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Black pastoralists, white farmers: The dynamics of land dispossession and labour recruitment in Southern Namibia 1915 - 1955

by

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ABSTRACT.

The dissertation examines the dynamics of rural economic struggle within the reserves and on white commercial farms. The supply of farm labour during the period 1915-1955 can be seen as an equation with a number of variables. Black pastoral communities in southern Namibia sought to retain control over their land and their labour. In contrast, the administration sought the division of land amongst a new wave of white immigrants and the recruitment of local black pastoralists as farm labourers.

The 'state apparatus' available to enforce legislation in the early years of South African rule was initially weak and local labour control depended largely on the relationship between individual farmers and their workforce. The mobility of stock was essential to black pastoralists and denser white settlement increased the constraining influence of cartographical reserve borders. The State described these as 'labour reserves' and effectively prevented the emergence of black farmers who might rival their white neighbours. Yet case studies of the Bondelswarts and Berseba reserves show how economic differentiation influenced the shape of political resistance.

The pattern of rapid white settlement in southern Namibia was initially inspired by a political, rather than economic agenda. The drought of 1929-1934 was a turning point in the economic history of the region. The subsequent transformation of the white farming community into the primary source of revenue within Namibia was strongly linked to the successful expansion of the karakul industry in southern Namibia. The alienation of land and the increase in the quantity and quality of white farmers stock was a crucial factor in the detrimental revision of the terms of employment of local workers on farms. The growing prosperity of white farmers in the region resulted in a change in the composition of the labour force with increased reliance upon migrant labour from northern Namibia.

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ABBREVIATIONS.

AGM	Annual General Meeting.
AR	Annual Report.
CNC	Chief Native Commissioner.
JP	Justice of the Peace.
LoN	League of Nations.
Mag.	Magistrate.
NA	Native Affairs.
NC	Native Commissioner.
O/C	Officer-in-Command
Odendaal Report	South Africa, Republic of. Report of the Commission of Enquiry into South West Africa Affairs, 1962-1963. Government Printer. Pretoria. RP. No 12/64.
PMC	Permanent Mandates Commission
SAP	South African Police.
Sec. Prot.	Secretary for the Protectorate.
Sec. SWA.	Secretary for South West Africa.
SWALU	Suidwes-Afrikaanse Landbou-Unie.
SWANLA	South West Africa Native Labour Association.
SWAP	South West Africa Police.
WO	Welfare Officer.

NOTE ON TERMINOLOGY.

People carry a wardrobe of identities, some received, some cherished. The suitability of particular terminology is therefore in reality dependent upon the historical context. I have generally referred to communities by their geographical location except where a distinct ethnic identity was of particular relevance. I have used English translations throughout for textual consistency ie. Witboois rather than /Hobesen. See chapter two for further discussion of identity. The term Namibia has been used in preference to South West Africa throughout the thesis, except where the name featured as part of a title.

Introduction.

If there are many gaps in the existing historiography of Africa, there are veritable chasms in that of Namibia. Comparative literature from neighbouring countries such as South Africa can provide some theoretical insights into the processes at work within Namibian history, but must not dictate the assumptions that are made about it. Namibian history has been shaped by a unique pattern of events which are in many ways distinct from those that formed neighbouring states. The priority for historians of Namibia must be to recover and organise the primary evidence that can be used to reconstruct Namibian history.

The inadequacy of material covering the period from the occupation of the country by South African troops in 1915 up to the launch of the armed struggle by SWAPO in 1966 is one of the most apparent chronological weaknesses of the historiography. Geographically history has also tended to focus on the more populous northern region, with some work on the central region, but very little about the very different experience of the southern region. The chronological and geographical focus of this dissertation will aim to shed light on these shadowy areas of Namibian history.

The chronological span of the dissertation commences with the defeat of the German colonial forces (and their replacement by the colonial forces of the Union of South Africa). The work focuses particularly on the subsequent twenty years during which the dispossession of the black pastoralists of southern Namibia was most evident. The exclusion of black pastoralists from the land and their difficulties in gaining access to credit and markets on an equitable basis stifled the emergence of black commercial farmers in southern Namibia.[1] The severe drought that struck the region in the late nineteen-twenties and early nineteen-thirties can be seen as a pivotal point in the work. The drought was followed by a second surge of territorial expansion by the white farming community and the adaption of the long-distance migrant contract labour system to act primarily in their interests. The thesis follows the story through to 1955 when the minimal length of contracts was increased by

50% (from 12 to 18 months) and the responsibilities of the 'Native Affairs' Department in the territory were transferred to the 'Bantu Affairs Department' in the Union.

