

**THE GENESIS AND DEMISE OF THE  
CENTRAL AFRICAN FEDERATION 1958-68**

**THE GENESIS AND DEMISE OF THE CENTRAL  
AFRICAN FEDERATION 1953-68**

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## P\_R\_E\_F\_A\_C\_E

This study covers the genesis and demise of the Central African Federation from 1958 to 1963. An attempt has been made in this study to analyse the factors which were involved in the formation of the federation itself. The arguments advanced by the proponents of the federation in favour of "partnership" of races, have been probed into and, in most cases, found wanting. In this exercise, a historical perspective has been adopted in order to determine the levels of development in the three territories which formed the federation.

Our thesis attempts to show that it was the rise of African nationalism, from "a breeze to a wind and from a wind to a whirlwind" which kept the British on their tenterhooks in trying to find an amicable solution to the Central African problem. We have also tried to show the limitations of the British in this regard flowing directly from their doctrinaire policies of colonial paternalism and their post-war economic crisis.

Throughout the span of its existence the Federation was met with implacable opposition from the Africans. In the end Britain had no alternative save to go along with the "wind of change" that had, in the early forties swept across Asia, and now was engulfing the African continent. Having chaired the meeting which instituted the federation

in 1953, Britain found herself presiding over the meeting which buried the federation in 1963.

I feel greatly indebted to my guide and Guru, Professor Anirudha Gupta, Head of African Studies, School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, who has given me unmeasurable insight into the issues that were at work in the Central African debacle. His willingness to give me of his precious time could not have gone unnoticed. It was indeed his expert guidance which led to the completion of this work in record time.

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I also wish to register my gratitude to my friends and colleagues for their valuable discussion and constructive criticism. Special mention is due to my wife, Florence, and son, Tatenda, whose patience and forbearance allowed me to deny them the full responsibilities of a husband and a father during the preparation of this work.

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## CHAPTER I

### THE LEVEL OF DEVELOPMENT IN THE THREE CENTRAL AFRICAN STATES TO 1958

In this Chapter we propose to examine social, political and economic developments in the three territories that constituted in 1958 the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland. First, we shall deal with Southern Rhodesia, to be followed by Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland.

#### SOUTHERN RHODESIA (ZIMBABWE)

Motivated by a combination of personal gain and the concerns of empire, Rhodes first began to make plans for opening up the regions under study in 1878, but not until 1888 did he feel it was time to act. He, therefore, established the British South Africa Company (BSAC). In 1887 his agents attempted to obtain treaties from Lobengula, the king of the Matabele. The Rudd Mineral Concession, granted by Lobengula in 1888 (but later repudiated by him), gave Rhodes a monopoly for the mining of minerals throughout the Matabele Kingdom. Two years later the British Government recognised this claim and presented the B.S.A. Company with a royal charter to administer the territory.

After the abortive Jameson Raid<sup>1</sup> and the bloody uprising<sup>2</sup> in Southern Rhodesia the British South Africa

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1. For a detailed account of the Jameson Raid, see Elizabeth Pakenham, Jameson's Raid (London, 1960).

2. For the Matabele and Mashona uprising see - T. O. Ranger, Revolt in Southern Rhodesia (London, 1967).

Company came under heavy criticism in Britain from a powerful group, calling for the revocation of the Company's charter. The British Government, however, ignored the call because it feared assuming direct responsibility. Although the British Government never publicly admitted it, Joseph Chamberlain, the then Colonial Secretary was aware of Rhodes's Plan to invade the Transvaal and had condoned it.<sup>8</sup> Financially and morally, the British Government could not afford to dispense with Rhodes and his Company and felt itself committed to maintaining the charter. In the same year, the Order in Council gave the Company's Administrator a legislative Council of 9 members, five were to be appointed by the Company and four to be elected. The vote was given to anyone, (except to an African), who was literate and lived in a house worth £ 75 or had an income of £ 50 a year. This constitution was largely the work of Lord Milner, the South African High Commissioner, who hoped, like Rhodes, that Southern Rhodesia would one day join the four self-governing territories of South Africa in some form of Union, in favour of British interests over the Afrikaner nationalists.

The wealth of the country lay in mining and agriculture, given good infrastructure. The first years

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8. P. E. N. Tindall, A History of Central Africa (New York, 1968), p. 204.

of the Company's rule were, therefore, devoted to the railway construction. By 1898 and 1899 the railway lines reached Umtali and Salisbury respectively from Beira in Mozambique. Meanwhile the Cape railway line had also been extended to reach Bulawayo in 1897. From here it continued to reach the rich coal deposits of Wankie. With the bridge across the Zambezi completed the railway was continued via the rich lead and zinc mine at Broken Hill (Kabwe) Northern Rhodesia to the borders of Belgian Congo in 1909. Although gold production gradually increased, the early hopes of finding a second "RAND" were dashed to the ground. Many of the country's later difficulties stemmed from this fact. This failure of the gold dream stimulated the search for other minerals. Coal mining began at Wankie in 1908 followed by that of Chrome in the Great Dyke at Selukwe and asbestos, at Shabeni. These minerals formed an important part of Southern Rhodesia's exports.

The BSA Company allocated many farms to the pioneers. For lack of marketing opportunities at first these farmers, mainly very close to the mines and small towns, supplied grain, meat and milk to these centres. Besides maize the farmers also grew tobacco in the Umtali and Salisbury areas.<sup>4</sup>

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4. Unfortunately the industry could not weather through the strains of the First World War and collapsed in 1914. It was not until many years however that tobacco achieved much importance as a leading export.



The settlers swelled into Southern Rhodesia after the war years.<sup>5</sup> Agriculture and mining flourished. But this could only continue if the Africans were forced into the money economy as cheap labourers, with the benefits of economic development being used to attract more white immigrants at the expense of the blacks like in South Africa. Generally, in British Africa, the means employed to force Africans into the cheap labour market was the head tax, which the African could only get by selling his labour for wages on white-owned farms, in mines, factories and houses. This system of migrant labour brought many problems.<sup>6</sup> Africans were denied the right to own land in more than half of their country, and prevented from becoming self-sufficient farmers. This had future political implications. When the country gained self-government in 1923, both the British and the white settlers kept Africans off the voters' rolls. Yet unlike the Afrikaners of South Africa, who have never made any effort to conceal their racist contempt for the Africans, the British were anxious to keep any mention of race out of the constitution they were giving to Southern Rhodesia.<sup>7</sup>

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5. In 1918 there were 25,500; in 1930 48,000; in 1945 80,500. Then after the War came a rapid increase; by 1950 there were 1,25,000 and by 1960 2,19,000.

6. See Jack Hoddiss, AFRICA: Roots of Revolt (London, 1960).

7. W.F. Ward, A History of Africa, Book Three (London, 1965), p.97.

Though the Company regarded itself as the owner of land and able to dispose of it as it thought fit, the settlers refused to recognise this claim. This land ownership dispute was only decided after a long delay. In 1918 the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council upheld that the Crown owned the land by right of conquest, the Company having been the Crown's instrument.

After this decision, the BSA Company was no longer keen to continue its hold in Central Africa.<sup>8</sup> Politically there were three alternatives for Southern Rhodesia: separate and responsible government; joining South Africa, and becoming a British Crown Colony. The white settlers rejected the third because it would have meant, like in the Northern territories, allowing Africans to have a voice in labour and land issues. In 1923, after a white-settler referendum, Southern Rhodesia decided by 8,774 votes against 5,999 votes to end the Chartered Company's rule and became a self-governing colony with a constitution given by Order-in-Council from His Majesty in Westminster, thereby sealing the fate of a million Africans, who were given no part in the referendum.

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8. It was prepared to relinquish its powers of government but wanted to be reimbursed for its administrative expenses over the years. After much discussion this was accepted and the British Government agreed to pay the Company £ 3,750,000 towards this and its expenses on public works.

The first Prime Minister was the erstwhile leader of the movement for Responsible Government, Charles Coghlan (later Sir Charles). During his tenure, the question of land use led to the appointment of the Carter Commission in 1925. The Commission reported that the land available for European settlement should be limited and that the Africans should be allowed to settle there permanently. Agreeing with the Commission's report one European settler was quoted as saying, "The Native is a visitor to our white towns for the purpose of assisting the people who live in towns; and no other native should be present".<sup>9</sup>

In 1980 the Government made the Land Apportionment Act<sup>10</sup> to give effect to the Carter Commission recommendation. The Act divided the land into four classes: Native Reserves, 21 million acres; Native purchase Area, 7½ million; European Area, 49 million; Unassigned Area (which might be allocated to the Native or European Area), 17½ million. This situation continued for about thirty years with minor alterations. Land apportionment was not officially regarded as a permanent policy, but was defended on grounds of encouragement of white immigrants, the scientific cultivation of the soil, and protection of Africans from competition in land. Though large areas were preserved

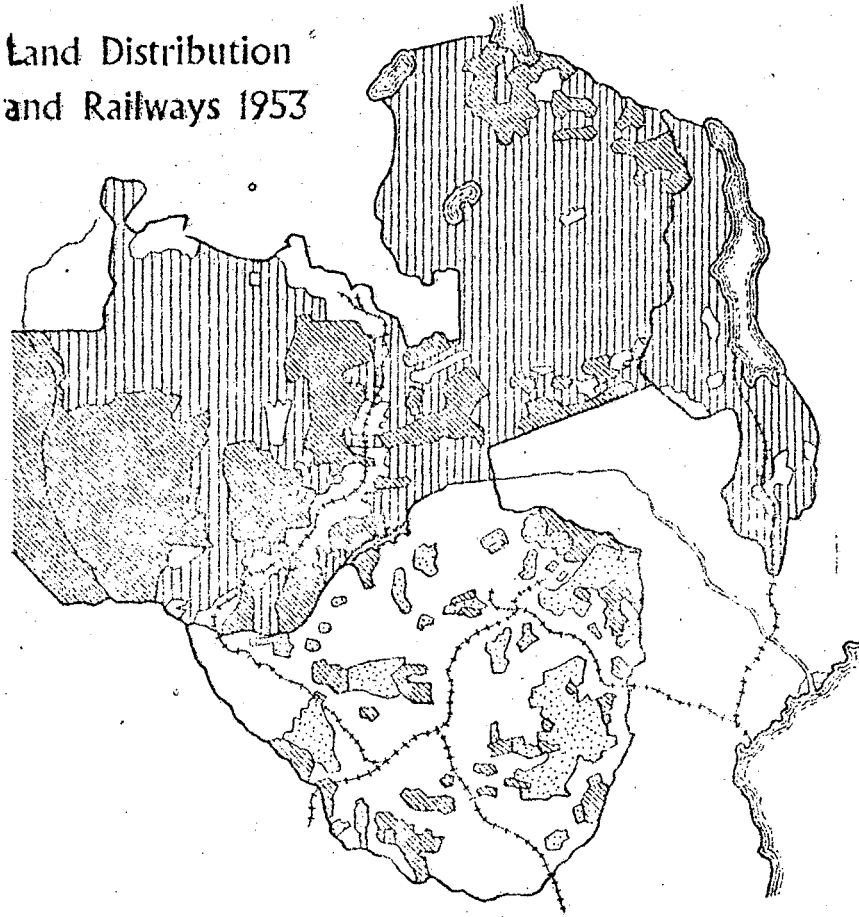
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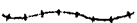



9. Ward, n.7, p.111

10. See map for detailed land distribution on page 7.(a)

**THE CENTRAL AFRICAN FEDERATION**

**Land Distribution  
and Railways 1953**



-  Native Reserves
  Railways
-  Native Trust Land, Northern Rhodesia  
 African Trust Land, Nyasaland
-  Native Purchase Area, Southern Rhodesia
-  Crown Land, Northern Rhodesia  
 Public Land, Nyasaland  
 European Area, Southern Rhodesia.  
 (Also included Unassigned Area, part of which  
 could be allocated to Native Area.)

**Source: A.J. WILLS, HISTORY OF CENTRAL AFRICA (London, 1967), p. 261.**

from erosion, it was at the expense of the Africans.

In the field of agriculture in Southern Rhodesia the government passed the Maize Control Act in 1951 which caused hostilities in the country. What brought about ill-feelings among the African growers was that the Board set up two prices, one higher for European grown maize and a lower one for that grown by Africans. The Cold Storage Commission was formed in 1957 to assist developing beef and dairy cattle industry. Besides the Maize Marketing Board, the country also witnessed formation of the Dairy and the Tobacco Marketing Boards. Improved farming methods were encouraged and a wide variety of crops came to be grown.<sup>11</sup>

By the late 1940's African agricultural development was under way, however, lack of land set aside for Africans hampered it. In 1950 the Government added some 18 million acres to the Reserves from the unassigned areas. In 1951 the government passed the Native Land Husbandary Act, which provided for compulsory reorganization of all NATIVE reserves into individual holdings without due regard for the growing

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11. In the Eastern Districts, altitude and high rainfall allowed the production of a wide range of crops including tea, citrus and deciduous fruits. The most outstanding crop of the country was tobacco. The industry was built up in the period between the world wars so that after 1939 Southern Rhodesia was in a position to take advantage of the high prices which tobacco fetched on world markets. Soon after the war, by the London Agreement of 1948, British buyers gave a guaranteed market for some two-thirds of the crop up to £70 million a year. On the eve of the war, the annual auction sales had reached £1 million, by 1949 the figure was £10 million and it steadily rose during the 1950's.

African population. Its effects on productivity were as follows : it destroyed the tribal system, rooted in the historic link between the tribe and its communal land; it drove many people to the towns who were at present subsisting on the over-stocked and cultivated veld; and it increased the urban squatter population, whose members were no longer able to wander back at will to the village. The contention here is that the Act had disastrous effects on Africans.

In 1916 the first all-white trade union was organised in Southern Rhodesia. The Mines and General Workers' Association followed the formation of the Railway Workers' Union. Both associations catered for the improvement of the working conditions of the European workers only. Even during the depression years the unions fought hard to maintain the white workers' conditions.<sup>12</sup> On the other hand, African workers were entirely deprived of the benefits of the Act, and were not covered by the term "employee". They could not be employed at wage rates other than those specified in an agreement under the Act. Africans were also excluded from competition in white areas of employment.

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12. Mr. J. W. L. Keller, an influential member of the Railway Workers' Union and also leader of the Rhodesian Labour Party pressurised the Godfrey Huggins Ministry, which was returned to power with the Unions' support, to implement the Industrial Conciliation Act of 1934. This Act was modelled on South African legislation and provided for the regulation and registration of trade Unions and set up an Industrial Conciliation Board for the settlement of disputes.

The Africans reverted to the organization of associations mainly aimed at a general uplifting of the African people, like the Rhodesian Bantu Voters' Association and the Rhodesian Native Association of the middle 1920s.<sup>13</sup> These associations were, however, mainly reformist in character.<sup>14</sup> One of the earliest effective African trade unions was the Rhodesia Railways African Employees Association formed in Bulawayo in 1944, which was sufficiently powerful and well-organized to call for effective strike action in 1945. The Government intervened and the workers' conditions were comparatively bettered.

The changing economic pattern after the Second World War affected the old "two-pyramid" approach to race relations. With the growth of industries and the increase of the African urban population, the races had to cooperate closely at least in their working relations. Huggins recognized this change. In 1941 he said, "you cannot plan for the unknown, to state that the lines will never meet is stating what is not and cannot be known".<sup>15</sup> He spoke

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13. See T. O. Ranger, Aspects of Central African History (Nairobi, 1968), pp. 222-36.

14. In the 1930s Aaron Jacha led the Bantu Congress of Southern Rhodesia which voiced protests against legislation which was felt to be discriminatory against Africans.

15. R. Gray, The TWO NATIONS (London, 1960), p. 276.

of black and white as brothers who had grown apart because of environment differences, but favoured that political power be in white hands only.<sup>16</sup>

Initially, education for both Africans and European children was entirely in the hands of the churches and missions. The BSA Company had helped many of the missions by giving them generous land grants and after 1899 it began to aid education by giving annual grants to schools.<sup>17</sup> However, in the early twentieth century the government took over a number of schools for European children and gradually developed a system of State education and in 1932 made education free and compulsory for European children. However, the post-war influx of immigrants created problems for the Education Department. They embarked on an expansion programme of schools and these were staffed with qualified personnel. By 1952 the European schools were

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16. G. Clutton-Brock, Facing 1960 in Central Africa (London, 1959), p. 8. Higgins's change of mind was within the established southern Rhodesian empirical approach. He was quoted to have said to Guy Clutton-Brock, "you know, I used to believe in separation once but I found it wouldn't work so I gave it up". The clearest practical expression of Higgins's change of policy was in the townships, where he legislated to improve living and accommodation standards.

17. The missions and churches were very anxious to impart education to the Africans mainly for the purpose of making them understand the Bible or at least to read it. The curriculum concentrated on the three R's and some training in Carpentry, Agriculture and Hygiene was usually added.



enrolling over 17,478 children under twelve years.<sup>18</sup>

In 1927 the Native Education Department was set up, and soon afterwards a Director and three inspectors were appointed. In the 1940s the Government increased its participation in the African education to meet the rapidly raising demand. By 1953 it had built sixteen government primary schools for Africans in the urban areas. In the rural areas the government took over the payment of salaries of all approved teachers in mission schools in 1947. Eighty-seven central primary schools and the big mission centres were providing upper primary teaching to well over 18,000 pupils by 1953, most of them boarders.<sup>19</sup> But the Government fell short of making education free and compulsory for African children.

In the field of public health, the Government tried to take measures to drain swamps and spray stagnant water in a bid to eradicate malaria. The Public Health Act of 1924 went a long way in encouraging employers to promote

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18. The small group of Asian and Coloured children were often educated privately or outside if their parents could afford. In 1942 the Government began to provide for a few selected children to continue their secondary schooling in South Africa. Due to the raise in numbers, provision had to be made within the country for them. In 1952 the First Secondary School for Indian and Coloured pupils was opened at Barham Green in Bulawayo.

