, BS3/427, RC to HC, 17 March 1920.
 184. NAZ, BS3/427, Buxton to SoS, 22 April 1920.
 185. Alston May, Anglican Bishop of Northern Rhodesia (1914–1940), was one of the principal critics of the BSAC's post-war tax and land policies. At the 1922 Missionary Conference he launched a scathing attack on the north-eastern tax. *Proceedings of the General Missionary Conference of Northern Rhodesia*, pp. 81–5. See also J. Weller, 'The Influence on National Affairs of Alston May, Bishop of Northern Rhodesia, 1914–1940', pp. 199–201.
 186. LACA, T. F. Sandford to A. May, 3 December 1921.
 187. LACA, T. F. Sandford to A. May, 30 January 1922.
 188. NAZ, BS3/427, Stanley to Buxton, 19 April 1920.
 189. NAZ, BS3/427, Stanley to Buxton, 21 April 1920.
 190. LACA, A. May to Stanley, 20 February 1922.
 191. LACA, Stanley to A. May, 10 March 1922.
 192. See Palmer, *Land and Racial Domination*, p. 110.
 193. LACA, A. May to Stanley, 21 March, 1922.
 194. *Ibid.*
 195. See Tables 2.1 and 2.2 for the dramatic rise in the number of registered black Northern Rhodesians employed on the Katanga and Southern Rhodesian mines during the period 1920–2.
 196. LACA, T. F. Sandford to A. May, 3 December 1921.
 197. WFA, Kapatu Mission Rapport Annuel 1919–20.
 198. WFA, Chilonga Mission Rapport Annuel 1919–20.
 199. NAZ, ZA 7/1/5/9. See, for instance, Abercorn and Mporokoso Annual Reports 1920–1.
 200. CCWM, LMS, Central Afr. Box 3. For the devastating social impact of the new tax upon the already war-depressed border districts, see also Mporokoso, Kambole and Kawimbe Mission Annual Reports for 1920 and

- the Decennial Report, Central African Mission 1910–20. One LMS Missionary, J. A. Ross, even drew up grandiose plans for a proposed industrial development of south Tanganyika in order to relieve the acute distress. This would, he suggested, provide 'local remunerative employment' reducing the 10s. *Od.* tax-inspired mass exodus to the Congo and elsewhere, and provide social stability which would help combat crime and the spread of Watchtower. The plan envisaged growing wheat, coffee, fibres, fruits, vegetables, cotton and sugar cane alongside herds of cattle, sheep and goats in the Liendwe Valley region. See J. A. Ross to Admr, 26 April 1920, NAZ, BS3/243. The scheme was later adopted but only on a small scale. See also Tanganyika Annual Report 1921–2, NAZ, ZA 1/6/9.
201. See Govt. Notice No. 36 of 1925, *Northern Rhodesian Government Gazette*, Vol. 15(5) (31 March 1925).
 202. GP, BSA/5/490, Notes: Mr Savory's interview with the President and the members of the Exec. Committee, London Wall, 15 May 1917. Savory's proposed post-war settlement areas included the Batokas (40,000 to 60,000 acres), Monze (150,000 to 250,000 acres), Magoye (75,000 to 100,000 acres), the Lusakas (12,000 acres) and large areas of the Kafue Flats.
 203. GP, BSA/5/480. DO Malcolm, Memorandum: 'Post-war Problems in Rhodesia', 12 June 1916. Malcolm's memorandum emphasising the need for capable, monied settlers received support from Drummond Chaplin, the Southern Rhodesian Administrator. See GP, NAZ, BSA/5/498, D. Chaplin: 'Memorandum re. proposed settlement scheme for ex-soldiers agreed with Sir Rider Haggard', undated, 1918.
 204. NAZ, KDB, 1/3/6, AM Magoye to DC Batoka, 13 December 1920.
 205. NAZ, KDB, 1/3/6, AM Magoye to DC Batoka, 26 August 1921.
 206. *Ibid.*
 207. NAZ, KDB, 1/3/6. Rough Notes: Interview with Manachingwala and others, 2 September 1921.
 208. NAZ, KDB, 1/3/6, DC Batoka to SLA, 19 October 1921. In an earlier letter the District Commissioner revealed the fears underlying this retreat. He warned of a tense confrontation emerging between, on the one side 'a large native community [...] who have, to a large extent, lost fear of white men, and who are galled by pound fees, etc. and sullen and angry at what they regard as an unfair disposal of some of their old land and, on the other side, some very inexperienced white men, whose ideas on the subject of native rights are the reverse of what is either fair or politic'. Consequently, there was 'matter for trouble and perhaps violent reprisal by wounding or killing cattle'. *Ibid.* DC Batoka to SNA, 5 September 1921.
 209. NAZ, KDB, 1/3/6, DC Batoka to SLA, 19 October 1921. This immediate post-war land pressure upon the Tonga may have been an early factor contributing to the later politicisation of the Southern Province and the early success of Congress in the area. The Tonga had a profound sense of grievance and resistance to this form of colonial oppression, possibly exacerbated by earlier restrictions upon their wartime commercial competitiveness (notably the Native Grain Trading Proclamation of 1916). See I. Henderson, 'Pre-Nationalist Resistance to Colonial Rule in Zambia', p. 678; I. Henderson, 'The Origins of Nationalism in East and Central Africa:

- the *Zambian Case*', p. 601 and Dixon-Fyle, 'Agricultural Improvement and Political Protest on the Tonga Plateau', pp. 579–82.
210. LACA. For Bishop Alston May's role in the Msoro land controversy see his numerous correspondences in Lusaka Anglican Cathedral Archives. See also Weller, 'The Influence on National Affairs of Alston May', pp. 199–200.
211. See Rau, 'Mpeseni's Ngoni of Eastern Zambia, 1870–1920', p. 363.
212. LACA, T. F. Sandford to May, 3 December 1921.

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BS (British South Africa Company)

Series 3 (includes High Commissioner, Administrator, Resident Commissioner and Secretariat classifications and correspondence).

DoNA (Department of Native Affairs), bound departmental reports.

DNB District/Sub-district Notebooks (archival serial numbers attached):

KDA Broken Hill

KDB Batoka

KDD Kasempa

KDE Barotse

KDF Fort Rosebery

KDG Fort Jameson

KDH Kasama
KSA Chilanga
KSC Livingstone
KSD Fort Mpika
KSE Mwinilunga
KSF Namwala
KSG Kawambwa
KSK Serenje
KSL Fife
KSM Mkushi
KSN Ndola
KST Lundazi
KSU Mporokoso
KSV Feira
KSW Chienji
KSY Petauke
KSZ Luwingu
KTA Nsumbu Island
KTB Solwezi
KTE Guimbi
KTJ Mumbwa
KTN Abercorn
KTQ Chinsali
HM6 (historical manuscripts)
HM7 (historical manuscripts)
ZA (Secretary for Native Affairs)
Nos. 1, 2, 7 and 8.
ZP Native Reserves Commission

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