Southern Namibia has a distinctive ecological identity (little work seems to have been done on similar districts of the Cape such as Namaqualand and Gordonia) that makes it particularly appropriate for a regional study. The regional character of southern Namibia is forged by the arid nature of the climate in the region and the consequent environmental constraints that have dictated a predominantly small stock pastoral economy. In southern Namibia there is virtually no 'Putting the Plough to the Ground' and therefore it provides an interesting comparison to existing studies on agriculture in South Africa, such as the collection of essays edited by Beinart, Delius and Trapido.[2]

The central themes that run through the history of southern Namibia in the period covered are the struggles that surrounded the issues of land and labour. Black pastoralists sought to revive their autonomy after the intense, but brief, 'moment' of German colonial rule. The aspirations of these rural communities were countered by the aims of the new South African administration. The state apparatus aimed to sponsor an initially rapid wave of white settlement, predominantly from the Union, and to stabilise the white farming community.

The rural struggles of the period thus centred on the attempts of the state to undermine black pastoralism and to channel the local black population into work on white farms. The historian's partiality for the dramatic has perhaps obscured the long term nature of the local population's reluctance to be conscripted as a rural proletariat. The reserves became increasingly incredible as the foci of pastoral ambition, but a number of strategies were developed which facilitated evasion of, or at least engagement with, the process of labour recruitment and control. Land and labour were the two determining variables in the equation of economic power and prosperity in the region.

The theoretical basis behind the empirically rich substance of the dissertation lies in the substantial literature that exists concerning the regulation and control of the labour supply in South Africa. The argument popularised by Wolpe and Legassick in their articles of 1974 was that South African society was constructed to suit the needs of a capitalist economy dominated by the white minority.3 The black population was to be cast in the role of the labour force to fuel white capitalist endeavour. The recent history of South Africa can thus be condensed into the view that "... capital secured the labour-power it required".4 The state apparatus was harnessed by white capitalists to secure the flow of cheap black labour to meet their needs. The aim was to be the transformation of dangerously independent peasants into an economically dependent proletariat. The territorial segregation applied nationally by the 1913 'Native Land Act' ensured the 'reservation' of areas of land in which the rights of 'peasants' to continue farming were to be guaranteed.

The essential paradox, however, was that these 'reserves' would be sufficient to allow the maintenance and reproduction of the workforce by providing sufficient produce for the subsistence of women and children. They would however, be insufficient to enable the residents to meet all the financial demands placed upon them through internally generated income. The application of taxes payable in money would force the majority of able-bodied men into the cash economy as waged migrant workers.

The limits placed on the quality and quantity of land provided to small black farmers would hamper any attempts to 'escape' the obligation to seek waged labour by workers able to develop their own commercially successful farming businesses. The productive capacity of the reserves could thus be calculated as an indirect subsidy to the employers of migrant workers enabling them to pay wages lower than would have otherwise been necessary to ensure (in crudely economic terms) the reproduction of their labour force.

The argument has been extremely influential on subsequent writers. SWAPO in their official history of Namibia describe a straightforward process of

proletarianisation:

> ... the peasants have been impoverished to force them to work for wages ... the resulting rural reserve army of labour has been used, together with totalitarian labour controls, to keep the wages of all black workers at starvation levels.[5]

However this form of analysis has also been substantially criticised for its "exaggerated functionalism".[6] The concept of a monolithic white capitalist structure with unitary labour requirements simplifies history to the extent of clouding rather than clarifying the nature of the capitalist state. On the farms of southern Namibia, for example, a need existed for semi-skilled, experienced sheep farmers as well as manual labourers and there were considerable differences in wage levels.

Urban industry, white farmers and large mining companies needed labour in differing numbers and with levels of stability and skill that varied over time. Change within one sector could influence the flow of labour to others. The differing labour requirements led to a degree of economic competition between the segments of the white capitalist community which was consequently reflected on the political agenda.[7] The dynamics of this competition in Namibia was most overtly visible in the struggle between the mining and agricultural sectors for influence and control in the organisations responsible for the recruitment and distribution of contract labourers.

The might of the state in crushing overt resistance and the general theoretical basis of the analysis has, perhaps, also cloaked the extent to which the black population were able to resist coercion at a local level. The theory therefore fails to explain or acknowledge regional and local differences in the response of black communities and fails to adequately integrate the often distinct responses of the varying economic and social strata within a community to external pressures.