19. When it was felt that expansion was not rapid enough to meet the demand the government appointed a commission of Enquiry under the Chairmanship of Alexander Kerr in 1951. Its main recommendations were implemented. It improved teachers' salaries, increased grants for secondary and teacher training work.

good health in their establishments. From 1900 hospitals were beginning to receive trained nurses and by 1918 courses were started to train State Registered Nurses. As early as 1911 the government made its first attempt to extend regular health services for Africans in the rural areas,<sup>20</sup> though inadequate for the growing population. In the post-war period the government spent money building hospitals in big towns only because of the large European populations there. In rural areas Africans were encouraged to construct good houses and latrines. Hygiene was taught at the primary schools, with hygiene demonstrators serving as useful link between the hospitals and the discharged patients. Missions pioneered the medical work in the rural areas. They opened leper clinics, the first ones being at Nyandiri and Morgenster and for years missionaries funded this work entirely from their own resources. By 1928 the government began to contribute to these services by paying half of all the medical missionaries' salaries. By 1958 the Government was spending over £ 2½ million on its own health services, in addition it made grants of £ 58,238 to missions and £ 83,084 to local authorities.

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20. Dispensaries were built so that by 1930 there were seven of them with two of the first ones having been upgraded to the rural hospitals status with provision for in-patients. Post standard six orderlies were trained to man the district clinics.

The system of local government which grew up on Southern Rhodesia illustrated the assumptions of separate development. In the European areas, a system akin to that of South Africa was developed. The 1890s' legislation provided the basis for the country's local government structure. Three types of local authority were established. In areas where the European population was between 200 and 600, Village Management Boards were created who carried out duties in terms of rules laid down by the Governor. Town Management Boards were established in larger communities, and could control local affairs according to the terms of laws covering a wide range of subjects, such as, provisions of roads and bridges, electricity and water supplies etc. They owned all unalienated land within their boundaries and could dispose it, subject to government approval. They were also empowered to levy rates and to employ salaried staff. Then there were Municipalities which had a great deal of autonomy. These dealt with an even wider range of subjects. They could administer cultural facilities suited to a large city, such as museums, art galleries and public libraries. They ran many varied departments and their finances were subject to audit and accounts were open to inspection. In 1946 the Department

of Local Government was created to co-ordinate between authorities and local governments. It was the final authority on matters affecting the sale of Crown Lands and had powers to overrule decisions of local authorities on matters in which the government's policies for land development were not being met.

The development of local government in the rural areas followed a different line from that of the European areas. After the troubles of the 1890s Chiefs had lost most of their powers. The Government established a direct system of control with Native Commissioners acting in both administrative and judicial capacities. By and by Chiefs were inducted into the administration largely as agents of the government in collecting taxes, reporting crimes, and generally maintaining law and order among their subjects. Some Chiefs encouraged their people to build schools and to adopt improved agricultural methods. In 1937 two Acts were passed; the Native Courts Act which permitted the establishment of Courts, consisting in each case of a Chief or Headman and two councillors, which could adjudicate in disputes between Africans that were capable of being decided according to native law and custom. Their powers were more limited than those of Native Courts in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland. In

particular they had no jurisdiction in criminal cases and were subject to the supervision of the Native Commissioner, who could revise their decision as he thought fit. Then a sister piece of legislation was passed, the Native Councils Act, which provided for the establishment of Councils. These were empowered to raise and spend funds by imposing local rates and charges for services performed. The Government encouraged the councils by promising them a £ for £ grant. Huggins described the system as a first step towards the African pyramid. "It is like the old days in Athens", he said, "when everybody met in the market square and fixed things up. We have only the beginning . . . ."<sup>21</sup> By August 1938, forty-five Native Courts had been established. Councils appeared more slowly, subject to the discouragement of additional taxation that usually followed; but in ten years there were over fifty in the Colony's reserves. In the Rural Areas as well as in the Purchase Areas, in contrast to the urban centres, Africans could share in a system of local government which conferred on them considerable responsibilities for these matters.

As far as the Central Government structure was concerned, there was hardly any change since 1923. In

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21. A.J. Wills, An Introduction to the History of Central Africa (London, 1964), p. 266.

the late 1940's the government considered introducing separate representation for main races as had been done in South Africa. Views on the desirability of the Common Roll prevailed and the government raised the qualifications for the vote from £ 100 income per annum to £ 240 for all new applicants for the vote although no existing voters were removed from the Roll. After 1953 there were to be important changes in government practice but this period under review was, generally, one of steady economic development and consolidation of the position in terms of principles adopted in the first ten years of "Responsible Government". Only in the later years was this general framework seriously challenged by the development of industries and the consequent influx of Africans to the towns and by the gradual development of educated middle-class Africans divorced from tribal ways. To cope with the development of the post-war years, and especially to finance it, many white-settlers looked to a closer union with the North and the creation of a large state which would catch the imagination of overseas investors. The question of a federal Union became the dominant political issue of the day.

#### Northern Rhodesia (Zambia)

There were few Europeans except missionaries until 1890 when the agents of Cecil Rhodes arrived to induce

the Chiefs into surrendering their land and mineral rights. The territory's history during this period was influenced by its neighbours. Like Southern Rhodesia, it was originally under the rule of the British South Africa Company (BSAC) and its mineral wealth led to economic development, and the growth of a highly influential European population. Therefore, it had to deal with problems similar to those of Southern Rhodesia. The BSA Company administered the country until it was declared a British Protectorate in 1924. The British Government implemented similar policies like those of the Nyasaland Protectorate on land-holding, local government and African representation in the legislative council. Thus, its history contrasts with that of Southern Rhodesia.<sup>22</sup>

Initially, development in the country was very slow and hinged on the extension of the railway line. By 1909 the line from Southern Rhodesia was constructed through the mining centres of the country to the Katanga border.

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22. North-eastern and North-western Rhodesia, which had been administered separately since they came under the control of the BSA Company, were united in 1911 to form Northern Rhodesia. Under the Company, the governing powers were vested in a Company Administrator and a Council of Company officials. The British Government appointed a Resident Commissioner for the territory, as it had done for Southern Rhodesia, to act as Imperial representative on the spot.

The European population of Northern Rhodesia like those of Southern Rhodesia clustered along the railway line. A few European farmers, however, settled in the Fort Jameson area (CHIPATA). The most important mining centre of this period was the Broken Hill (KAEWE) lead and zinc mine whose production shot up rapidly in the 1920s. Copper mining started at Kansanshi and then in 1912 the first promising production started at Bwana Mkubwa.

Land problems were minimal in Northern Rhodesia as compared to those of its neighbours. It had the smallest African population of all the Central African territories in relation to the size of the country and Europeans were very few. European settlers caused friction only in the Chipata area, where it was densely populated with Africans. The North Charterland Exploration Concession had alienated some 200 square miles of land. Some of the land granted away possessed a native population of 140 people per square mile. As long as the whites mainly confined their efforts to keeping cattle as they had done in the early days, they needed only a few labourers. But with the desire to improve their farming methods came the demand for more African labour on their estates. For several reasons



the Europeans began to demand territorial segregation. In 1904 a Reserves Commission was set up which considered that 490 square miles of land should be constituted into a native reserve, and that the natives were to stay on European land only as tenants and those who opted to move to the reserves were paid 2/- per hut in compensation. The majority preferred to stay on the European farms. On the other hand, the European farmers, now experimenting with cotton and tobacco, started demanding more labour, and, therefore, welcomed the squatters on their farms. By 1918 many more reserves were created because of the population increase.

There were constitutional changes towards the end of World War One. Settlers in the territory gained an Advisory Council which embodied the principle of elected members; four were to be elected from the north-western area and one from the north-eastern area. The settlers were not happy of the Advisory nature of their council. This ultimately led into a dispute similar in nature to that in Southern Rhodesia between the settlers and the BSA Company. The settlers argued that the land and the minerals belonged to the Crown and should be used for the benefit of the country. When in 1920 the settlers learned that the Company was preparing to introduce income tax, they petitioned the British Government with their grievances and demanded a share in the government.

The whole matter was investigated by a Committee headed by Viscount Buxton. Buxton was in favour of the colonists and against the Chartered Company. In the end it turned out that the Buxton Enquiry was a sheer waste of time and money; not one of its recommendations was accepted;<sup>25</sup> the Company refused to instal a Legislative Council which it considered to be an unnecessary expense, whilst the matter of the land and mineral rights was kept out of the courts.

The Devonshire Agreement of September, 1923 determined Northern Rhodesia's future as a Crown Colony.<sup>24</sup> The Company received £ 2 1/4 million from the British Government in compensation for both the Rhodesias. Because of the earlier Company Agreements with paramount Chief Lewanika of Barotseland, the Company would receive half the payments on sales of unalienated land in North-western Rhodesia until 1965. The Company also retained ownership of three large estates in North-eastern Rhodesia which it had taken over from the African Lakes Company in 1898. It also continued to receive the mineral royalties.

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25. See L. H. Gann, A History of Northern Rhodesia (London, 1964), pp. 188-91.

24. Wills, n. 21, pp. 249-50.

In April 1924 Northern Rhodesia became a Crown Colony with a typical protectorate type of government, consisting of a legislative council of 14 members, nine nominated by the Governor and five elected. There were no African members. But under the Crown Colony system, Africans might hope that as education developed, they would come to sit in the legislative council, as they were already doing in West Africa. The British Government would not allow the settlers to block their way. "Equality of opportunity in the purchase of Crown lands was to be afforded and Africans henceforth were to be encouraged by the granting of easy credit and leases on terms similar to those afforded to Europeans. Taxation was to be limited to a sum that would not upset customary life. African development was expected to be the key-stone of colonial policy".<sup>25</sup>

The striking feature of Northern Rhodesian development as a protectorate was the discovery and extraction of the colossal copper resources near the Northern border. The country's development was based on this wealth and it made a great difference between itself and the other protectorate of Nyasaland. This

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25. R. I. Rotberg, The Rise of Nationalism in Central Africa (Massachusetts, 1965), p. 106.



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discovery helped to woo a large number of European settlers. Although the immigrants possessed the enterprise, skill and capital needed to develop the mines, their presence caused an immense cultural gap between the foreigners and the indigenous majority. As the years passed the Africans became more permanent members of the towns and the economic gap between the races tended to cause tensions especially in the shares each should have in the economic and political development of the country.

To forestall friction caused by shortage of land, the government created a number of new reserves near the areas of European settlement, i.e. along the line of rail and in the Abercorn and Chipata districts. Whatever the government's good intentions, it would appear that the government was purposefully creating labour reservoirs for the European farmers. The rest of the country was left as Crown Land available for future needs and for other purposes - such as game reserves. When the African population increased and the shifting cultivation system was no longer feasible, what was regarded as a permanent solution turned out to be a temporary one. Soil fertility declined due to soil erosion. The government reacted quickly to this problem. Between 1938 and 1947 important land reform programmes were

effected. Large areas of alienated land were purchased from the BSA Company in the Abercorn district and from the North Charterland Exploration Company in the Chipata area. These lands were restored to the local tribes and this eased the pressures on the adjacent Reserves. Then in 1947 the Native Trust Land Order-in-Council was issued finalising the situation on land tenure. It subdivided the vast area of Crown land giving the greater part for Native Trust Land held for the use of tribal Africans.<sup>26</sup> Non-Africans wishing to lease land from these areas would be allowed on condition that their presence would promote African interests.

European agriculture in Northern Rhodesia was boosted during the War years. In 1942 the government offered farmers minimum guaranteed prices for wheat and maize; and maize production along the railway belt rose from 146,000 bags in 1942 to 268,000 bags in 1945. Tobacco production increased also with the rising prices on the world markets. Despite weaknesses on the labour front, the forward policy in farming met with success, and production quickly expanded.

African cultivators also played a major part in the food campaign. The government's war time policy of

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26. See map p-7(a)

guaranteed maize prices stimulated African farmers to grow more cash crops. Cotton and tobacco were grown in Chipata while those along the rail line grew beans, maize and groundnuts to feed the town populations. In many areas progressive chiefs and headmen together with trained African agriculturalists, helped to overcome suspicions of scientific farming. However, most of the rural areas remained backward and impoverished, acting as reservoirs of unskilled labour for the Copperbelt and countries to the south. Through hard work the country was able to produce enough maize to meet its requirements by 1958.

In 1924 Northern Rhodesia's total exports were worth less than £.400,000. By 1952, they had soared to over £ 82,600,000. The development of the Copperbelt was responsible largely for this boom. Till 1924, mining progress had been slow, capital harder to find than in the south. After that date the BSA Company, having relinquished its political responsibilities, revised its concession policy, confining itself to powerful organizations able to comply with new minimum expenditure clauses. Among these financiers were Sir Edmund Davies, who had big interests in Central African minerals and had been associated with Evans Mubwa since its inception; and Ernest Oppenheimer, the South African Magnate. By 1929 Copper enterprises

merged into two powerful groups, the Rhodesia-Anglo American Corporation, financed mainly in Britain and South Africa, which controlled Nkana, Bwana Mkubwa and Nchanga and the Rhodesia Selection Trust, with strong American backing, which controlled Roan Antelope and Mufulira. World prices soared, forced up by a huge American combine; capital flowed into the Copperbelt and production expanded. The size of the African labour force trebled in three years from 8,000 in 1927 to 28,000 in 1930. The world slump of 1931 to 1932 affected the infant industry severely. Most of the mines had to close down and thousands of workers were laid off.

Despite these setbacks Northern Rhodesia gained more than lost from the depression. Housing had not kept pace with the population in the urban centres; African compounds were unsatisfactory and much European accommodation was make-shift and unhealthy. With the reduced population it was now possible to set these matters right. On the world industrial stage, the Copperbelt withstood the shock better than foreign producers owing to its cheap labour. Emerging from the depression as low-cost producers, the Northern Rhodesia mines found an assured market in the United Kingdom whose consumption, already above world average,

accelerated in the later thirties, when rearmament began.<sup>27</sup> The decade was, therefore, one of spectacular expansion. At the beginning of 1935, when Nyasaland was still struggling in the trough of the depression and Southern Rhodesia was making a gradual recovery, Northern Rhodesia's prospects were beginning to soar. Mineral output in that year was valued at over £ 4 millions. By the advent of the Second World War it exceeded to £ 10 millions. This remarkable turn of fortunes did not go unnoticed south of the Zambezi.

The creation of a more permanent organization was most advanced on the Copperbelt in the whole of Central Africa. There was no legal colour bar in the industries of Northern Rhodesia, but the European workers naturally tried to preserve their standards, fearing competition from the African workers who might undercut them. For this reason, the Europeans, many of them young men fresh from the Rand, formed a strong union in 1937, the Northern Rhodesian European Mine Workers' Union. In negotiations with the mine managements, the union insisted on "the rate of the job" whenever the companies wanted to consider Africans for

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27. L. H. Gann, Birth of a Plural Society (London, 1958), pp. 166-8.



training and subsequent employment in European-type jobs. A European miners' strike in 1940 led to a pay increase. This was followed by riots caused by African workers whose wage grievances had not been listened to.<sup>23</sup> Although the problems of the slump years were all over, the wages for the African workers had remained static in a situation where the cost of living had gone up. Africans began to organize themselves; their earlier organizations were on a tribal basis but eventually associations developed which cut across tribal lines. After the war years, Lawrence Katilungu led the first African Mine Workers' Union.

Education for Africans was, in the early years, in the hands of missions as was in the other two Central African territories. A network of primary schools was built in the areas but they were poorly staffed and equipped. By the 1920s the government began to take a more positive role in the African education. The government began to aid some mission schools but the bulk of the primary schools continued unaided. After the world slump the government encouraged the development of educational institutions. A junior secondary school was opened at Mwanali in 1941, with courses culminating in the Cambridge School Certificate. By 1943 there

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23. Wills, n. 24., pp. 295-6.

were fifteen boys in Form 4 and the school could number some twenty old boys who had gone to study at Makerere College in Uganda or overseas universities.<sup>29</sup> The rush to the Copperbelt in the 1940s resulted in a rapid population growth. The government introduced compulsory education for all those aged between twelve to sixteen. By 1958, 155 students graduated from the Junior Certificate and forty-seven took the Cambridge School Certificate.<sup>30</sup> Because of the shortage of funds, there were few schools for non-African children during the Company rule. Besides those going outside, a few more children were educated in schools built in big centres. After the depression conditions improved, technical evening classes were conducted on the Copperbelt. In the early 1940s education was made compulsory for those children between the ages seven and fifteen if they were near Government schools. In 1947 the government decided to provide secondary schools in the main towns, as a response to the high rate of European immigrants. By 1958 provision had been made for those preparing for the Higher School Certificate.

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29. Tindall, n.s., p. 27

30. To provide for the advances in education, government increased the educational budget to £ 609,000 by 1952. Many of the administrative powers of the Education Department were handed over to Local Education Authorities consisting of representatives of the Education Department, the Missions and the Native Authorities. These were set up in all the provinces and districts.

In the field of health the government of Northern Rhodesia first provided medical care to the urban dwellers. By 1924, the government had built six hospitals for Europeans and only nine for the black majority. This biased position had not changed at all by 1958, there were only 2,725 beds for Africans and 540 beds for the Europeans. Specialised institutions were built to cater for leprosy, tuberculosis, and mental diseases. Clinics were provided to serve out-patients in the urban areas, and these offered maternity and child welfare services. In the course of time, the government opened training centres for nurses at Lusaka and Mazabuka. This trained personnel was used to staff rural dispensaries as well as helping in hospitals. Preventive medicine was an important part of government health expenditure. A drive was launched against malaria, bilharzia and sleeping sickness.

The bulk of the medical work in the rural areas was done by missions. Many of them, particularly the London Missionary Society and the Livingstonia Missions, supplied hospitals with qualified medical personnel from the early years. In response to the missions' good work in the rural areas, the government gave increased aid. In the mining centres, the Companies provided the needed medical facilities.

The doctrine of Indirect Rule, being introduced in the rural areas, did not find a ready course in the urban centres. When the tribal elders were appointed in the Mifulira Mine Compound in 1931, the mineworkers paid scant attention to them. The 1935 disturbances hastened the decision by the authorities to drop the idea of bringing the Native Authority system into the town. A system of local government grew up which was largely in European hands. Big towns required municipal status run by Councils and the smaller towns had Management Boards to which members were nominated generally. This new phenomenon gave Africans in Northern Rhodesia an opportunity to exercise responsibilities in the urban local government affairs. More powers were conferred on the African townships where Africans occupied houses permanently. They were granted their own Town Management Boards, which met under the chairmanship of the District Commissioner. The Boards were empowered to levy rates and the government gave them grants to help finance their activities.

In the rural areas, the 1929 NATIVE Courts Act, returned some of the functions of the chiefs to them. They could hold courts and try minor civil and criminal cases, subject to appeal to higher courts. The passing of the Native Authorities Act, incorporated Chiefs into

the administrative machinery. They took over functions previously undertaken by District Commissioners. In the 1940s Councils were strengthened by the appointment of educated and progressive Africans who, besides keeping the books, were encouraging advanced measures in agriculture, health and education. In 1942, Provincial Councils were instituted where in members from the rural councils met those from the urban councils. Eventually the African Representative Council was set-up, its members being elected from the Provincial Councils. The Secretary for Native African Affairs presided over the Council's deliberations. All matters affecting Africans were placed before it and it would duly advise the Governor on the issues at stake. It was indeed a mouthpiece of progressive Africans and offered them experience in the political field. In fact, it was some of the members from this Council who helped to form the Northern Rhodesian African Congress<sup>81</sup> in 1948 together with some members of the Federation of Welfare Societies.<sup>82</sup>

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81. Wills, n. 28, p. 272.

82. Working under the influence of similar organizations in South Africa and Nyasaland, the Congress organised opinion on a country-wide basis. Its political programme was based on the doctrine of "paramountcy of African interests" and was opposed to any union with Southern Rhodesia. When in 1951 definite proposals for a federation were put forward, the African National Congress (as it was renamed) opposed it bitterly.

When Northern Rhodesia became a protectorate with a Crown Colony type of government, the Legislative Council had consisted of nine officials and five un-officials. In 1929, the Council underwent changes in the composition of its members in order to give increased influence to the unofficials. The unofficials became two less than the number of the officials. In 1930, the Secretary of State for the Colonies in the British Government, Lord Passfield's Memorandum on NATIVE Policy in East Africa<sup>88</sup> caused a profound shock to settler opinion. The memorandum reiterated the principle of "paramountcy of Native Interests". This meant that if there were a conflict between the interests of the Europeans and Africans, African interests would prevail. The white settlers did not take too easily to this memorandum, however, the government realizing the importance of the immigrants in the territory, shelved the policy for future consideration. In 1933, the wishes of the settlers were almost fulfilled when their members were made equal with the officials by reducing the nominated official members from four to three and adding a nominated unofficial member representing native interests. In 1945 the elected members received a majority of one member over the officials in the Legislative Council and the Governor

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88. Wills, n. 81., p. 259.

was replaced by a Speaker in the Council. Three years later the first African members, elected by the African Representative Council joined the Legislature. By 1958, the number of elected unofficials had been increased to twelve; African members had increased to four and these were also the two unofficials representing African interests. There was then a majority of unofficials in the Legislative Council, but since they represented different interests, some might vote with the officials on certain issues.

The Executive Council consisted of seven officials and the Governor. In 1948, this body was joined by three of the elected members from the Legislative Council and a nominated member for African interests. A year later these elected members were made responsible to the elected members of the Legislative Council - a forerunner of Responsible Government.

The country was on the verge of Responsible Government in 1958 when the government reduced the number of officials to five in the Executive Council and gave both the officials and elected unofficials ministerial posts in the government.

#### NYASALAND (MALAWI)

The earlier history of Nyasaland was similar to that of the countries in East Africa. In early 19th

century, the country was severely disrupted by the Arab-slave traders. The people of North-west Nyasaland appealed for protection to European ivory traders, who in turn, approached the British Consul in Mozambique, Sir Harry Johnston.<sup>84</sup> The logic of events under a culmination of humanitarian trade and imperial pressures drove towards greater British intervention. Local chiefs did not welcome this and resented the growing interference of both traders and missionaries, but were powerless because of lack of arms. When a clash of interests blew up between Cecil Rhodes and the British government, a compromise was arrived at under which the British South Africa company became nominally the administrator of both Southern and Northern Rhodesia and Britain became protector of Nyasaland. At this time, the similarity to Northern Rhodesia lay in the fact that the tribes had in the main been liberated from slave raiders, and the attitude of the Imperial Government was that of a 'protecting' power. Much of the country, besides, was not really suitable for European settlement. There was no overall claim on the land by any commercial company, and the long-term interests of the native population were predominant from the outset. On the other hand, the Protectorate compared closely with Southern Rhodesia in

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84. F. Brockway, The Colonial Revolution, (London, 1978), p. 262.



that the Shire highlands had long been regarded as an area suitable for white settlement, and by 1900 these healthy uplands around Blantyre contained a European population of over 800. This was small compared with Southern Rhodesia's 6,000, but the area available was more confined, and in fact, many of Southern Rhodesia's early problems were repeated in miniature on the Shire highlands.<sup>85</sup> The chief factor which distinguished the Protectorate from the two Rhodesias was that it came directly under the authority of the Imperial Government.

Because of the large population in comparison to the territory's size (by 1958, Nyasaland had over sixty people to the square mile, while N. Rhodesia and S. Rhodesia had each 6 and 10 respectively), the land problem loomed large in her history. The 1986 Native Trust Land Order in Council divided the land into separate categories. Most of the country became Native Trust Land, held exclusively for African tribal use. To ease the problem of over-population, the government bought back the BSA Company's extensive North Nyasa Estate, which had never been developed, and added it to the Trust Lands, so that the African squatters on it were

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85. Wills, n.38., p.211.

given security of tenure. With this, 90 per cent of the country was set aside for African use.<sup>86</sup>

Agriculture was the mainstay of Nyasaland's economy. From a traditional shifting agriculture, the peasants moved, though slowly, into the more intensive crop rotation farming methods. They grew a variety of crops, such as, tobacco, cotton and groundnuts. Cattle and their products did not figure so large in the economy as in the Rhodesias. The settler community's contribution to the country's economy was not negligible. They farmed not only livestock but also cash crops among which was tobacco which became the country's major foreign currency earner followed by tea. In 1951 when Nyasaland's total exports totalled £ 5,900,000, tea and tobacco together accounted for £ 4,761,000 of this total.<sup>87</sup>

From the pioneer days Nyasaland had been difficult of access. By 1902 trains could run from Salisbury to Cape Town, but there was no rail line from Rhodesia into Nyasaland. In 1915, a rail line was built from Blantyre down the lower Shire Valley to Chindio on the

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F. 81

86. See map on page 7(a)

87. Tindall, n. 29., p. 249.

Zambezi, but this railway merely linked Blantyre with the Zambezi. That means that communication had still to be done by steamers from Quelimane. Because of this, the journey from the sea into Nyasaland was very slow. In the 1920s, improvements were made; a new line was built from Beira to the bank of the Zambezi at a point opposite Chindio, but the wider river had still to be crossed by a ferry. It was not until 1985 that the British Government helped to pay for bridging the Zambezi and then the rail line was extended to the north of the country to Chipoka on the lake shore.

The lack of efficient rail or river communications with the coast was one of the important factors in holding back European immigration and in impeding the economic development of the country before 1940. The road system was also very poor. Although the distance from Salisbury to Blantyre is less than 400 miles, the road's condition severely reduced its value for both goods and passengers. By 1958 the only tarred road in the country was the one from Zomba to Blantyre which continued to Cholo district to serve the tea estates.

Nyasaland's development contrasts strongly with that of both the two Rhodesias, for minerals lacked any decisive role in it. Although there were known deposits of minerals, only a little of mica and Corundum were

obtained. The lack of good transportation system might have been handicapped by the dearth of industrial development in the country. For this reason too, Nyasaland had no towns comparable in size or importance with those in the other territories. Zomba, the only town of importance was no more than an administrative centre by 1950.

The lack of mines and factories meant that Nyasaland could not utilise all its abundant manpower. These men had to leave to find work in the more industrially advanced neighbouring countries. Whether on the Copperbelt, in Southern Rhodesia or on the Rand, Nyasas found on the one hand higher wages and better material facilities for Africans, and on the other more restrictive and discriminatory laws. Thus at the end of every contract, they would return discontented with conditions at home, yet proud of the relative absence of the colour bar, and anxious to extend their social freedom. The protectorate was indeed looked upon as a haven of security in a white men's world.<sup>88</sup>

By 1945, the Agency for the Rand Mines was engaging up to 12,000 men a year. The Nyasaland Government tried to control the movement of labour by issuing permits to only recognised agencies and fixed their annual quota of recruits. It also entered into agreements with the

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88. L. H. GANN, "The Northern Rhodesia Copper Industry and the World of Copper 1928-52", H.P.C.A. No. 28, 1955, quoted from Wills, n.85., p. 288.

governments of the other countries concerned. In 1949 the Migrant Labour Agreement was signed with the two Rhodesias, which stipulated that contracts should be for two years only.<sup>89</sup> The mass movement of large numbers of able-bodied men had its social problems. The system broke up rural life and separated families. Many workers who made good in the far cities stayed there; perhaps they settled down with new wives or they feared that after the return journey hungry relatives at home would soon strip them of their meagre savings.

African education was in the hands of the missions from the earlier days. Missions were effectively established in Nyasaland then in the two Rhodesias; and therefore African education was more advanced. Livingstonia for example, was a great educational centre by 1900 providing primary education and vocational courses and even sending out trained teachers to staff the small village schools. The government acknowledged its responsibilities early towards education and in 1901<sup>1</sup> was granting about £ 1,000 a year to help the missions. Because of the lack of economic development this promising foundation failed to get the needed finances. However, by 1946 there were nine institutions providing education

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89. Tindall, n. 87, p. 254.

at upper primary levels and above. The successful pupils from these schools were accepted at Zomba Catholic Mission and Blantyre mission for secondary education. In the 1940s the government opened a teacher training Institution at Domasi which was followed by a government secondary school at Dedza in 1951 which taught both academic and technical courses. Africans were given opportunities to fill more responsible positions in the field of education.

Non-African education in Nyasaland was handled by missions as well as by private organizations. Those who qualified for further education would be given bursaries by the government, if their parents could not afford, to go to Southern Rhodesian Schools. Asian children were mostly sent to East African schools while those of the Coloureds were admitted into the mission secondary schools within the country.

Just like education, the earliest health services in Nyasaland, developed under mission auspices. Livingstonia and Blantyre were running good hospitals and training medical assistants, so that by 1946, there were many training nursing sisters working under the supervision of eighteen mission doctors. During the 1930s the British Government made grants out of the Colonial Development Fund and some of this money went into the development of health services. Besides general hospitals and clinics, the

Government opened specialised institutions; a mental diseases hospital and a leprosarium were opened in the 1950s. In the villages, the local authorities were very active in health-work activities. They were assisted by the trained Health Department officials who provided clean water supplies and enforced better methods of sanitation and constructed dispensaries.

The British hoped that as the colonies developed the older tribal institutions would be modified into democratic bodies. The first step towards achieving indirect rule in Nyasaland was taken in 1929 when certain judicial powers were handed back to the chiefs. They were empowered to hold courts and try both civil and criminal cases, subject to appeal to higher courts. The 1938 Ordinance brought the chiefs back into the administrative system. They could levy local taxes which were supplemented by the government grants to finance local government activities.

In the course of time Provincial Councils were introduced and these met twice a year under the Chairmanship of the District Commissioner. 1946 saw the setting up of the Protectorate Council to each Provincial Council sent seven members. When Africans were finally allowed to sit in the Legislative Council, it was this body which was responsible for selecting them. By the 1950s, educated and capable Africans were appointed to various Advisory

Committees and boards. At the same time increased participation in the country's affairs stimulated African political interest on a country-wide rather than tribal level.

In Nyasaland the constitution of 1907 remained for many years as the basis of Central Government but, as the years passed, the number of both official and unofficial members in the Legislative Council were increased so that by 1958 there were ten members each. The composition of the Executive Council remained unchanged for some time, by 1958 there were only five officials and two unofficials in the Council. Throughout this period, therefore, no members of the Legislative Council were directly elected and parity between the official and unofficial members was preserved, with the governor, who acted as Chairman, having a casting vote. But in the Executive Council the unofficials were in a minority.

This comparatively static form of government, in which colonial civil servants had complete control, reflected the underdeveloped state of the country and the slow pace of change in the economic sphere. As there were few Europeans, there was no incentive for them to try to get elected representation in the legislature with the hope of eventually obtaining Responsible Government.



The fact that there were no industries in Nyasaland meant that trade unions could not be formed. However, there were many Welfare Societies in the country. The first of these was formed in 1912. Many Separatist Churches too were organized to express the people's grievances. These organizations gave scope to Africans with organizing ability and yearning leadership. The possibility of such movement as to take up political aims was great and this happened in the Chilembwe Rising of 1915.<sup>40</sup>

During the inter-war years the Native Associations and Welfare Societies served a valuable purpose in expressing views and grievances of the people. They discussed the political issues of the day, especially, the subject of amalgamation with the two Rhodesias which was mooted in the late 1930s. There was strong opposition to any form of closer association with Southern Rhodesia, largely based on migrant worker's experience there of pass laws and the lack of opportunities for Africans in skilled trades.

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40. This revolt grew out of the discontent of African tenants on European estates in the Chiradzulu area. Chilembwe, educated in America, was a clergy of a Separatist Church. He organized his followers while many police and all the troops were away on the Tanganyika border to guard the country against German attacks. The rising left two Europeans dead and Chilembwe and some of his followers were killed in the fighting. See Ward, n.9, p. 98.

During the 1940s, the idea of self-government gained strength among the educated and travelled Africans. Dissatisfied with conditions in the country increased and a more militant note was struck in the speeches of the leading Africans suggesting that Africans should be allowed to play an active role in the affairs of the country. In May 1944, the Nyasaland African Congress was formed. They demanded direct representation in the Legislative Council among many other demands. Matters heightened with the appearance of the controversial subject of closer union in the form of a federation with the other two Central African colonies. A new phase of attacks upon the principle of colonial rule began. Opposition to federation became quite widespread culminating in riots in the Cholo area in 1958. This issue helped to cement the newly educated leaders and the traditional authorities together against their oppressors.

#### SUMMARY

In the preceding pages we have tried to show the developments in each of the three Central African territories. Certain comparisons and contrasts became apparent and these were important in view of the pending association of the three countries in a federation.

The land position had become strikingly different in the two northern territories from Southern Rhodesia. In the

former there was never a clear cut separation of land occupation as the Land Apportionment Act had introduced in Southern Rhodesia. Moreover, land was brought back from the companies and given to the natives, a phenomenon which was never contemplated in Southern Rhodesia. By 1958, about 95 per cent of the land in the northern territories had been declared Tribal Trust Land, whereas in Southern Rhodesia some 50 per cent was open to purchase only by non-Africans.<sup>41</sup>

Southern Rhodesia, with its comparatively large European population, was developing a diversified economy, while her northern neighbours were developing mono economies. The development of the social services reflected the degree of economic development. Health services had similar aims in all the territories, but were least well developed in Nyasaland, and most developed in Southern Rhodesia.

The proposal to federate these three territories, therefore, aroused considerable controversy. Although there were certain similarities in their past history there were important differences too and those who valued the distinctive features of their own country often feared that they might be submerged if a federation came about.

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41. See map, p. 7(a)

## CHAPTER 2

### "SELLING" AND IMPOSITION OF FEDERATION

The idea of forming closer political links between the three territories in Central Africa dated back to the early days of European settlement. There were also suggestions to form links with either South Africa or the East African territories. As early as 1915 the B. S. A. Company had suggested amalgamating the two Rhodesias, both then under Company rule, to cut the administrative costs, but the settlers in Southern Rhodesia had not seen any advantage in this and the matter was dropped.

After a short period of silence the issue of linking the two Rhodesias and Nyasaland was revived. In 1927 the Hilton Young Commission considered, among other alternatives, the possibility of partitioning Northern Rhodesia and joining the Copperbelt and line of rail to Southern Rhodesia. Nothing came of the idea as most members of the Commission disapproved of Southern Rhodesian Native Policy.

Closer association seemed more attractive to Europeans in both countries by 1936. The copper industry appeared to have a promising future, the white population had grown considerably and Europeans in Northern

Rhodesia, who were doubtful about the British Government's intention for the future development of the country, felt that a link with Southern Rhodesia would strengthen their position. A conference was therefore held in 1986 at the Victoria Falls attended by representatives of the European political parties in Southern Rhodesia and by the elected members of the Northern Rhodesia Legislative Council. The Conference favoured an amalgamation of the two countries and hoped to establish a strong Central African state. In response to the conference's decision<sup>1</sup>, the British Government set up the Bledisloe Commission<sup>1</sup> in 1988 to inquire into the feasibility of closer union, not only of the two Rhodesias, but with Nyasaland as well. The sum of the report, published in 1989, was that amalgamation could not be achieved immediately. The obstacles enumerated were the contrasting native policies between which it was yet too soon to choose, the general African opposition that had been discovered in the North, the limited size of the European population and the differing constitutional status of the three territories.

Immediately after the war, however, one of Bledisloe's main recommendations was acted upon and a Central African Council set up in 1945, comprising the governments of

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1. E. Clegg, Race and Politics (London, 1960), pp.96-7.

Northern Rhodesia, Southern Rhodesia and Nyasaland, to co-ordinate existing services wherever possible. The council had considerable success in things like running a joint air service and negotiating financial agreements, but it was crippled in the last resort by its advisory status and lack of executive powers. Sir Godfrey Huggins had never lost faith in the idea of amalgamation through all the ups and downs of the thirties. But he found the Central African Council an impediment to his plans for further political development. It was becoming apparent that the cause of amalgamation was likely to be a lost one. In the British election that followed the end of the war in Europe, the Labour Party was swept to power, pledged to prevent amalgamation unless and until the African inhabitants desired it. Huggins persisted none the less, and was fortified by a succession of events in 1948. In the Southern Rhodesian election of that year, his United Party was given an unshaken vote of confidence, gaining twenty-four seats of the thirty. By contrast the elections in the Union of South Africa brought Malan's Nationalists into the office with avowed intention of carrying out the policy of apartheid. The colony thus was able to stand out in sharper light as a bulwark of British liberalism in southern Africa. At the same time events in Northern Rhodesia were a cause of concern for the settlers. The formation of the first African Trades

Union under the wing of the colonial office and the recommendations in the Dalglish report,<sup>2</sup> emphasized the obvious fact that Africans were a coming economic as well as political power in the land. Once again, caught between the opposing policies of Pretoria and London, Rhodesian settlers north and south of the Zambezi were brought shoulder to shoulder.