The focus on the local character of the conflict between the forces of capital and labour raises questions about the nature of resistance. Social history has raised the possibility of "Resilience as Resistance".[8] The explanation was that the initial form of resistance was often neither violent nor organised, but was reflected in individual decisions and choices. The elevation of the fact that black workers, unsurprisingly, generally made economically rational decisions to the status of 'resistance' is debatable. The point is that where workers were able to find any flexibility within the system, they used this to negotiate or obtain the most advantageous deal possible and to 'escape' or 'avoid' the most damaging demands of their employer and of the state. The continuing attempts by individuals to find the optimum economic option available reflected persistence, rather than resistance.

The argument can be presented in more concrete terms by examining the actions of farm workers. The collection of oral testimonies presented by Keegan has, perhaps, provided the best insight into the daily struggle of black workers engaged in the rural South African economy.[9] If an agreement was weighed in the balance and found wanting, in comparison with the terms offered by a neighbouring farmer, a farm worker might be able to move. One South African farm worker described this as 'jumping the fence', a term which suggests that whilst workers recognised the restrictions that they faced they were also aware of the opportunities at times of labour shortage to play the labour market to obtain improvements in their pay and conditions. Individuals sought a position that allowed them the greatest control over the process of accumulation.

The pastoral context of southern Namibia created a different emphasis to that found in mixed or purely agricultural regions. Yet, like the 'peasants' that feature in Bundy's influential study, black pastoralists sought the best available opportunity to accumulate and preserve stock.[10] Werner's doctoral thesis on the 'Herero' reserves of Central Namibia has provided one of the few attempts to examine this dynamic in a pastoral Namibian context.[11] Werner's use of the term 'self-peasantisation' to explain the process is problematic in its use of theoretical terms, however the thesis is one of the few works that highlight the degree of internal

differentiation within the reserves of the 'Police Zone'. Werner describes the arena of struggle as the efforts of mobile black pastoralists to restore and preserve as far as possible their social and economic independence and resist conscription as an immobilised proletariat (the replacement of stock by wages). Yet just as there were conflicts of interest between the competing sectors of white capital, there was also no monolithic black response. The recognition of economic differentiation within the black community facilitates explanations of the differing political responses to their experiences.

The cracks of diversity that are lost beneath the wall paper of macro-economic theory are important. The local conflicts between economically differentiated groups were (and are) central to the understanding of particular historical events, political phenomena and regional differences in response. Beinart and Delius argue that:

> ... the view from above neglected the question of the extent to which agriculture should be analysed in terms of a larger number of regional political economies each distinguished by marked differences in ecology, class structure, ethnic composition, access to markets and linkages to other forms of production.[12]

The challenge is to unravel the regional political and economic pattern that was formed in southern Namibia by the different strands reflecting the aspirations and power of various interest groups. One of the few attempts to apply this approach in the Namibian context can be found is a thought provoking, but frustratingly brief paper by Pearson on the Rehoboth Rising of 1925.[13]

The shape of the Namibian economy was distinctly different from that of South Africa with the contribution of the commercial farming sector being far more significant to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP). In South Africa by the mid-1940s manufacturing industry had overtaken mining as the largest contributor to the GDP.[14] In Namibia in the mid-1940s the contribution made by the commercial

farming sector was still more than triple that of the manufacturing and mining sectors combined![15] The economic significance of the commercial farming sector and especially the karakul sheep farmers of southern Namibia during the 1940s is central to understanding the differences between the operation and application of the migrant labour system of Namibia and that of South Africa.

The reserves of the region were established with the direct aim of stabilising the rural workforce required by local white farmers. The primary destination for labourers leaving the reserves of southern Namibia was to be neighbouring farms, rather than distant mines. The failure of the reserve network of southern Namibia to 'deliver' the labour supply to the local white farming community provides an ideal case study of the operation and limitations of the state system of labour regulation and control. Whilst the alienation of land by white settlers made the maintenance of the black pastoral economy increasingly unviable, the state had persistent problems in directing the flow of labour from the southern reserves to the white farms which were experiencing particular difficulties obtaining sufficient labour.

The establishment and operation of a system of labour recruitment in Northern Namibia has been one area of Namibian history that has aroused considerable academic interest and it has been the subject of stimulating work by Gordon, Clarence-Smith and Moorsom.[16] The work has tended to focus on the source areas for this labour and the role that it played within the mining economy. Long-distance migrant labour, in the Namibian context, also played a major role on white commercial farms once the supply of local black labour proved inadequate. The material in this thesis will help to highlight the importance of the agricultural sector as a labour destination.