The leaders of the Rhodesians, Sir Godfrey Huggins in the south and Sir Roy Welensky in the North, continued their relentless support for amalgamation of these two territories. The British Government rejected amalgamation and suggested instead the formation of federation which would include Nyasaland. It preferred this because it would permit some matters to be dealt with by the federal government while leaving others in the hands of the territorial governments. In February 1949, on the initiative of Sir Roy Welensky, a meeting was held at Victoria Falls to consider closer union. Huggins, Welensky and leading politicians from all three territories attended, but no Africans were invited to be present. It was at this conference that the plan for amalgamation was finally abandoned and replaced by a proposal for some form of federation in which control of native affairs would be retained by the territorial governments. The omission to invite African members was later regarded as a serious error. This move far from settling the matter

<sup>2</sup>The Dalglish Commission recommended that Africans were capable immediately of filling certain European occupied posts on the mines, and others in the near future after training.

however marked the start of a period of controversy in all the Central African territories. Hostility to the federal concept grew from then onwards, especially in the Northern territories.

Visiting Central Africa, Arthur Creech Jones, declared that his government was inflexibly opposed to the scheme of linking the three territories, and regarded the Central African Council as sufficient for immediate needs. The federationists marked time knowing very well that the British general election was near. Although labour was returned to power with a reduced majority, Creech Jones lost his job to James Griffiths, as Secretary in the Colonial Office. Huggins at once returned to charge. This time the new administration and indeed Parliament as a whole was now much more amenable to the idea of a strong British bloc in Central Africa, and Griffiths consented to a new conference, which met in London during March, 1951. The Report of this Official's Conference was published in June 1951 and reflected the unanimous conclusion that there was an urgent need to bring about some closer association.<sup>3</sup> It stressed the economic interdependence of the whole area, adding that a single economic system would provide a more attractive field for investment than the three small territories. It

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3. R. Weinsky, Weinsky's 4,000 DAYS (London, 1964), pp. 37-40.



argued, too, that strategic problems, communication and other basic services could be more easily handled on a federal scale; and that there would be improved health and educational facilities and higher personal standards generally. A number of reasons in favour of federation were put forward by Europeans. In the first place it was a desire to gain the advantages of the economics of size.<sup>4</sup> In the second place we might mention what could be called political administrative arguments. A number of people acknowledged the sense of creating a political unit readily viable as a geo-political power block. Sir Roy Welensky pointed out that it was impossible to ignore the trend of events in South Africa where nationalist ministers were continuously referring to the desirability of creating a republic, possibly outside the Commonwealth. In a future war, declared Welensky, South Africa might remain neutral; hence it could no longer be considered strategically safe. In addition to this, there was the question of defence too. Britain was no longer the power she had been in 1938; her capacity to defend Central Africa was doubtful, and each of the existing states were incapable of defending themselves. In the third

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4. Hazlewood stresses throughout Chapter 6 that "the commonly presented economic case for federation in Central Africa was weak", p.249. He does admit however that capital entered the Federation "partly for psychological reasons - people believed that federation was economically beneficial". A. Hazlewood, The Economics of Development, (London, 1964), Chapter 6.

place the Federation was seen as a bulwork against African nationalism. At a time when it appeared that African nationalism was on the march many people regarded the federal movement as retrogressive. The ultimate alternative, however, was particularism and fragmentation. In due course African nationalism was the Achilles heel of the Central African Federation. Whatever the economic advantages might have been, clearly African nationalism was not interested.

The British government was faced with an acute dilemma, its motive in supporting the Central African Federation was at least, in part, a desire to prevent Southern Rhodesia moving into the South African orbit. In order to prevent this trend, it was necessary to create a federation as the price to pay to stop this development. On the other side, the British Government had to contend with intensifying political consciousness expressly antithetical to federation which in due course made federal government an impossibility. In the fourth place, the federation was seen as a means to promote a policy of racial partnership. But here too, it failed to achieve the intended goal as can be deduced from Sir Godfrey Huggins's definition of it - partnership would be as the relationship between rider and his horse.<sup>5</sup>

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5. D. P. Currie, Federalism and the New Nations of Africa (London, 1964), p.7.

The officials in their report of 1957 recognised the vast differences in political development between the territories and admitted the implacable opposition to federation of Africans, but they seem completely to have disregarded the strength of this political opposition, and to have learned nothing from the findings of the Hilton Young and Bledisloe Commission, which had discovered that the real obstacle to closer union was the vast gulf between the two irreconcilable ways of life. This was followed by the Victoria Falls conference, this time with African representatives. No final decision was taken at this conference, but the British Secretary of State for the Colonies, James Griffiths, was persuaded that, although African opinion in the Northern territories was opposed to a federation it was, nevertheless, in the long term interests of all, provided that the Africans in the protectorates had adequate safeguards for their interests.

It had been announced during the Conference that a General Election would be held in Britain in October, and since Labour was hanging on with a bare majority, Huggins and Welensky played for time, hoping that a Conservative Government would be more sympathetic. And indeed Labour lost the election. Within a month the new Colonial Secretary, Oliver Lyttelton, announced that the Conservative Government was convinced of the urgent need for federation

on the general lines of the official's report. A second London Conference was called for April 1952. By this time African opposition had consolidated, and though the Northern Rhodesian African representatives had informal talks with the Colonial Secretary, both they and the Nyasaland African representatives refused to attend the Conference either as full members or as observers. The only Africans present were the two Sir Godfrey's nominees from Southern Rhodesia. The outcome of the Conference was a draft Federal Scheme. A final Conference met in London early in 1958 to consider the draft federal scheme. This time no Africans were in attendance; a significant pointer indeed to the bleak future of the structure that was under creation without their consent.

The federal proposals were submitted to all the Governments concerned. In Britain, Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland legislation was passed to establish the Federation, in both of the Northern territories opposition was expressed in the Legislative Councils by African members and European members representing African interests. In Southern Rhodesia Sir Godfrey Huggins had agreed to consult the electorate and a referendum was held in April 1953. The proposed constitution was accepted by a majority of 25,580 votes in favour to 14,929 against. The voting revealed a sixty per cent majority in favour of federation, a proportion not greatly differing from that in support of

Responsible government in 1923. Instead of clearing the bill in the Imperial Parliament, it was decided to create the Federation by introducing a permissive Federation Bill empowering the Queen to create the new constitution by Order in Council.<sup>6</sup>

In 1953, the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland emerged from the crucible of racial antagonism with a mandate to rule about eight million Africans and two hundred thousand whites for the benefit of both. Supposedly, its creed was partnership. Humanitarians expected white Rhodesians to share the attributes and prerogatives of power with Africans. They assumed that the federal government would gradually try to create a truly multi-racial society where colour would be of no significance. But partnership seemed a hollow creed, and Africans continued to view federation as a cynical device designed to perpetuate white domination between the Limpopo River and Lake Tanganyika.

#### African Reaction

Many Africans in the federation rejected partnership. This phenomenon was easily understood in the context of the Northern territories where the "paramountcy" of

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6. A. J. Mills, An Introduction to the History of Central Africa (London, 1964), p. 820.

African interests was regarded as the touchstone of British Colonial Policy until 1958. To them "partnership" suggested a retreat from "paramountcy". It also implied an arithmetical slight-of-hand which somehow purported to balance the interests of almost five million Africans in the two Protectorates against only 70,000 Europeans. In the Native's eyes, the white settler population of Northern Rhodesia, for an example, was by numerical rights, to constitute little more of a multi-racial balance to the African majority than those of Tanganyika. The white settlers of Nyasaland too were really as proportionally insignificant as were those of Ghana. In neither of these, Tanganyika or Ghana, "graduates" of the colonial system was it thought necessary to create an artificial balance of power between the races. In neither territory was "partnership" considered a reasonable definition of the relation between the overwhelming majority and a tiny minority. In both cases, reasoned the Africans, the rise of political power of the African majority was being achieved without creating artificial undemocratic political safeguards for European interests. Very often many an African of the Northern territories wondered why Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland were not allowed to follow their natural destinies as African states of the same cut as Ghana and Tanganyika. Many of them concluded that it was primarily because Southern Rhodesia forced

federation on them in order that it may "cut itself in" on the wealth of the Copperbelt.

In February 1952 the African Council, of Nyasaland, largely composed of Chiefs and was the highest African representative body responsible to the Government of the Protectorate was convened and the case in favour of Federation was put before it by Government, with a specific request to the Council to accept it. After full discussion the Council categorically rejected the proposed plan to federate the three territories. As a follow up to this, strong delegations of African leaders, both Chiefs and Commoners, were sent by the people from both Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland to England to protest against Federation. They left in April 1952. They went "as deputations sent by our people to re-affirm to Her Majesty's Government our unanimous opposition to Federation".<sup>7</sup>

While in England, leaders of the African National Congresses of both Nyasaland and Northern Rhodesia gave an interview, "we talk as a united people. This is the first time that traditional leaders, Chiefs and others are completely united with nationalist political leaders in

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7. The TIMES, 24.4.52 quoted from G. Clutton. DANN in Nyasaland (1959) p.48.

Africa. The Government, which generally has the support of all Chiefs for its policies, has not yet managed to get the support of a single Chief for Federation...<sup>8</sup>

The natives of Nyasaland knew the political and economic system of Southern Rhodesia and its social climate. They knew from experience its "Native Policy" and the attitudes which went with it. Thus these people were well educated regarding the social conditions existing inside Southern Rhodesia. Because of this they were bitterly opposed to Federation. Although they could submit to "apartheid" conditions while working in Southern Rhodesia or South Africa, they would not tolerate its importation into their country. The seriousness of the matter was demonstrated in 1953 when the chiefs of Nyasaland petitioned not only the British Government, but also the United Nations. The Chiefs went to the extent of quoting article 78 of the U. N. Charter to put their point across. They pointed out that Britain would be violating not only the provisions of the Article, but also the provisions of the treaties signed with their ancestors, if she should transfer her responsibilities to any other body. In course of time it became clearer that the strength of the Congress in Nyasaland, was the result not the cause of Nyasaland's opposition to Federation. In 1954, the Congress

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8. Manchester Guardian 11/5/52 Ibid, p. 48.



submitted a memorandum to the Secretary of State for the Colonies when he visited Nyasaland: "We reiterate our opposition to the imposition of the Central African Federation against the overwhelming wishes of the African people of this country... What the people of Nyasaland desire is self-government within the British Commonwealth of nations".<sup>9</sup> It can never be doubted that the opposition to Federation of the people, chiefs and political leaders of Nyasaland was virtually hundred per cent. This opposition was corroborated by all authoritative opinion, and the reasons for it were affirmed by every impartial investigation into the possibility of closer association with Southern Rhodesia. No economic argument could overcome the urge of an uprising people for self-determination and nothing could deter these people to pursue their goal, self-government.

In Northern Rhodesia the campaign against Federation provided yet another of the rare occasions when the traditional authorities and the common people could band themselves together in a crusade against the malpractices of the White rule. In addition to many other fears, the natives of Northern Rhodesia opposed Federation because they reasoned that, at a later date, the Federal Government might attempt to gain increased control over territorial matters or alter existing land legislation, which as we have seen, set aside a great of land in the north for

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9. Ibid., p. 58.

African use. "All our country is our own here", expressed Chief Mporokoso of Northern Rhodesia, "but I have heard that in these other countries a man can buy land and make it his own. We do not want that here. All the land should be free",<sup>10</sup> In these variegated but consistent terms was expressed what was a universal rejection of federation by the African people in Northern Rhodesia. When the Legislative Council voted for federation in 1958, Harry NKumbula, who had become Chairman of the Congress, called a conference of delegates and chiefs at Lusaka and burned copies of Government's White paper before them. The chiefs decided they would adopt a policy of non-cooperation if federation were imposed.

Events in Southern Rhodesia were not all that benign. To a great extent, African Nationalism in Southern Rhodesia was the result of the strong opposition to the implementation of the Land Husbandry Act, which spread throughout the country during the 1950s. However, one is not trying to overshadow the effects of creation of the Federation, formed without the consent of the African populations of its three component territories.

James Chikerema, one of the founder members of the City Youth League (CYL), started his political carrier

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10. Ibid., p. 272.

while studying at the University of Cape Town, in South Africa. Jones and his friends organized a massive protest against the federation. After the founding of the CYL in 1955, a successful bus boycott in Harare Township was organised in 1956 and the leaders of the League started a drive to re-organise the people on all-Southern Rhodesian basis so as to present a United Front against the imposed Federation. By mid-1957 the CYL had consolidated a good deal of strength. A paper, CHAPUFU (Witness), was organised to give publicity to the activities of the League in the language of the people. The year 1957 saw the formation of a political party in Southern Rhodesia which linked Bulawayo with Salisbury and effectively drew in the rural masses. As a direct challenge to the White Settlers the Africans chose September 12<sup>11</sup> as the day for launching the renovated African National Congress. Activities of the Congress were linked with those of other Congresses in the two Northern territories. No amount of repressive measures could stay the Africans' negative reaction to Federation.

#### European Reaction

When the Federation idea was finally accepted and implemented both Welensky and Huggins, leaders of the

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11. For September 12 was the prime festival of settler-ism, when pioneers were remembered by many young immigrants. They held a ceremony in front of the flag-pole in Cecil Square where Rhodes' men first raised a Union Jack in 1890. This festival was called Occupation Day.

Europeans in Rhodesia, one in the North and the other in the south respectively, threw all their weight and influence behind it. To most Europeans Federation was linked with the struggle for survival of their supremacy in Central Africa. They feared the imposition of "Gold Coast ideas" and saw in the federation as at best an effort by Huggins to put the brake on such a policy. The handful of settlers in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland could expect to draw strength from association with the relatively well-organized European community in Southern Rhodesia. In addition, many saw in federation an opportunity to be free of Colonial office rule which seemed to be pushing the Africans in the two Protectorates towards paramountcy. Those in Southern Rhodesia looked at Federation as the gateway to the Copper-belt which they considered to be the hinterland of Southern Rhodesian finance and technology. One of the driving force behind the demands of the federationists was the financial support they enjoyed from big business in London. The United Central African Association became very active towards the 1950s. Prominent in the group was the British South Africa Company, which after the royalties detente in 1949 had acquired a warm regard for Sir Roy Welensky and sympathy for his policies. Support also came from Rhodesia Selection Trust and the Anglo-American Corporation, who

between them owned the copperbelt.<sup>12</sup> This financial support strengthened European demands for federation at any cost. Europeans in the northern territories were not given a chance to cast their votes over the desirability of the federation. However, a large minority of Europeans in Southern Rhodesia opposed the federal idea as the vote in the Referendum showed. Of the total enfranchised population of Southern Rhodesia, 25,000 votes were cast in favour of Federation, 15,000 against it. The majority was 63 per cent. Of the 40,000 people who voted, only 429 were Africans who were on the electoral roll. Some opposed because they saw in the proposed scheme a departure from the policy of "separate development" which had hitherto played such an important part in Southern Rhodesian affairs and which they wished to see continue. Others opposed it because they felt it was premature to link countries with divergent racial policies and different constitutional status and others thought it was unwise to introduce a federation in the face of African opposition.

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12. All three of these groups were subsequently to give financial aid to the United Federal Party, Anglo-American and Rhodesian Selection Trust withdrawing in July 1950. This high powered advocacy of Central African Federation began to penetrate the City of London, a development which was to bear fruit when the Conservatives took office in 1952. Richard Hall, ZAMBIA (London, 1965), p. 150.

### British Reaction.

Central Africa was of both strategic and economic importance to Britain. It was hoped to combat the spread of Communism by establishing control in a privileged group. Again this would prevent the spread of "apartheid and baskap" from South Africa to cross the Limpopo. By creating Federation Britain would lighten her economic responsibilities. Britain was faced with the need of post-war retrenchment and therefore relinquishing economic responsibilities in Central Africa, and yet keep her influence and control intact in the region was the most welcome plan. The "Big Boys" of business and industry whispered behind the Cabinet chairs that a broadly based expanding economy under European control would bolster up the shaky economy of the United Kingdom by opening a wide area for expansion. Capital would be invested and markets opened up; the rich rewards of these virgin lands would be reaped by those of British stock. A sick Britain could not have afforded a wink at the promises of financial help from any source. As early as 1941 Earnest Oppenheimer had promised that should any Union take place between the Rhodesias, he would move his office to Salisbury.<sup>18</sup> Three years before the Federation

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18. Gregory, Earnest Oppenheimer and the Economic Development of Southern Africa (Oxford, 1962), p. 462.

Anglo transferred the headquarters of Rhoanglo, Rhokena, Nchanga and Broken Hill to Salisbury and built up a major office there. Oppenheimer was committed to the Federation idea and he supported the federationists London pressure group, the United Central Africa Association.

Britain's economic situation was causing concern. The very attempts to maintain and rebuild the imperialist system as the supposed indispensable basis for recovery did in fact intensify the crisis by placing more and more crippling economic and military burdens upon the already weakened coffers. When the Marshall Plan was proposed, the British policy makers leapt for joy, but their joy was soon turned to dismay when the plan was discovered, it could not cover over the drain. R. P. Dutt has given an eye opener into the British crisis of the post-war period, we reproduce his findings here :

British Overseas Investment Income and Government Overseas Expenditure

(£ million)

	1938	1946	1950
Overseas Investment Income (net)	+ 175	+ 71	+ 122
Government Overseas Expenditure	- 16	-210	-105
	<u>+ 159</u>	<u>-139</u>	<u>+ 17</u>

(Source: R. P. Dutt, the Crisis of Britain and the British Empire (1956), p. 404).

Several factors become more apparent when the economic crisis of Britain are analysed. Overseas investment income had fallen in 1946; on the other hand, Government overseas expenditure had multiplied more than thirteen times. Thus a surplus of £ 159 million in 1938 had turned into a deficit of £ 189 million in 1946. Indeed, Britain's Imperial adventure was sucking the prime of the nation. Even after the extreme measures of government policy to force up colonial exploitation and reserve this situation had brought the net overseas investment income of £ 122 million by 1950, this was still two sevenths below the pre-war figure, while government overseas expenditure at £ 105 million was six times the pre-war level, and the painful achievement net surplus of £ 17 million was less than one ninth of the pre-war surplus.

By 1958, the three territories that were to form the Central African Federation had each to shift a proportion of their territorial public debt to that of the Federation. Southern Rhodesia shifted on to the Federal Government a burden of £ 98.4 million, Northern Rhodesia a debt of £ 22.9 million and Nyasaland one of £ 5.5 million.<sup>14</sup> Had federation not been formed the Colonial Office would

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14. N. Chamunyarira, Crisis in Rhodesia (London, 1965), p. 58.



have had to shoulder the public debts of the two Protectorates (£ 28.4 million plus the other proportions each territory had to shoulder individually). It can be seen that the British support for federation which was clearly rejected by the Africans, was partly an easy way for Britain to shift her responsibility onto the White element already entrenched in Central Africa. Although there may have been several other compulsions working on the architectures of the Central African Federation, it is equally plausible to see the British economic crisis of this period as a contributing factor to it. The act of allowing the formation of a federation was seen by the British Labourites as improving social and economic conditions in Central Africa but their obsession in their economic crisis could not allow them to see that they were in fact creating a situation benefiting only the European minority. Under the Conservative Party this minority gained ascendancy for a short but profitable period. African paramountcy became a dead issue.

#### International Reaction

The arguments for federation were not an isolated Central African phenomenon, they were, in the words of Sir Roy Welensky, "a global manifestation". The anti-Communist argument was widely used by the protagonists

of the federation. Because of the building up of tension between East and West, the argument had its impact in the Western countries. As a result of this "Red" fear, the federation issue did not receive as much of sympathy as it would have otherwise in the world forums. In the United Nations the Africans and their allies the Asians formed the Afro-Asian bloc which kept the world body at its tenterhooks. On October 28, 1958, the Indian delegate, acting on information presented by Rev. Michael Scott ("Missionary in Nyasaland), asked that the federation issue be debated in the General Assembly's Fourth Committee. The British delegate pointed out that the U.N. Assembly had no right to discuss political developments in Central Africa. In 1957 Dr. Nkrumah of Ghana and Sir Roy Welensky attended the Commonwealth Meeting for the first time. Welensky argued that political independence was an illusion unless founded on economic independence. The Ghanaian leader gave him a negative view based on his country's experience, that economic viability was not necessarily the only criteria of the country to govern itself.<sup>15</sup> In Britain different groups kept the issue alive. One of the most significant anti-federation meetings was held in Edinburgh, organized by the World Church Group, an inter-denominational organization on whose executive sat Julius Nyerere, then a

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15. Welensky, n.s., p.77.

student in Edinburgh University. Well over 1,200 people were in attendance. Prominent people delivered speeches condemning the federation, among them were Dr. K. Banda, the Rev. K. Mackenzie, a missionary who had worked in both protectorates of the proposed Federation, and a Labour Party expert on colonial affairs John Hatch. At the end of the meeting a resolution was unanimously adopted - rejecting any closer association of the Central African territories "without the free consent of the African peoples".

The year 1959 was indeed a watershed. From then on, until its demise, the Federation was almost continuously in a state of strife and emergency. The federationists were put on the defensive and dissolution became only a question of timing and method. Sir Roy Welensky frantically blamed the African resurgence on the Afro-Asian bloc and the communists. He traced the growth of a conspiracy against what he called "Civilized standards" to the Bandung Conference of 1955 and the Cairo gathering of December 1957. This development he saw climaxing in the All-African People's Conference (AAPC) at Accra in 1958. "It was in fact, a good hot bath of nationalistic fervour and a meeting of extremists....."<sup>16</sup> Sir Roy contended. The

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16. Federal Hansard, April 1959, quoted from Hall, n. 12, p. 185.

AAPC was indeed an African conference and its proceedings were closely watched by those who wished the oppressed masses of Africa more oppression. Copies of resolutions passed at the Conference were distributed from Salisbury to the territorial governments and these of course tended to confirm Sir Roy Welensky's earlier prophecy that the tide of black nationalism was running faster and only concerted action could stem it. The Conference passed a resolution, which gave encouragement to the oppressed of Central Africa and elsewhere, calling for a "final assault upon the denial of freedom, liberty and final human rights to the people of Africa".

The AAPC sent shock waves all over the Western world. In London, the Chartered Company director, Harry Grenfell, addressing the Conservative Royal African Society, pointed to the Accra Conference as proof that "nationalism" was in the ascendant; in Central Africa the authorities had a duty to act in good time before "the poison has infected the body politic". Sir Roy Welensky admitted that the Accra conference had a shattering impact on the federal issue, "now we face the most critical period in the life of the federation, as we approach the time in 1960 when we may properly pursue our determination to gain full membership of the Commonwealth".<sup>17</sup> The Accra

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17. Ibid., p. 186.

conference certainly exhilarated the Central Africans among the delegates. The conference produced a new unity of purpose between the nationalist leaders. Events were not set on a collision course well before the end of 1958 and any hope of an accommodation between Welensky and the Africans had vanished with the failure of his belated "meet the people" tours through the northern territories. Nyasaland was beyond restraint after the return of Dr. Banda, Southern Rhodesia's rural areas were in a turmoil over the Land Husbandary Act, - everywhere the Africans were ready to come to grips with their oppressors.

In Africa the sprouting African Nationalism kept the pot at the boiling point. By the beginning of 1959 the whole position of the Western powers in Africa was at stake. North of the Sahara, Western influence in the Arab Republic was to all intents and purposes a pro-Africanist and in Algeria the progressive forces under Ahmed Ben Bella were lied down in hot pursuit against French imperialists. In West Africa, nationalism was rapidly asserting itself in all the colonies. It was no illusion at all, Dr. Nkrumah was eager to fulfill his Pan-African dreams as quickly as possible. In East Africa, the heroic Mau Mau struggle had driven home its message to the British and in other territories of the

region, the demand for independence was more and more insistent. Central Africa was viewed from an international perspective, the native population could no longer be passified. The direction of events had soon to change in the early 1960s, with the change of government in London. Harold McMillan's entry into the office at Westminster brought with it a British change of her colonial policies.

## CHAPTER 3

### THE AFRICAN CHALLENGE

The establishment of the Federation initiated a decade of intensified political activity in Central Africa. While the European minority was busy with constitutional changes to ensure its supremacy, the African majority was laying down fresh plans to resist the imposed Federation. Fear among the Europeans that political power would pass on to an inexperienced majority and swamp the privileges of the experienced minority lay behind the various schemes such as special voting constituencies, dual-voting rolls and devaluation of votes, which were a feature of the constitutional proposals of this period (See Table, p.74). The rapid constitutional advance was partly due to Britain's increasing belief that self-government must come quickly in the African dependencies if they were to avoid unrewarding struggles between the colonial territory and the mother country and partly to increased strength of the nationalist movements in the three territories. The increase in African political awareness had many causes, not only in Central Africa but in the changes taking place in other parts of Africa, and in world attitudes to colonialism.

A.	Ordinary seats (Elected by the ordinary, predominantly European roll)	Southern Rhodesia Northern Rhodesia Nyasaland	24 14 6 <hr/> 44
	Registered Voters		
	European	85,968	
	Africans	1,697	
	Other Races	8,979	
. . .			
B.	Special Seats (Elected by the ordinary, mainly European) and Special predominantly African roll jointly)	Southern Rhodesia 4 (who must be African) 1 (who must be European representin African interests) Northern Rhodesia 2 (who must be African) Nyasaland 2 (who must be African)	5 5
	Registered special voters		
	European	169	
	African	4,877	
	Other Races	61	
	Registered voters (Ordinary and special)		
	European	86,137	
	African	6,574	
	Other Races	4,040	
. . .			
C.	African Members elected indirectly by African Local Councils	Northern Rhodesia 2 (who must be African) Nyasaland 2 (who must be African)	
. . .			
D.	European members appointed by the Governor of the territory to represent African interests	Northern Rhodesia 1 (who must be European) Nyasaland 1 (who must be European)	
			59 in all

COMPOSITION OF THE FEDERAL PARLIAMENT

Source: G. R. M. Creighton, The Anatomy of Partnership  
(London, 1960), p. 86.



SOUTHERN RHODESIA

The history of African resistance to the European rule in southern Rhodesia can best be understood when we begin with the Ndebele and Shona risings of the 1890s. According to Dr. Eric Stokes the uprising involved all people. "Here the Zambesian historian encounters a concerted movement of popular resistance unique in scope and intensity ... what can be described as genuinely national revolutions in which for a time the traditional political leaders were set aside".<sup>1</sup> The failure of this resistance by no means spelt the dearth of political activities among the Africans. Nyemanda, one of Chief Lobengula's sons organized a movement which fought for a Ndebele National Home under the protection of the King as had done Khama, Mosheshe and Lewanika of Bechuanaland, Basutoland and Barotseland respectively. Although Nyemanda's movement failed to achieve its objectives, it was significant in that it expressed the African voice when the whites were busy campaigning for Responsible Government.

When Southern Rhodesia was handed over to the settlers according to Rhodes's promise, the Africans began to question the viability of Nyemanda's movement. They

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1. Eric Stokes and R. Brown (eds.) The Zambesian Past (Manchester, 1966), "Introduction".

soon realised that nothing could be achieved by appeals to Britain. Abraham Twala, one of the African organizers, said, "Experience has taught us, that our salvation does not lie in Downing Street..."<sup>2</sup> He and others organized Associations on the lines of Jabavu, the leader of African voters in South Africa.

The 1930s witnessed the birth of the first African Congress organization formed by Aaron Jache. This became the basis for the creation of the radical movement of 1957.<sup>3</sup> Again another important stage was arrived at in African mobilization; when numerous independent Churches were started. The people could forsake their traditional Chief's authority to follow that of the Church leaders for the promised radical changes. From such organizations future mass nationalists were to come, such as the Rev. NDabeningi Sithole. In urban centres Trade Union activities culminated into an effective mass action since the 1890s risings. There was a general stoppage of work among the African workers in Commerce and industry in 1948.<sup>4</sup> The late 1940s and early 1950s saw such rapid industrial expansion that there was bound to be special

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2. Rhodesia Herald 31 March 1922, Twala's letter, quoted from Ranger, Aspects of Central African History (London, 1968) p. 288.

3. Ibid., p. 281.

4. A. J. Wills, An Introduction to the History of Central Africa (London, 1964), p. 298.

dislocation and shortages of money to satisfy the needs of urban populations. This combined with general disenchantment against government legislation on land, in the rural areas, threatened to knit the Africans together against the government.

The coming of Federation and its doctrine of "partnership" in fact delayed the formation of the sort of united movement foreshadowed in 1948. Once again the Africans fell into the trap of politics of participation. During this period the various trade unions and political associations almost fell into abeyance while their leaders tried again to fight from within. Dr. Nathan Shamuyarira Zimbabwe's Minister of Information, says of this period that, it was indeed the golden age of participation for Africans" ... Everyone else was rushing to join multi-racial organizations imbued with the new spirit of partnership and believing it would change their whole lives and bring equality".<sup>5</sup> This participation did not bring the required realities. The 1951 Land Husbandry Act aroused wider and more vigorous opposition from the Africans. It struck at the interests of the young unmarried wage workers in the towns whose ambitions were not to settle

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5. N. Shamuyarira, Crisis in Rhodesia (London, 1965), p.40.

permanently there but to return to the countryside to set up their families. In them African politics found a group of embittered activists who linked urban and rural discontent.

In 1955 George Nyendoto, James Chikerema and others withdrew from the politics of participation and formed the City Youth League. These young firebrands breathed new life into the slumbering African National Congress. Their uncompromising activities led to the formation of the Southern Rhodesia African National Congress (ANC) in 1957 under the leadership of Joshua Nkomo. The A. N. C. combined all the organizations of the country to fight for African rights. In 1958 disillusionment greeted those Africans who were still indulging in the politics of participation; Garfield Todd was forced out of office by his Cabinet colleagues. His fall and the elimination of his party at the subsequent elections brought home to many that participation could not succeed. The multi-racial groupings lost their grip when they lost African support. Africans threw their support behind A. N. C. whose aim was to gain political control on the basis of "one man one vote". It held meetings in the rural areas and these stirred up rural opposition to the agricultural policies. It was very easy for politicians to inflame discontent and deepen fears over land because of the Land Husbandry Act.

Sir Edgar Whitehead, the Prime Minister of Southern Rhodesia, declared a state of emergency in 1959 and banned the A. N. C. and arrested its leadership. Whitehead's government introduced a number of repressive legislation such as the Unlawful Organizations Act, the Preventive Detention Act and the public Order Amendment Act which were aimed at silencing the African voice once and for all. Soon after the Congress ban, it appeared as though African politics had been dealt a crushing blow. Sir Edgar took the opportunity to call for a new era of participation. He launched his "Build a Nation" campaign to win the hearts of the African middle class. What he did not realise was that the ban of Congress signaled the end of participation policy among the Africans.

In 1960 the National Democratic Party was formed, with the same leadership as of its predecessor. It was a mass movement of a new and formidable kind. It attempted a wide range of tactics, such as appealing for overseas support and producing cogently argued criticisms of the constitutional proposals of the Southern Rhodesia Government. In July of the same year, N. D. P. demonstrated its strength in a march through the townships of Salisbury and in 1961 it gave a further demonstration with the referendum organized by the Party in which its members voted over-whelmingly against the new Southern

Rhodesian Constitution.<sup>6</sup> A campaign of growing political intimidation followed but this did not lead, as in Northern Rhodesia in 1961 to a revision of the Constitutional proposals more favourable to the nationalists, and in November 1961 Whitehead banned the N.D.P. while its leaders were in Dar-es-Salaam for Tanganyika's independence celebrations. Nkomo, undaunted by these moves, declared the formation of the Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU) on December 18. While continuing along the principles laid down for the NDP, ZAPU added a new touch by stressing the need to project the Southern Rhodesian struggle onto the international scene. There was to be greater focus on the Pan-African aspects of the struggle and on the role of the United Nations, a strategy warranted by the increasing importance of the new States of Africa and Asia. The new organization organized sabotage activities in the whole country and

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6. The proposed constitution enlarged the existing Southern Rhodesian Parliament to sixty-five members and maintained the principle of two voter's rolls in the election of these members. The country was divided into fifty ordinary constituencies, and redivided into fifteen electoral districts, each of which would send one member to Parliament. Voters on the A Roll required either fairly high income or educational qualifications, ranging from an income of £ 720 a year and the ability to fill up the application form, to an income of £ 300 a year and four years secondary education. All chiefs and headmen were eligible for the A Roll by reason of their office. The B Roll qualifications were lower and ranged from an income of £240 with no educational qualification to an income of £120 a year and a completed primary education, for a person over thirty years old. P. Tindall, A History of Central Africa, (New York, 1968), p.326.

began to send young supporters overseas for sabotage training.<sup>7</sup> The Government's reaction was almost inevitable. On 20 September 1962, ZAPU was banned and the leaders were restricted in different areas.<sup>8</sup> Whitehead said that ZAPU was banned not because of its political opinions, but of its terrorism acts. Nkomo announced, from Lusaka, that he was setting up a Government-in-exile in Dar-es-Salaam. His lieutenants opposed him bitterly and started questioning his leadership.

Meanwhile the Whitehead Government started appealing to the moderate Africans to support it on the basis of the gradual abolition of the Land Apportionment Act and the eradication of racial discrimination in public places. To the Rhodesian Front Party, formed by merging the Democratic Party and the Southern Rhodesian Association on 2 June 1961, these government measures were unacceptable. Charging the United Federal Party with opening the way to an African takeover, the Front decided to campaign against going too far and too fast to appease world opinion and the Africans. In December 1962,

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7. *Shamuyarika*, n.5., p. 202.

8. Mr. Nkomo was out of the country at the time of the banning, and according to his rivals it was with great reluctance that he agreed to return to face restrictions with his fellow-nationalist leaders.

the Front won the election and Mr. Winston Field, a prominent farmer became the Prime Minister. The party which had ousted Todd in 1958, was now completely wiped out and it was disbanded. Africans boycotted the elections.

This election was a crucial one for the tottering federation, for now neither Northern Rhodesia nor Nyasaland could possibly work with a government openly dedicated to thwarting African advancement. The new administration in Salisbury released Nkomo and other 1959 detainees. With the federation clearly moribund, both Sir Roy and Field asked Britain for the right to independence as Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland. Britain was in a dilemma. Meanwhile there was growing African discontent following the banning of ZAPU and the subsequent arrests of its M. L. A's. When Nkomo urged his Executive to eseepte to Dar-es-Salaam so as to get ready to form a government-in-exile there when the Government declares the Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI), again his leadership was doubted. As a matter of fact some of his colleagues felt that they had reached the parting of ways. They disagreed with Nkomo's policy of fighting from outside or "circumvention" and instead urged him to face the government squarely - "confrontation". When Nkomo could not budge, the ZAPU ranks split asunder.<sup>9</sup> The Rev. Ndabaningi Sithole led the

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9. See Shamuyarira, n.7., Chapter 10 for an account of the split.



newly formed Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) whose motto was, "We are our own liberators". In 1964 Ian Smith took over as the Prime Minister. One of his acts was to break the back of the nationalist movement through mass arrests and restrictions. ZANU and the People's Care-taker Council (PCC) led by Nkomo were banned and the leaders were sent to restriction camps.

In a relatively free political atmosphere, Smith grappled with the British Government and because of their failure to reach at an amicable understanding, Smith declared UDI in 1965 opening up a new era in the politics of Southern Rhodesia.

#### NORTHERN RHODESIA

The African responses to colonial rule were inevitably conditioned by the slow pace of real economic and social development. Due to the lack of educated African modern-style politics were slow to emerge. Some of the earliest moves towards political organization in Northern Rhodesia were led and directed by Nyasas employed on the Copperbelt. However, the first political achievement took place far from the towns. A Nyasa Minister, David Kaunda, father of Zambia's first President, founded a Welfare Association, with his colleagues, at Mwenzo. Its constitution stressed the need to help promote the

Relationship between the government and the governed.<sup>10</sup>  
This was followed by religious organizations which played a big role in arousing the people's consciousness.