The thesis will provide a detailed study of a region during a period of considerable change. Change should be understood in both chronological and sychronical terms. The process which might be dubbed the 'proletarianisation of the pastoralist' can be charted in chronological terms that reflect the constraints placed upon the black

pastoral economy and the struggle of local workers to retain the maximum degree of control over their labour. The reason that the impact of economic change on local communities was not uniform must be understood in spatial terms. Attention will, therefore, also be given to local differences between the resources available to different communities and the vertical and horizontal differentiation within them.

STRUCTURE.

The dissertation has been divided into six chapters. The first chapter provides an outline of the legislative framework created by the South African administration in Namibia and the German foundations upon which it was constructed. The chapter will also look at the apparatus that was available to implement and enforce legislation and describe the patchwork of reserves that emerged over the period covered by the dissertation.

The second chapter concentrates on the economic experience of the inhabitants of southern Namibia. The importance of stock mobility will be stressed and the manner in which closer white settlement increased the constraining influence of cartographical reserve borders. The chapter will consider the impact of various factors such as the introduction of grazing fees and repercussions of drought on the local economy within the reserves. The chapter will also explain the emergence of increasing differentiation amongst stock-holders within the reserves from 1935.

Chapter three will consider the political consequences of some of the shifts in economic patterns upon the inhabitants of the reserves in southern Namibia. The changing motivation for 'resistance' and the structural roots of internal political disagreements will be considered. Two case studies of particular disputes (in the Bondelswarts and Berseba reserves) will also be examined to help clarify the role of different economic groups within a community in the context of opposition to the administration.

The second half of the dissertation will lead the reader beyond the reserves and onto the rural farms in the districts that surrounded them. Chapter four will describe the pattern of white settlement in southern Namibia and place this within the context of state incentives and subsidies provided for white settlers. The chapter will argue that the early programme of settlement sought to address a political, rather than economic agenda. The transformation of the white farming community into the primary source of revenue within Namibia will be explained and linked to the successful expansion of the karakul industry in southern Namibia. The mounting alienation of land and increase in the quantity and quality of white farmers' stock was to be a crucial factor in the detrimental revision of the terms of employment of local farm workers.

The role of locally recruited farm workers on white farms will be considered in chapter five. It will be argued that the bargaining power of these workers was comparatively strong in the early years of South African rule due to the weakness of the mechanisms of control, the labour shortage, and the poverty of the white stockowners entering the territory. The changes in pay and conditions provided to local workers over time will be explained. The most important variable considered will be the decreasing tolerance for workers' own stock on white farms and the crucial role that this played in the dispossession of the local population.

The final chapter will consider the long distance migrant labour system operated by SWANLA. It will demonstrate the growing importance of this organisation in meeting the needs of white farmers. The chapter will consider the type of workers employed in this manner and the role that they played on the farms. The poor pay and conditions available for farm labourers led long distance migrant workers to avoid recruitment as farm labourers or use it as a means of gaining access to more lucrative employment. The chapter will show the way in which the system was reformed to gain greater control over the supply of labour to the farming community.

SOURCES.

The State Archives in Namibia contains a rich and well organised collection of official correspondence and documentation that provided the core material used for this dissertation. The independence of the Republic of Namibia on 21st March, 1990 ensured that previous problems that some researchers had in gaining access to files have been removed. Annual Reports by the Administrator of the Territory provided a useful overview of the period, but were supplemented by the reading of district reports compiled annually by district magistrates and 'native affairs' officials (when in post). Reserves were sometimes provided with superintendents or welfare officers who also provided regular monthly reports on the economic and political affairs within individual reserves. Individual police posts also sent regular reports to the officer commanding their division (the whole southern region fell within the Keetmanshoop Division).

The documentary material available in the Archives is voluminous, but has to be handled with care. The predominant voices in the material are those of white officials, the voices of black women farm workers or poor white settlers are faint. The transient nature of some posts and limited efficiency of the administration meant that one had to be wary of official estimates and assumptions masquerading as facts.

A number of paths were taken in search of the missing voices in the history. The files of court cases heard by district magistrates provided one source of black opinions, whilst the minutes of reserve board and reserve meetings were another. Yet the views expressed in evidence such as this were highly structured by the context and the audience to which speeches were being made. A string of convictions for stock theft offenses, for instance, meant that the early lengthy statements of the accused were reduced to uniform confessions of guilt or silence.