However, the modern political history of Northern Rhodesia really began in the late 1930's, when the Copperbelt finally emerged after the depression as the economic heart of the country. The mining towns brought large number of Africans into close association and recurrent conflict with a small number of dominant Europeans. In this situation, both sides began to compete in bringing pressure to bear on the government and the mining companies. It was in the mining towns that popular African discontent first found effective expression through recognized leaders; and through the system of migrant labour there was continual movement between towns and country, so that the development of African political awareness in the towns was from the first of great significance for Northern Rhodesia as a whole. Moreover, this development gave a new urgency to the long-standing problem of Northern Rhodesia's relationship to Southern Rhodesia, and it was this problem which dominated political controversy upon the emergence of Zambia in 1964.

In 1935, for the first time, African mineworkers went on strike at the Copperbelt and this showed the

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10. R. Hall, *Zambia* (London, 1965), p. 118.

potential strength of African miners. This show of strength was followed by the formation of Welfare societies throughout the Copperbelt in 1942. These became important forums for discussion and means of securing substantial local improvements. 1946 witnessed a landmark development in the political history of the Africans. Dauti Yamba initiated steps which culminated in the formation of a Federation of Welfare Societies. For the first time an official body of Africans met together to discuss their problems at a territorial level. This Federation held several meetings and after two years, it reconstituted itself as the Northern Rhodesia Congress, a forerunner of the nationalist political parties. Side by side with this African Trade Unions were being organized. Lawrence Katilungu<sup>11</sup> led the Northern Rhodesia African Mineworker's Union (NRAMU) whose strength and status soon led to the abolition of the Tribal Representatives throughout the Copperbelt.

These moves by Africans prompted Europeans' drive towards political supremacy in the country. Sir Roy Welensky and his colleagues intensified their struggle for a closer union with southern Rhodesia. This on the

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11. For detailed Trade Union activities, see Anirudha Gupta, "Trade Unionism and Politics on the Copperbelt" in William Tordoff (ed.) Politics in ZAMBIA (Manchester, 1974).

other hand stimulated Africans to make a counter-bid for political power. Africans feared any form of Union with the South for the same reasons that most Europeans welcomed it; such union would strengthen European domination. The campaigns for amalgamation and then federation, gave stimulus to an African political awakening throughout the country. By 1949 the local associations were turned into Congress branches and the cyclical pattern of labour migration to and from the towns meant that between town and country there was a constant flow of news and ideas as well as leadership. Such links reinforced the common interest of Chiefs and miners in protecting tribal land.

In 1951 the Congress was significantly renamed the Northern Rhodesia African National Congress under the leadership of Harry Numbala and it worked hard to unite the people under its banner. In the following year a conference of Chiefs and Congress delegates in Lusaka set up a Supreme Action Council, with a majority of trade unionists, to plan and if desirable order mass action. Numbala burned the British White Paper on Federation before delegates of Chiefs and Congressmen and announced that the Chiefs had determined not to co-operate with a Federal Government. A two day "National Prayer" was called for during which no Africans would go to work. The plan for "national prayer" fell through and Federation was introduced despite African protests. There was

no reason for Africans in Northern Rhodesia to accept the European assurance that Federation meant "partnership". The Federal political structure did not encourage hopes that any substantial power would be conceded to Africans in the near future. Thus most Africans continued to oppose Federation and some began to work towards a new objective: the creation of an independent State based on majority rule. The failure to prevent Federation costed the ANC its popular support. The dearth of real political activities between 1954 and 1958 caused an eruption of religious fanatical movements such as the Lumpa Church founded by Alice Lenshina whose goal it was not to remove Federation but sorcery.<sup>12</sup>

1958 witnessed the resuscitation of Congress, this time with new, young leadership such as Sikota Wina, Simon Kapwepwe and Kenneth Kaunda, who were committed to the idea of creating an independent African State. They dedicated themselves to uniting Africans and any Europeans who cared to listen, in a sense of belonging to a new nation to be called ZAMBIA. Nkumbula was less committed to this idea. When Harry Nkumbula, leader of the A. N. C., agreed to participate in the 1959 elections, the young leaders

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12. Ibid., p. 188.

refused to take part and this ended in a major split in the Congress. K. Kaunda, S. Kapwepwe, S. Nina and other firebrands formed a new party, the Zambia African National Congress (ZANC) whose support could not be mistaken from all over the country save the Southern Province, Nkumbula's home.

A State of Emergency was declared in the whole Federation in 1959 on the pretext that a murder plot against Europeans had been busted in Nyasaland. Because of its anti-Federation activities ZANC was banned and all of its leaders thrown into jail. Instead of scaring the masses away from ZANC, this repression helped to stiffen African resistance. When Kaunda was released in 1960, he was greeted as a hero and he took over the leadership of the newly formed party, the United National Independence Party (UNIP). By this time the British Government realised the need to effect constitutional changes in favour of African advancement and as for Federation they could already see the writing on the wall. Not only were pressures rising fast against it in the Northern territories, but in Southern Rhodesia where many Europeans had always opposed any form of Union with the North, there was growing white support for the Dominion Party which aimed at a fully independent Southern Rhodesia. Under pressure of events, the British

Government announced in 1961 a constitution for Northern Rhodesia which would make possible an African majority in the legislature, even though this was bound to lead before long to Northern Rhodesia seceding from the Federation.<sup>13</sup> In the election of October 1962 UNIP and ANC between them gained a majority of seats and their leaders took over a number of government departments. The federation was now doomed and it was finally broken up at the end of 1963. The 1964 elections, on a wider franchise, gave UNIP a decisive majority; Kaunda became Prime Minister of an independent Zambia.

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13. The 1961 Constitution led to elections in Northern Rhodesia, which, as shown below, gave a majority seats in the Legislative Council for the first time.

	<u>UNIP</u>	<u>U.F.P.</u>	<u>ANC</u>	<u>Total</u>
Europeans	-	18	1	14
Africans	12	2	4	18
Asians	1	-	-	1
Eurafricans	1	-	-	1
<b>State of Parties</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>34</b>

Source: F. Macpherson, Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia, (Lusaka, 1974), p. 394.

NYASALAND

The failure of the Chilimbwe rising of 1915 brought a cool withdrawal from the politics of direct military confrontation. The Nyasas gave their energies entirely to educational and economic betterment and political advancement at the local level. This programme was followed up to the early years of the 1940s. While native associations brought pressure to bear on the government, the new wave of independent churches sought instead to take the process of betterment into their own hands. By 1940, it was evident that the policies of betterment could not of themselves achieve significant political change, and that new techniques were required if political pressure was to be effective. This by no means is not to play low the role played by these policies; because while the native associations had pointed the way to the future through the success with which they had transcended tribal particularisms and the extent to which they looked towards the Centre, independent churches and to a lesser extent, the local councils, had stimulated considerable popular enthusiasm for local political reform and educational self-help. The work thus begun by associations culminated in 1944, in the formation of the Nyasaland African Congress, the first political organization in Central Africa to seek to work



on a territorial-wide basis. It gained its strength by affiliating to it all the associations already in existence and transformed them into its branches. In political content, Congress, in its early years did not present a radical alternative for its mass following. However, the one thing significant was that an organization which could be used by a mass political party had been created but that political party was still in the making.

It was not till the question of Federation broke on the scene that the catalyst was created which led to a wide-spread political activity in Central Africa. The birth-pangs of the Federation undoubtedly provided a major stimulus for action. In 1949 the Nyasas greeted the federation proposal with no less repugnance than they had previously shown on the amalgamation issue in the 1930s. The movement grew to strength in 1951 when the British Government accepted the desirability of the federal scheme and it climaxed in 1958 when the Federation was formally launched against the wishes of the majority. Federation helped to draw Nyasas together more solidly. Not only were the new leaders opposed to it on the ground that its implementation would destroy hopes of political advancement, many Chiefs

within the official hierarchy were also antagonistic, because to them it represented direct rule policies which would hit at their power bases. When the government issued a series of agricultural Ordinances, between 1946 and 1952, the Nyasas saw these as practical manifestations of the influences of the Federation. Some of the Congress leaders worked hard among the peasants to foment strong resistance for these agricultural Ordinances. The rural discontent thus created, provided a fertile ground for nationalist politics.

The character of Congress changed by 1955 with the growing influence of a group of young radicals headed by H. M. Chipembere and K. Chiume. These demanded self-government, universal suffrage and emphasised the need to get activists from towns as well as from rural areas. By 1957 Congress had developed the techniques and symbols of the mass political party; the slogan Kwacha (the dawn) was adopted among other things. Its young leaders realized that Congress lacked a charismatic and experienced leader and turned to Dr. Hastings Kamuzu Banda who, though he had spent over forty years away from home, had still managed to keep closely in touch with developments in Nyasaland over much of that period. In 1958 Banda arrived on the Nyasaland scene to take over the leadership of Congress, and initiated the final phase of direct

action.

Hatred on federation had changed the course of the Nyasaland Congress, as it had also in Northern Rhodesia, from an organization dealing ad-hoc with social grievances, to a nationalist political movement demanding the "political kingdom" before all others, as the only way to get out of Federation. For sometime now Congress had tried, through constitutional methods, but failed to throw off federation and non-violence was no longer an essential part of their policy. Dr. Banda put new heart into the Congress as well as some badly needed new organization and unchallenged leadership - one to which the masses responded with tremendous enthusiasm. Congress activities were stepped up; Nyasaland was heading for a showdown. When the whole country was up in civil disobedience and later to riots requiring the baton charges, the Nyasaland administrators took precautionary measures. Reinforcements of police from Northern and Southern Rhodesia, Tanganyika and units of the Federal Army were called in. By March 1959 a full State of Emergency was declared, under the pretext of a "murder Plot"<sup>14</sup> against

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14. See Harry Franklin, Unholy Wedlock (London, 1963), pp. 144-5, for a full account of the plot.

all Europeans. Dr. Banda and two hundred Congressmen were arrested just before dawn, in "Operation Sunrise" on March 8 and dispersed to various prisons. The British Government appointed the Devlin Commission which began its work in February 1960.<sup>15</sup> The Devlin Report brought a change in the British attitude to the Federation. They were no longer convinced of the Federation's humanizing multi-racial mission and in time began to see that its continued existence would have the reverse effect. The new British Colonial Secretary, Ian Macleod, ordered the release, in April 1960, of Dr. Banda, and invited him for talks in London. Dr. Banda led a delegation to London and a new constitution was agreed upon which implemented big changes.<sup>16</sup> When elections were held under the

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15. P. Kestley, The Politics of Federation (Penguin Books, 1968), pp. 441-6.

16. The unofficial members of the Legislative Council were increased to twenty-eight and for the first time all the members, whether African or non-African, were directly elected. A dual roll was adopted. Eight members of the Legislative Council would be elected by the upper roll voters with high qualifications similar to those already accepted in 1958 for the Federal Upper Roll (it required an income of £ 720 a year and the ability to fill up the application form or an income of £ 300 a year and four years secondary education), and the remaining twenty members would be elected on the lower roll (it required an income of £ 240 a year with no educational qualifications or an income of £ 120 a year and a completed primary education, for a person over thirty years old).

new constitution in August 1961, the Malawi Congress Party won the majority of seats and it was given four of the five ministerial posts in the Executive Council. In January 1963, Malawi attained self-government status and on July 6, 1964 the protectorate of Nyasaland became the independent state of Malawi.

Faced with these thought-provoking events in Central Africa, the British Government appointed the Lord Monckton Commission in 1960 to make recommendations for the Conference to review the constitution of the Federation to be held in London the same year. Considering the force of opposing opinions and the urgency of the issues at stake, the Commission achieved a remarkable degree of unanimity, its report being signed by all but two of its twenty-five members.<sup>17</sup> The last recommendation of the Commission advised that "a declaration of the intention of Her Majesty's Government to permit secession by any of the Territories, if so required after a stated time or at a very favourable effect, and might be decisive in securing a fair trial for the new association."<sup>18</sup> The Commission's report changed the course of the Federation's

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17. Wills, n.4, p. 344.

18. Ibid.; p. 345.

history. One by one, the Northern territories withdrew from the shaky federation, and the Federation was forever doomed. Imposed on the majority of the people of Central Africa, it lacked that most important prerequisite for stable and lasting political institutions: consent of the governed. Indeed whatever its economic merits, the federation failed because partnership failed.

## CHAPTER 4

### PARTNERSHIP IN PRACTICE

There was considerable fear in Britain that Central Africa would become the scene of a violent conflict between the two noticeable nationalisms at work on the continent: black nationalism as exemplified by the West African model and white nationalism on the Afrikaner pattern. It was felt, in some British circles that federation in Central Africa would help curb the excesses of both black and white nationalism.<sup>1</sup> They saw "partnership" between whites and blacks as a last chance to avoid a disastrous confrontation, and because the alternatives were so unpleasant, few of its proponents were disposed to look at the case too closely. No one bothered to explain how "partnership" could be imposed by a very small minority on the rest of the population who had clearly rejected it. Whatever merits there might have been to the arguments put forward in favour of federation the success of the experiment depended on the acceptance of its validity, neither of its protagonists was able to explain how this particular objective could be achieved by forcing federation down African throats.

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1. Cuthbert Alport, The Sudden Assignment (London, 1965), p. 20.

We propose to look briefly in four areas of the Federal structure how the doctrine of "partnership" was implemented in the few years of its existence; its government, education, civil service, army and the railways. This is by no means to imply that these were the only important areas of the Federal structure, but it is hoped that these will adequately illustrate the illusory doctrine of "partnership".

#### Partnership in Government

There were three paths open to the Central African Europeans who were faced with "growing African nationalism". The first was to suppress it utterly; the second was to surrender to it gracefully and the third was to suppress it while appearing to yield. They chose to follow the third path. The supporters of the Federation were convinced that to toe this line would give them all they wanted. They honestly believed that the Africans had no cognizable intellectual basis for political convictions. But, they were soon to realize that they were very wrong. African nationalism could not allow them to bring their plans to fruition as we have shown in Chapter Three.

At the beginning partnership was given a luring coating; there seemed to be signs of partnership in



practice. The first Federal Parliament had six African MPs - later increased to twelve - sitting alongside the white members. In early 1959 a junior black minister was appointed to the Government and Mr. Lawrence Vamba, a journalist was posted to the information staff of Rhodesia House in London. A small number of well-educated Africans (1,597) voted on the common roll with the Europeans and under the new constitutional amendments of 1957 - amendments of careful complexity - a special roll was introduced to allow larger numbers of Africans to have a limited vote.<sup>2</sup> A host of other pinpricks were removed, such as separate entrance to post offices, ban on multi-racial trade union and a ban on African wishing to buy lottery tickets and to bet on horses, and the whites claimed from the mountaintops that the door to black advancement was ajar, and not slammed as in South Africa.

What the whitemen failed to see was that the Africans knew very well that only a few scratches had been made in the paint of the wall but not a single brick had been removed. In July 1957, Federation was given a revised constitution which was largely favourable

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2. See table on page 74, Chapter 3 for the actual numbers of Africans who were given the right to vote.

to the whites. Article 9 of the 1958 Constitution was deleted and in its place provisions favouring white supremacy were placed, Article 9 provided some safeguards against government that would cause a deterioration in the welfare of the Africans. This was to be realized through the African Affairs Board, whose Chairman would be a minister appointed by the Governor.<sup>3</sup> But under pressure from Europeans in Rhodesia, plans for the Ministry for African interests were dropped, and an African Affairs Board was set up as a standing committee of the Legislative Assembly instead of an independent body. The real reason for the changes was revealed by the Federal Prime Minister, Sir Roy Welensky :

"The method of electing the four Africans who represent African interests in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland at present is very unsatisfactory. These members have a full vote just like any other member of Parliament, but they are elected by a small group of Africans. Members of other races have no say whatever in their election... I believe it is most important that we should have elected African members from all three territories, elected by members of all races and who belong to the ordinary political parties. Under the new proposals all the six additional African members will be elected in this way and I believe that this will be a great step forward".<sup>4</sup>

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3. T. David Williams, Malawi the Politics of Despair (London, 1978), p. 188.

4. T.M. French, Race and Nationalism (London, 1960), p. 175.

This is very plain that the goal of the Prime Minister, was to dilute the existing nationalist African representation in the legislature by the addition of native members elected by and therefore responsible to a preponderantly white electorate. The difference between the Africans elected by Europeans and the ones elected by the African electoral colleges was never more marked than in the franchise debates themselves. For example, when in 1957 the Federal Government forwarded a Bill to enlarge the membership of the Federal Assembly from thirty-five to fifty-nine, during the debates the two Africans from Southern Rhodesia co-operated with the other black MPs from the Northern territories. It was obvious that the votes of these two black MPs from southern Rhodesia were vital to the Federal Government who needed a two-third majority to pass the bill. Not surprisingly, the two MPs from Southern Rhodesia who had all along voiced opposition to the bill in the Committee stages, turned a vault face and voted for the bill, after having attended the Government's caucus meeting the previous day. This was only to demonstrate the unrepresentative nature of the African MPs elected by a predominantly European electorate.

Nowhere was the inequality of the partners more clearly expressed than in the distribution of political power in the Federation. One year before the Federation

met its doom there were about 8,500,000 people in the Federation. Of these only about 300,000 were white. The Africans outnumbered the whites by a ratio of 26:1. But of the 91,767 people on the federal voters' roll only 1,164 were Africans.<sup>5</sup> In other words, the white voters outnumbered the African voters by a ratio of 79:1. Higgins supported and defended such a distribution of political power. In May 1956, he said :

"We want to indicate to the Africans that provision is made for them to have a place in the sun, as things go along. But we have not the slightest intention of letting them control things until they have proved themselves, and perhaps not even then. That will depend on our grand children".<sup>6</sup>

#### Partnership in Education

The Europeans in Central Africa, like any where else in Africa, diligently taught that education was the indispensable prerequisite to economic progress and political privilege. Slowly, but surely, the African responded wholeheartedly. The cult of education which

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5. L. Kapungu, Rhodesia The Struggle for Freedom (New York, 1974), p. 38.

6. P. Keatley, The Politics of Partnership (London, 1978), p. 224.

had begun in Africa as a justification of white supremacy, soon became the established blackman's religion. In fact, in the course of time the whiteman came to regret why he allowed the Africans the educational privilege, "why should we spend our money to train natives to compete with us and replace us in our profession?" asked a European. Such became the dominant feeling among the proponents of "partnership".

An analysis of partnership in education requires both a comparison of the State of African and European education and of the rates of development experienced by each. The following tables show that African education did not remain static fiscally. Its gains can be revealed by a comparison of territorial estimates for recurrent expenditure voted two years before and after Federation.

Territory	1951 Recurrent Appropriation	1955 - 56
Southern Rhodesia	£ 754,710	£ 1,544,211
Northern Rhodesia	£ 458,019	£ 1,711,741
Nyasaland	£ 168,816	£ 829,965

In a period of less than five years, total recurrent expenditure thus rose from £ 1,876,545 to £ 8,585,927. By 1956, African education was receiving approximately £ 4,500,00 in capital and recurrent expenditure from the three territorial

governments. At the same time, European expenditures had also risen. During the period 1951-1955 while African recurrent estimates rose £ 2,209,882, those Europeans and other non-Africans rose £ 3,096,175 ;

Government	1951 Recurrent Appropriation	1955 - 56
Southern Rhodesia	£ 1,782,158	Federalized
Northern Rhodesia	£ 860,067	Federalized
Nyasaland	£ 14,402	Federalized
Federal	- -	£ 5,252,802

Source: T.M. Franck, *Race and Nationalism* (London, 1960), pp. 120, 121.

Though educational facilities were increased for all races disparity in the provisions was glaring. During 1955-56, 50,000 Europeans and 6,000 Asian and Coloured children attended federal government schools at a cost of £ 126 per pupil. During the same period 800,000 Africans attended government and government aided schools at a cost of £ 6 per pupil.<sup>7</sup>

In 1958, Federal expenditure on education was £ 6,200,000 exclusive of buildings for all three territories, with an estimated additional expenditure of

7. B. Pachai, *Malawi: The History of the Nation* (London, 1978), p. 264.

£ 1,624,110 for buildings - a total of £ 7,824,110. Southern Rhodesia with more Europeans than the other two, spent not less than £ 8,500,000 on education for its total white population of 219,000 as against £ 2,161,000 for an African population of 2,800,000.<sup>8</sup> Even if a part of this 8,500,000 is assumed to have been spent on the internal university college, the difference remains striking. In the same year, there were twenty-two secondary schools serving a quarter of a million Europeans and twenty serving 2-1/2 million Africans.

The African system of education offered a strictly limited opportunity for reaching the higher income levels. The most it gave to Africans was continued social and political inferiority at a slightly higher level of training. For instance, it provided Africans with technical training in building, carpentry, leather work or metal work, which never carried a high rate of remuneration, but not in motor engineering, aircraft maintenance, accountancy or commerce, though the Africans who started from the same background were performing all these functions successfully over the border in the Congo (Zaire) and far higher ones a little further afield in Tanganyika (Tanzania).<sup>9</sup>

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8. T.R.M. Creighton, Anatomy of Partnership (London, 1960), p. 166.

9. *Ibid.*, p. 167.

One of the glaring examples of the Central African "partnership" was that of one of the two Africans who had qualified as doctors in Southern Rhodesia. The young doctor was ordered to stop post-mortem work on European bodies by the Federal Secretary of Health, who explained that, "One does not want to ride roughshod over people's views".<sup>10</sup> After setting up a multi-racial University College of Rhodesia and Nyasaland, the Europeans deliberately played down African enrolment. After seven years in operation there were only 28 Africans out of a total of 168 students in 1960. In December 1958, the appointment of Dr. E. Chidzero, Minister of Economic Planning of Zimbabwe, as the first African member of the College faculty was hastily reversed when it was learned that he had a French Canadian wife. The atmosphere of multi-racial partnership in education was a very tenuous one, to say the least, reflecting the fragility of the superstructure that had been created despite thunderous opposition from the Africans.

#### Partnership in Civil Service

According to the Federal Constitution of 1958, the existing status of the three territorial Civil Services were

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10. Clyde Sanger, Central Africa Emergency (London, 1960), p. 65.



to remain intact and the federation had to create its own. It was clearly stated that the three Territorial and Federal Governments were free to pursue their varying philosophies of social, economic and political development. In addition, they too were to operate, separately, their civil services. There were important differences between the four civil services which we must briefly spell out here. The civil services of the northern territories, traditionally, drew their middle and senior public servants from the United Kingdom, with a few others from the Dominions and colonies. The responsibility of each official was to the imperial system as a whole and the Colonial Government, as well as to the local Territorial Administration.

The Southern Rhodesian and Federal Civil Services were of an entirely different order. The Southern Rhodesian organ fell under their Public Service Board and that of the Federation was governed by its Public Service Commission. Both were responsible to none other but their own governments. They were both locally based and recruited. Their employees were neither eligible for transfer to other parts of the Empire as were those in the Northern Territories, nor were they

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expected to leave Central Africa on retirement. The biggest distinction between the two colonial services in the Protectorates and the Federal and Southern Rhodesian services was to be found in their policies on African recruitment and advancement. The former did try to establish a reasonably progressive record in this field, while the latter did not. In the two Protectorates there were a substantial number of Africans under the civil service system and of these a goodly few had reached the middle and upper echelon posts.<sup>11</sup> In Southern Rhodesia the Public Service Act of the Colony traditionally barred all Africans from the Civil Service. Dr. Ross, the chairman of the Southern Rhodesian Public Service Board expressed in 1957 that Europeans in the colony would not tolerate being served by Africans. And he firmly believed that Africans as a race, do not have intelligence or integrity to assume any part in the administration of governmental affairs.

The Federal Public Service, unlike that of Southern Rhodesia, was created under a constitutional guarantee that all races shall receive equal treatment. "No person domiciled within the Federation who is a subject of Her Majesty or a person under Her Majesty's protection shall

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11. Franck, n.4, p. 168.

on grounds of race only be ineligible for employment in the Federal Public Service, and in appointing or recommending any person for such employment regard shall be had only to his competence, experience and suitability".<sup>12</sup> It is surprising to note that only 15 Africans were ever appointed on such provisions. All but a few of African women qualified as registered nurses were classified as "auxiliaries" by the Federal Health Department and paid at a far lower rate than their white equivalents. The few who were thus promoted "transferred to the European pay scale, after long years of service, but still had to start again at the bottom rung of the new scale. When Africans replaced Europeans as postal clerks, their pay was much below that of the Europeans for the same job.

Almost since its inception, the Federal Government directed concentrated fire on the colonial civil servants in the two Protectorates. They repeatedly charged that these servants owed no abiding loyalty to Central Africa and, therefore, were inclined towards unrealistic and sentimental policies towards Africans.<sup>13</sup> They were also accused of not "selling" federation to the Africans; and that they tolerated nationalistic excesses and took sides

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12. Ibid., p. 168.

13. Ibid., p. 169.

with the congresses in these territories. It was indeed a Central African type of partnership - of a horse and a rider.

### Partnership in the Army and Railways

The concept of "partnership" practiced in the army was a ludicrous one. The Federal Army was created by merging the Territorial armies of the three countries in 1958 after the creation of the Federation. It consisted of three components; the Regular Forces, the Territorial Force and the Reserve Force. The Regular Force was the operational branch of the Army, consisting exclusively of Africans with European officers and some non-commissioned officers both whites and blacks. The Territorial Force consisted of Europeans, Coloreds and Asians conscripted for 6 month service. It appears, from counts that the smallness of the European population in the Federation was the driving force which precluded the luxury of an all-white army as had been done in the Union of South Africa. All the same, the steps to train Africans was resorted to not without nerve shaking. Whatever status the African soldier had, throughout his military career, was treated as a member of an inferior race. In theory, as the constitution provided, the African soldier might aspire to any rank, but in practice, no African was ever commissioned. Europeans in the Federal armed forces lived, worked, ate and played under

conditions which were almost certainly among the best in the world, while equivalent African conditions were among the very worst.

The unique opportunities for furthering "partnership" abounded in the Rhodesian Railways. But here again the opportunities were used instead to further racial tension rather than reduce it. By March 1956, the Rhodesian Railways employed a European staff of 9,122 and an African staff of 21,776.<sup>14</sup> In theory these workers were to be treated on par, but in practice the reverse was the case. The total expenditure during 1956 on housing for Europeans was £ 348,641; that for Africans was £ 70,767 only. It would be observed that ten times as much per employee was spent on European as on African accommodation. This ratio held good for everything else, from company wages to recreational facilities. Job advancement for the African railroader was scandalously slow. During the period 1955-56, gaps in the supply of European drivers and firemen appeared which could no longer be closed by ordinary recruitment. The Federal Government thereupon authorised the importation, at public expense, of several hundred untrained Greeks, and Italians whose sole qualification for the jobs was the pale pigmentation

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14. Ibid., p. 156.

of their skins. The then Minister of Transport, Sir Roy Welensky, maintained that there could be no alternative if railroad services were to keep pace with the expanding economy. Yet there was an obvious alternative. Sufficient African employees already working on the railways had driving and firing experience<sup>15</sup> to have met the entire and foreseeable need of a growing economy. Such was the driving force of "partnership" and despite the growing shortage of personnel in the upper employment echelons, Africans at the end of 1959 still could not become drivers, guards, firemen or station masters. These and many other partial practices of the Federal Government were singularly unsuccessful in reassuring the Africans of the sincerity of the Federal Government in its profession of "partnership". As far as the experiment was carried out, the whites in the Federation were never in doubt that the "partnership" they were seeking was the one - as expressed by Sir Godfrey Huggins - of "a horse and a rider". As a matter of fact it was stressed even in official circles that partners are not necessarily equal. There is always a senior partner and a junior partner. The African was the junior partner, the horse, and the white man was the senior partner, the rider.

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15. Most African employees had the driving and firing experience from working the trains in the marshalling yards and relieving Europeans on the road.

## CHAPTER 5

### "THE WIND OF CHANGE"

Any discussion relating to British colonial policy for the years 1945 to 1964 (within which our period of study follow, 1958-68) must centre upon the question as to why Great Britain relinquished control of her overseas possessions during those years. Colonial policy was to pass through trusteeship and partnership to abdication. Even though her power in Asia had visibly eroded prior to World War II,<sup>1</sup> it seemed as if Britain might maintain her hegemony in colonial Africa indefinitely. Yet twenty years after that war the dissolution of the British empire was almost complete. Change had been inevitable, but it had come much more rapidly than expected. A number of factors influenced policy making.

One hallmark of the British colonial policy in Africa was the tradition of a steady devolution of political power aimed at the eventual self-government. But in practice the touchstone of the policy was that of gradualism. Progress and development was to be slow and steady; as Schneider noted :

"British policy has sometimes been one of reluctant concession; of yielding to necessity under pressure

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1. Peter Dallo "Britain's Decolonization Policy for Africa, 1945 to 1964; Nyasaland, A Case in point" in R. J. Macdonald (ed.) From Nyasaland to Malawi (Nairobi, 1975).

of circumstances. But it likes to try to insist upon certain conditions so essential before self-government is conceded. It must have financial resources and economic stability to pay its own way and attract capital from overseas. It must have trustworthy and well educated inhabitants, capable of assuming responsibilities of the government and ensuring that "self-government" does not become the exploitation of the many by a new native oligarchy. Finally where national or religious minorities exist, there must be some acceptable method of protecting and preventing their domination or extinction by majority professing to act in the name of democracy.<sup>2</sup>

In addition to such a tradition there were other pressures upon the policy makers. In the 1950s and the 1960s such groups as the clergy,<sup>3</sup> the press,<sup>4</sup> and African nationalists in London<sup>5</sup> became much more vociferous in the expression of their opinions concerning colonial questions. And as the public became more informed and more interested in colonial issues, its voice became more influential. But in the final analysis, those responsible for the formulation of policy were the major political parties in the United Kingdom.

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2. Fred. D. Schneider, "Britain's Legacy of Empire", South Atlantic Quarterly, 59 (1960), p.64.

3. Roy Welensky, Welensky's 4,000 Days (London, 1964), p. 84.

4. Sir Andrew Cohen, British Policy in Changing Africa (London, 1959), p.90.

5. According to one journalist, there were so many African groups by 1960 that "it is impossible to count the total number of African organizations in London; little groups overlap, merge, subdivide, and fade away". The Economist, 195 (April 2, 1960), p.177. A number of African leaders from Central Africa were in London at one time or another during the period under study, e.g. Dr. Banda (Nyasaland), Joshua Nkomo (Southern Rhodesia) and Kenneth Kaunda (Northern Rhodesia).



[Under the Labour Government, the men who held the post of Secretary of State for the colonies, notably, Arthur Creech-Jones and James Griffiths, seemed to regard the interests of the African as uppermost. Before the Labour Government fell from power following the October 1951 election the concepts of "partnership" and of federation, both of which favoured the white settlers, had crept into the thought and language of the policy makers. Finally when Labour was turned out of office, several steps had been taken to bring "closer association" in Central Africa. The concept of federation and of partnership had been accepted, but the guidelines were not clearly drawn.]

With the Conservatives in control of the government, the role of Africans was steadily reduced. The burden to free themselves was placed squarely upon Africans themselves. The British Government would have to be pushed. When in 1959, the Macmillan Government emerged with an increased majority, in parliament, most Africans in the Federation interpreted this victory as a mandate for continuance of the system they despised, while simultaneously many whites welcomed the victory.<sup>6</sup>

1960 held out great hopes, fears and expectations for Central Africa. At the beginning of the year, it

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6. Dalleo, n.l., p. 308.

was known that the British Government was to appoint a Royal Commission (the Monckton Commission) to investigate the workings of the Federation and that this would be followed at the end of the year by a Federal Constitutional Conference. It was confidently predicted, therefore, that the future political and constitutional course of the Federation and its three constituent territories would be settled in 1960. The year was indeed to be one of decision. But by the end of the year the mood in Central Africa was of doubt and uncertainty. This was particularly true in Southern Rhodesia where the White minority government was becoming increasingly conspicuous as the African political rights were accepted elsewhere in the Continent. By this time the road for predominantly black countries like Nigeria and Tanganyika seemed clear, but there was no clear or obvious road for Southern Rhodesia.

The British Government was caught in the dilemma of trying to reconcile its initial enthusiasm for the Federation with the growing realisation that opposition within and without Central Africa was damaging Britain's international image and that if the internal opposition continued to grow the only way to save the Federation

might be by the use of force.<sup>7</sup> It was very clear to the British Government that the post-war world was dominated by two Super Powers, the United States of America and the Soviet Union, who were both anti-colonial.

The British Government's change of colonial policy was made public by the Prime Minister, Mr. Harold Macmillan, when he visited Africa to listen and learn. Before going on to Central Africa, Mr. Macmillan visited Nigeria and in a speech in Lagos he declared that in no circumstances would Britain remove her protection over Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland until political machinery was available to express the will of the majority of the population. He continued to point out, that, "In a really independent Federation each of the parties concerned must express its own will in its own part ... we do not regard its will as expressed until it had reached real self-government".<sup>8</sup> While in Southern Rhodesia, the British Prime Minister gave a very important speech, in the most important part of it, he dealt with the African Nationalism. He stated that, immediately after the war, when similar nationalist movements had swept across Asia, Britain had accepted the reality of their strength and had not stood in their way. "Now", he continued, "we are faced with a

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7. Writing about the change of British attitude, James Barber says that, "the change of attitude was apparent, but the degree of change was unknown, and upon this imponderable hinged the decision whether the British Conservative Govt. would support the existing Federation despite all criticism, whether it would demand a greatly revised Federal Structure, or whether it would allow the Federation to collapse entirely". The British were prepared to await events, to bide time and to try to gain as large a degree of agreement as possible. "At the same time their policy was dictated by beliefs which were relevant not only to Central Africa but to the whole empire. These beliefs were that rapid and irresistible changes were taking place, that these changes had to be accepted..." See G. Barber, Rhodesia: The Road to Rebellion (London, 1967), pp.22-23.

8. P. Mason, Year of Decision (London, 1960), pp.233-4.

similar growth of national consciousness in Africa. This is one of the facts of the African situation today. We must take it into account in framing our policies ... My journey has already taken me to two countries in West Africa (Ghana and Nigeria) where we have followed the same policy as we did in Asia. It has been equally successful".<sup>9</sup> Turning to the Federation, Mr. Macmillan said that, economically the future of the Federation looked good, "but our economic life must be set in a political framework. Indeed it cannot thrive unless the political basis of society is sound. The great challenge to you here in the Federation is to establish a sound basis, a social and political structure which reflects the political realities of your country in these days of change". The trend of these remarks became even clearer in the light of what Macmillan said when he was in South Africa as to the choice Britain was likely to make - if she were forced to choose - between the special privileges of white minorities and the concept of a Commonwealth in which many races had a share. In his address to the South African Parliament, he said, "The wind of change is blowing through this continent, and, whether we like it or not, this growth of national consciousness is a political fact. We must all accept it as a fact, and our national policies

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9. Barber, n.7., p. 24.

must take account of it".<sup>10</sup> Macmillan ended his visit on a confusing note for Central Africa. According to him, there would be no change or advance in the Federal position unless certain conditions were met, such as allowing more Africans to participate in the federal Assembly. The Southern Rhodesia premier, Sir Edgar Whitehead counter-reacted by saying that if those conditions were met, he would have to ask the electorate to consider seceding. In the Northern territories Africans were demanding for the same (secession and self-determination). Sir Roy Welensky and the Federation were at the cross-roads. The next move was crucial for the life of the Federation. What followed were painful events, leading to the now inevitable dissolution of the Federation, to the ardent supporter of the Federation like Sir Roy Welensky. The Federation was descending a steepy road; it had reached a point of no return.

#### Break-up of the Federation

Britain laid down her share of the "White Men's burden" in as unheralded a fashion as when she took it up. The whole facade became more clearer in March 1960 with the visit of Mr. Ian Macleod, the Colonial Secretary, to Central Africa. If Harold Macmillan laid down the broad lines of British policy in Africa, it was left to

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10. Emrys, Hughes, Macmillan: Portrait of a Politician (London, 1962), p. 184.