I was able to conduct a number of oral interviews with former farm workers and reserve residents which provided a useful insight into their perceptions. The correspondence of farmers was more prolific and their concerns were at times raised

by local farmers' associations. The recorded oral testimony given to specific commissions such as the Land Settlement Commission of 1934 was another useful source. The search for these diverse buried voices was time consuming, but necessary to shape and add flesh to the skeleton provided by official accounts.

NOTES - INTRODUCTION

1. For the purposes of this thesis the terms 'pastoralist' and 'farmer' are used to distinguish two different relationships with livestock. A 'pastoralist' is taken to mean someone who keeps animals for subsistence and the term farmer to describe those who were able to live from the income derived from their livestock.

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CHAPTER ONE: CREATING LABOUR RESERVES, THE LEGISLATION OF CONFINEMENT.

INTRODUCTION

White settlers in many parts of the world have used the principle of 'reserves' to justify their appropriation of vast areas of land from the indigenous black population. Demarcated areas, it was claimed were reserved for the use of the black occupants - who would thus have their land protected from unscrupulous traders and some of their own acquisitive leaders. The colonial discourse stressed the positive advantages to a black population of colonial land policy. The establishment of reserves in Namibia, however, was not simply an altruistic measure. The argument for the establishment of reserves in Namibia rested heavily on the needs of the local labour market.

The evolving debate over the function of the reserves in the context of the broader social and economic aims of the administration provides the focus for the first section of this chapter. The debate demonstrates a clear shift in emphasis over time. The initial pattern of reserves inherited from the German colonial regime was one that reflected the legacy of the anti-colonial war of 1904-1907. The military administration that initially managed the territory after the German defeat stressed the importance of reserves as a means of controlling the internal movement of the black labour force and providing areas in which black stockowners could be concentrated. The difficulty was to obtain a sufficient balance between the measures necessary to encourage black people to move into a reserve (rather than an urban area) and the economic pressures required to push them out of the reserve to work in sectors of the white controlled economy where there was a labour shortage.

The function of reserves within the apparatus of control over the labour force was one that became increasingly clear over the early decades of the South African occupation. The reserves became destinations to which 'surplus people' might be

assigned. The reserves became reservoirs. Reservoirs which were to contain squatters expelled from the farms of white settlers, black stockowners who were squeezed off Crown Land in order to allow it to be sold to white settlers and those who were expelled from urban areas following the tightening up of legislation in 1932.

The first half of the chapter will describe the major relevant legislation, outline the administrative structure set up to monitor the reserves and describe the geographical expansion of the reserve network and the local legislative differences between the reserves of southern Namibia. The key pieces of legislation which were used to 'capture' the black workforce were those that restricted movement, imposed financial obligations, and enforced contracts of employment. The legislation covering the reserves was thus a component of a broader administrative policy to manage the supply of black labour to the key white controlled sectors of the economy.

The qualification that must be made is that the machinery available to enforce the legal apparatus of control and direction was initially inadequate and the scope for evasion considerable. In the second half of the chapter the administrative structures used to supervise the black population will be described and the weaknesses of these structures, both in quantitative and qualitative terms, will be highlighted. The implication is that the management of the reserves was in fact dependent on the co-operation of local community leaders. The demands placed upon the appointed reserve leaders can be drawn from official notices that describe their duties and which clearly define them as agents of the administration, although many seemed to perform their duties with reluctance.

The diversity in the scale and natural resources of the reserves was considerable, a fact that had important repercussions on the pastoral viability of each. Southern Namibia was also distinguished by the existence of two reserves whose inhabitants had greater rights than in any other reserves. The communities had obtained agreements with the previous German regime and claimed exemption from demands

placed on other reserves. The Berseba and Bondels reserves were able to avoid the payment of grazing fees for over two decades by claiming special rights negotiated with the German colonial regime and recognised by its successor. The differences were of more than parochial interest. The local factors which mitigated or exacerbated the impact of particular legislative measures were an important variable that should contribute to any explanation of chronological and socio-political differences between the reactions of various communities.

THE RESERVE AND LABOUR POLICY OF THE GERMAN COLONIAL REGIME.