Mr. Macleod to complete the details and to give substance to the policy. While Mr. Macmillan filled Central African Europeans with confusion, Macleod filled them with fury. On his visit Mr. Macleod was greeted in Central Africa with placards reading "MAU MAU MACLEOD" ... He was blamed for the "sell out" in Kenya.<sup>11</sup> Europeans disliked and distrusted him because he was prepared to meet and even to negotiate with African nationalist leaders. But, while whites condemned him, Macleod was made a trusted and respected politician among the African nationalists. Macleod met Banda in July and reached at a unanimous agreement on the constitutional feature of Nyasaland.<sup>12</sup> This acceptance of African political rights in Nyasaland was the one clear constitutional step taken in Central Africa during 1960, but, while it offered Nyasaland some certainty for the future, it only increased uncertainty for the Federation. After the conference, Dr. Banda confirmed that he was opposed to the Federation whether he was in or out of office. Orton Chirwa, one of Dr. Banda's close supporters, said "Federation is dead. It was already dead before the conference put the last nail

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11. In Kenya Britain had demonstrated that the claims of a small but important white minority were not to stand in the way of the majority African claims.

12. The franchise was greatly expanded to embrace an estimated 100,000 people on two Rolls; eight members of the legislative Assembly would be returned by voters on the upper qualifications Roll and twenty by the lower Roll. The twenty-eight elected members would be joined in the Legislative Council by only three ex-officio and two nominated members. Also, half the Executive Council would consist of elected members of the Legislature.

in the coffin".<sup>13</sup>

Events in Southern Rhodesia had by now reached the point of saturation. It was already apparent that most of the White Rhodesians were preferring to secede from the Federation than to consent to such a widening of the franchise in Nyasaland, and Northern Rhodesia as might lead to African control of the Federal Assembly. The Europeans of Southern Rhodesia began to realize that their interests might be better served by concentrating their strength in their own territory and abandon the wider aims of the Federation. As doubts about the Federation grew among the electorate so did they among the Government. Sir Edgar Whitehead and his colleagues proclaimed their support for the Federation, but laid down terms for the continuation of this support. Sir Edgar stated that his country would remain in the Federation provided that the remaining reserve powers which the British Government enjoyed in the Southern Rhodesian constitution were removed and that the Federal Government remained in "civilized hands",<sup>14</sup> and finally that the two northern territories did not fall under African nationalist rule. While the Southern Rhodesian

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13. THE TIMES, 6 August, 1960, quoted from Barber, n.4., p.26.

14. The term "civilized hands" was used synonymously with "white hands".

Government gave qualified support to the Federation, the opposition party, the Dominion Party, sounded a dissenting note. In the Southern Rhodesian Assembly Mr. William Harper, opposition leader said, that the Federation "will inevitably lead to a lowering of European standards in this country and it is my view that this year (1960) is not so much a year of independence, but is the year of the battle for the maintenance of standards". He believed that majority rule in Southern Rhodesia "would be a resuscitation of the dark ages".<sup>15</sup> Criticism did not come only from the opposition, even among Sir Roy Welensky's United Federal Party (U.F.P.) supporters, there were critics of the trend of events in the Federation. The chief critic was Mr. Ian Smith the Chief Government Whip in the Federal Assembly. In his speeches of 1960 Mr. Smith expressed his opinions not only on the Federation but on political developments elsewhere in Africa. He spoke of "the ghastly mess" which had been caused elsewhere in Africa by giving independence with majority rule to people "who have no more than a veneer of civilization". This he blamed on Britain which he said was "riddled with arrogance believing that it has a divine right to guide the affairs of this country", but it "must be precluded from doing so for all time henceforth".<sup>16</sup>

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15. Barber, n.13., p.33.

16. Ibid., pp.29,30.



Sir Roy Welensky and the Federation received strongest opposition from the Africans. Nationalist leaders championed the Opposition cause and in all three territories they had the support of the majority of Africans - as we have shown in Chapter Three. Their trend was clear and unequivocal. The anti-Federal appeal was clearest in the two northern territories. When the Monckton Commission set out to do its work, most Africans viewed it as pro-settler to begin with and nicknames for it ranged from the "Mock Commission" to the "Monkey Commission".<sup>17</sup> In spite of this opposition the Commissioners did interview a number of Africans, admittedly most of them "moderate". Significantly, even these "moderates" expressed themselves as opposed to Federation, thus persuading the Commission to describe opposition to Federation as "almost pathological ... widespread, sincere and of long standing".<sup>18</sup> The Commissioners stressed that the people's feelings were genuine. Ironically, numerous European settlers interviewed in Southern Rhodesia spoke out against Federation as well; complaining of what they considered as too rapid advancement for Africans, and expressing their fear of the spread of

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17. See H. Franklin, *Unholy Wedlock*, (London, 1968), p.155.

18. Report of the Advisory Commission on the Review of the Constitution of Rhodesia and Nyasaland, p. 88.

discontent from the northern territories into their own. With discontent visible on every side, the Commissioners concluded that the only way to hold the Federation together in its present form was by force. Alternatively, the Commissioners suggested :

a major operation to reduce the functions exercised by the central authority, the composition of the assembly, to widen the franchise, to improve the machinery of co-operation between the constituent states, and to introduce safeguards against racial discrimination and for the protection of minorities ... we ... endorse immediate political advances in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland. We also make proposals to root out all forms of racial discrimination, to put into practice true partnership, ... and to promote economic development...<sup>19</sup>

Events in Central Africa seemed to present a blique future for the Federation. Public opinion in Britain was growing more and more against the Federation. The Devlin Report on the emergency in Nyasaland had reinforced the wave of sympathy for African nationalist aspirations and had caused grave embarrassment to the British Conservative Government and now the Monckton Commission's report gave an insight of how events were in the Federation. "The expectation that the opposition would decline as the economic advantages of Federation became apparent have not been realised ... In brief, the opposition to Federation

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19. Ibid., p. 88.

which, as we have seen, was strong at the time that Federation was introduced had gathered further strength by African disappointment in the manner of its operation. Partnership, in their view, has been a shame".<sup>20</sup> Finally, the Commission took the step which aroused the greatest controversy. The majority report advised the British Government that the question of secession should be discussed at the 1960 Federal Review Conference and that the British Government should make clear its intention of permitting secession, subject to certain conditions.<sup>21</sup> Although the findings of the Royal Commission were received as useful by both the Government and the Opposition Party in Britain in Central Africa it was received with disgust. Nationalist leaders dismissed it because it did not recommend the immediate dissolution of the Federation. Europeans were more vehement especially on the question of secession. However, amidst these mixed feelings, the Federal Review Conference duly met in December, 1960. Some of the African delegates staged a walk-out and the

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20. Barber, n. 16, p. 87.

21. The majority report reads: "... we are convinced that no form of federal association, however reformed, can succeed so long as many of its people feel that they are being kept in it against their will and can break out only by force. We, therefore, recommend that under certain conditions there should be an opportunity to withdraw from the association". Ibid., p. 88.

Conference ended without any real discussion and certainly without any agreement. For the Federation, the expectations of 1960 were unfulfilled. No constitutional settlement had emerged. But it would be wrong to conclude that the developments of the year had been unimportant. The Monckton Commission did not lead directly to a settlement, but it had provided a channel for the expression of diverse opinion. This opinion, plus the Commission's recommendations made it clear for most people that the existing federal structure could not survive.

After the break up of this Conference, consideration of federal affairs was suspended. For two years the Federation existed in a constitutional twilight, vague and uncertain of its future. Concentration moved to the three individual territories, but this concentration was in itself a decision in relation to the Federation. As we have clearly shown in Chapter Three, both Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland had their constitutions altered to provide for a wide franchise which soon ushered in a new era of political governance in these territories. The new nations of Zambia and Malawi emerged. Events were not so pleasing in Southern Rhodesia. In the footsteps of Cecil Rhodes, the white minority entrenched themselves into power and set the country on the road to rebellion which was to last for about fifteen years before the new nation of Zimbabwe was born.

By December 1962 the British Government made it clear by agreeing to the secession of Nyasaland, that it would no longer support the continuation of the Federation. At this time the United Federal Party had been defeated in all the territories and the Federation could only have continued in a radically altered form. But the Government in Northern Rhodesia was committed to secession and independence for the country, and in Southern Rhodesia many Europeans could see little advantage in a Federation in which the representatives of the northern territories would be members of the nationalist parties in power there. In March, 1963, the British Government agreed that either of the other territories might secede.

The break-up of the Federation created problems of forbidding magnitude and complexity, for Central Africa had been welded into a constitutional and economic unit. All the same, the Victoria Falls Conference was called for in late June 1963, under the chairmanship of Mr. R. A. Butler, the British Minister for Central African Affairs. Working parties were created to make the detailed arrangements for the formal dissolution, which was set for 31st December.

In the final arrangements it was agreed that some important services, including the railways, Central African airways, and the Kariba Dam, would be controlled jointly by the territories. Also an understanding was reached whereby the bulk of trade in domestic goods between the territories was free of duty.<sup>22</sup> The most controversial decision concerned the division of the armed forces. At the conference the general agreement stated that when the Federal Government ceased, "control of the forces should revert to that which obtained before 1958 when Southern Rhodesia was responsible for her own forces and the United Kingdom Government had operational control of the forces in the Northern Territories".<sup>23</sup> It was also agreed that in most cases units would be transferred according to their present disposition. When the detailed negotiations were completed Southern Rhodesia had acquired one of the strongest defence forces in Africa. She had an air force of sixty aircraft, including Hunters, Canberras and Meteors, and an army of 8,400 men including two infantry brigades, each with one regular and two active

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22. John Hatch, Two African Statesmen (London, 1976), pp. 172-3.

23. Report of the Central African Conference (Cmd. 2098), para 48.

territorial battalions.<sup>24</sup> The last exercise of the Federation was taken on 31st December, 1968, when the federation was formally buried.

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24. J. Symonds, Southern Rhodesia: Background to Crisis (London, 1965), p. 55.

## CHAPTER 6

### CONCLUSION

In their bid to subjugate the African majority, the European settlers in Central Africa, notably those of Rhodesia, left no stone unturned in their search for means to justify and achieve their goal. When success failed to meet their efforts in their quest for unity with South Africa, the southern Rhodesian settlers turned to the north for the fulfilment of their cherished goals. Sir Godfrey Huggins, leader of the South Rhodesians, now joined forces with Sir Roy Welensky of Northern Rhodesia in reviving schemes for the union of their territories. They argued that although in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland the European populations were smaller than in Southern Rhodesia, it would be preferable to control these predominantly African lands, difficult though this might be, than have them as independent neighbours. They also wanted the economic benefits that were expected to result from a federation of the three territories, with the opportunities for further white settlement which this could create.

The British Government supported the federal scheme for wider reasons. Certainly the economic advantages counted for much and were used to try to persuade Africans to consent to the plan. It was stressed how



interdependent the three territories had become. The Rhodesians were dependent upon Nyasaland for labour, the two northern countries upon Southern Rhodesia for manufactured goods and some agricultural products and the copper mines upon Southern Rhodesian coal and transportation. An even closer economic union, it was argued, must result in improved living standards for all the inhabitants, European as well as African. Further, Britain was genuinely concerned to develop a large multi-racial community not only as a bastion of good sense and moderation against the harsh-racial policies of South Africa, but also she could magnanimously withdraw her responsibilities from Central Africa and yet maintain its monopoly over the region's trade and this, the British reasoned, might bail her out of her post-Second World War economic crisis. The attempt was also to swing Central Africa out of the South African orbit and bring her into the East African orbit, where she (Britain) had already established trade monopoly. Ironically, Britain established, in 1958, the Central African Federation, despite the fact that she was aware of the racialism of the Rhodesian settlers, and of the impicable opposition of the African majority. In spite of warnings of European intentions and African fears, the British Government hoped that the benefits of political

stability and economic expansion would soften the former and allay the latter.

The economic growth of the Federation was, as expected, rapid. New industries were developed in southern Rhodesia, towns increased in size, - notably Salisbury the Federal capital -, and one of the world's largest dams, at that time, was constructed at Kariba on the Zambesi river to provide cheap electricity for the copper mines in Northern Rhodesia and industries of Southern Rhodesia. Africans shared much less in this expansion than did Europeans. In 1961 the average annual income of wage-earning Africans was only £ 87, while that of the Europeans was £ 1,209. In fact, many Africans were not even wage-earners.<sup>1</sup> Economically Nyasaland had good reasons to be dissatisfied. For her, Federation meant nothing more than "a paltry subsidy - less than £ 4 million a year -" observed Thomas Frank in 1960.

Within ten years the two contending forces of settler intransigence and African nationalism destroyed the new state. The European politicians who controlled both the Federal and the Southern Rhodesian Parliaments were determined to maintain European supremacy. "Political

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1. R. Oliver and A. Atmore, Africa since 1800 (Cambridge, 1967), p. 268.

control", wrote Lord Malvern in 1956, "must remain in the hands of civilized people, which for the foreseeable future means the Europeans". Welensky likened the Federation not to a partnership of equals, but to the relationship existing between rider and horse, the African being the horse. And this is exactly what these men worked for in almost all the aspects of the Federation.

African resentment at Welensky's past performance and future threats came to a head early in 1959. Demonstrations, strikes and riots led to States of Emergency being proclaimed in Southern Rhodesia and Nyasaland, and to the detention without trial of many African nationalist politicians. The emergencies were the dividing line in the fortunes of the Federation. Harold Macmillan, the British Prime Minister, during his 1960 African tour, was critical of the lack of progress towards genuine partnership in the Federation. He ended his tour in Cape Town, where he delivered his famous "Wind of Change" speech before the white South African members of Parliament. Macmillan's speech surprised and annoyed White South Africans, but it did not produce any results in that country. It, however, marked a further stage in the decline of the Federation. The Monckton Commission sealed the whole issue, it considered that "partnership

was a sham ". Secession was strongly renounced by the Commissioners. Iain Macleod, the Colonial Secretary, who was responsible for the departure from the multi-racial idea in Kenya, decided that the Federation should not stand in the way of the northern territories attaining African majority rule.

The most striking thing about the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland is that its establishment revealed not localized conflicts of interests, which it was thought could be harmonized by surrendering by each territory of a limited part of its sovereignty, but horizontally juxtaposed racial interests. In all three territories Federation was supported by the majority of the Europeans and opposed by the majority of Africans. The question to ask is whether the Federation created under such circumstances was to serve any useful purpose on bringing the two races closer. One other similar point to note is that the establishment of the Federation in Central Africa was without popular support. It was undoubtedly imposed upon an unwilling six or seven million black people to satisfy the whims of just over a quarter of a million white settlers in Central Africa. We strongly subscribe to the notion that all white supporters of the Federation were motivated by the desire to retard the growth of African

nationalism and to benefit from the high price of Northern Rhodesian copper. No doubt many were persuaded by the economic argument, and other thought, genuinely, though in our opinion wrongly, that Federation might promote true partnership of the races.

The analysis of the constitution and the legislative powers of the Federation is evidence that the Federation in truth was designed to increase the unity and power of the whites against black nationalism, which it was sought to divide and rule. We have noted that in the distribution of legislative powers between the federal and territorial parliaments the general principle was that all matters affecting whites were federal and all matters affecting blacks were territorial. Now in this case, the net result was that the Europeans achieved virtual unity in law and in administration while the Africans remained divided territorially in law and administration. When the franchise qualifications were amended in 1957, Welensky appeared to give Africans a greater representation while in fact, decreasing the value of the African vote. Welensky made it clear that, at the 1960 Conference to revise the Federal Constitution he would demand independence from the last traces of British control.

The British and Europeans of Central Africa were

mainly concerned with relations between white people and Africans, and they declared that federation would promote good relations between them on the basis of partnership; in fact, however, the basis of true partnership - partnership of equals - never did exist, for most Europeans looked to Federation as a means of entrenching their supremacy in the region. Partnership to them was indeed a slogan of expediency concealing the will to dominate. In our thesis we have tried to show that, at best, the concept of "partnership" was a delusion; at worst, it was a menace to racial peace in that it created distrust between the races. When the policy of racial partnership was first declared by Britain, people in the United Kingdom as well as in Africa took the declaration to mean Britain's rejection of the South African doctrine of "Herrenvolk" (political supremacy of a white minority) and the reaffirmation of her faith in democratic government with adequate safeguards for white minorities who had made their homes in Central Africa. But European settler politicians in Central Africa (Partnership in Practice) left no one in doubt that to them partnership meant the rejection of African advancement and the supremacy of black majority. For long nobody attempted to make it clear what partnership really meant. The word, in our opinion, was very much abused by European

politicians who offered it as an elixir which would cure the ills of race-relations, but they failed to define even one benefit of it. It comes out very distinctly in our thesis that in their relations with the Europeans, the Africans saw nothing else but signs of mere practice of "apart-ness" of the races rather than the claimed for "partnership". Humiliation was in fact substituted for partnership - because the African was looked at as the horse, the junior partner in the Federation. Those who tried to stick the beleaguered Federation together, often claimed that it was the different stages of development of the races which accounted for the inequality between them, but, we content, that to deny the African his natural dignity, to cause him, by discriminatory laws, to feel humiliated and inferior, must have been a very strange education for those who were offered "partnership".

After the emergence of Malawi and Zambia as African States, the British Government appointed R. A. Butler as a special minister to preside over the dismantling of the Federation. After the last Victoria Falls Conference, the Rhodesian settlers, who from now on left the "Southern" out of the name of their country, retained an even stronger hold over the Africans living between the Limpopo and the Zambezi. After having created a federation as a means for Britain to shift her responsibility onto the white element already entrenched in Central Africa, in the name of

"partnership", the British Government again created an ugly situation for the Africans at the end of the Federation. When the detailed negotiations were completed at Victoria Falls Conference, Southern Rhodesia had acquired one of the strongest defence forces in Africa. This appropriation, for which there was no legal, moral, or political justification, provided the Southern Rhodesian white settlers with the power they were to employ in defying British authority, maintaining their dominance over their African population and constantly threatening the security of its independent neighbours.

In all earnestness, there was no compelling reason of any sort for the creation of any political association in Central Africa in 1958, but for the flimsy self-centered reasons of the British and those of their kin and kith - white settlers in the region. This federation existed primarily to bolster and maintain white supremacy. A federation founded for the purpose of subjugating the majority of its people, was doomed to fail from the very beginning. Hence came its demise in 1968!



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