A brief summary of the legislation introduced by the German colonial regime is necessary for two reasons. Firstly, the legislative framework established by the Germans created the land and labour policy that was inherited by the new administration. Secondly, the German regime's efforts to enforce legislation revealed difficulties of labour control and assumptions that continued under South African rule. The relatively recent occurrence of large scale primary resistance, for example, fuelled a reluctance to countenance homogeneous large scale reserves which might facilitate the regeneration of resistance.

Drechsler argues that the decision of the German colonial authorities to establish reserves in Namibia was a response to pressure from the Rhenish Missionary Society.[1] The state, he claims, preferred to establish reserves under its control rather than have the missionaries gaining influence over more independent communities. Reserves were accordingly established in the so-called 'Police Zone'. 'Imperial Decree of 10 April, 1898 Pertaining to the Establishment of Reserves for Natives in the Protectorate of South West Africa' resulted in the creation of one reserve in central Namibia and one in southern Namibia (the latter being provided for the Witbooi community). The majority of the black population of Namibia, it should be noted, remained outside the Zone (in Northern Namibia) beyond the reach of effective German control. The introduction of the reserves within the Police Zone was intended to deflect criticism of the rapid alienation of land by white

settlers and concessionary companies. Drechsler points out that the resulting reserves were limited in size and that the Decree excluded from the reserves all farms that had been purchased by settlers or any '... that settlers might be interested in buying'.[2] The reserves were in no way to interfere with German plans to develop Namibia as a white settler colony based on the development of white ranching.

The outbreak of prolonged armed resistance to German colonial rule from 1904 to 1907 led the Germans to drastically revise their policy regarding reserves. 'Imperial Decree of 26 December 1905 Pertaining to the Sequestration of Property of Natives in the Protectorate of South West Africa' allowed the authorities to seize the land previously reserved as 'Hereroland' and to redefine it as Crown Land, the property of the state. A similar decree enacted on 8 May, 1907 converted the other reserve 'Namaland' into Crown Land. Over half a century was to pass before these titles would be resurrected as a means of dividing a black proletariat, rather than unifying scattered pastoralists. The removal of black rights to land was a consequence of the German military victory; however it is clearly also served the broader long-term aims of German policy within the colony.

A senior official in the German Colonial Office, Dr Paul Rohrbach, the Commissioner for Settlement gave a precise summary of Germany's plans for the territory. Rohrbach wrote, in 1904, that:

> The decision to colonise South-West Africa could after all mean nothing else but this, namely, that the native tribes would have to give up their lands on which they had previously grazed their stock in order that the white man might have the land for the grazing of his stock.[3]

The reserves as a form of 'national property' were seen as presenting a potentially dangerous base for political organisation within the colony. The economic autonomy that might be possible for black pastoralists in the reserves was also seen as a hinderance to the primary function of making them 'serviceable' to the 'white

races'.

The confiscation of the reserves established by the Imperial Decree of 1898 was part of the Germans security agenda. The few communities that were allowed to retain their land were those who remained loyal to the regime during the 1904-1907 war. The priority was to destroy any form of political organisation or common identity which might form the basis for the organisation of renewed opposition to the German regime.

The Germans planned the fragmentation of communities and the forced dispersal of the black population to serve as a labour force for white employers. Tecklenburg, the Deputy Governor of South West Africa proposed, in 1905, that:

> ... any form of tribal organization would be eliminated and the treaties concluded with the former tribes annulled. The natives would be settled on individual werfs in proximity to the places of residence of the whites. Those living on such werfs will serve as labourers to individual farmers ... Werfs in outlying areas not subject to police control will not be tolerated. They would only provide a nucleus keeping alive memories of the tribal system and land ownership.[4]

The destruction of the reserves was aimed at removing the possibility of any form of independent black political or economic organisation.

The dispersal of the communities of central and southern Namibia was accompanied by the proclamation of three directives on the 18th August, 1907 that contained a number of repressive measures designed to prevent the reconstruction of autonomous black communities. The directives put a ban on black ownership of land and cattle, restrictions on small stock and introduced a rigorous pass law.

The pass law was designed to help the German security forces effectively monitor the distribution and movement of the black labour force. The law stipulated that all

black residents were to carry a metal badge and a 'dienstbuch' (service book) providing the details of their contract. The only exceptions to this provision were children under the age of seven. The apparatus of rural labour control relied upon the incorporation of white farmers as functionaries with considerable legal powers. Black workers were told that:

> They must always carry this badge and have to produce the same to any Polife-official (sic) as well as to any European demanding the producing of same (my emphasis).[5]

The law did much to equate the position of whites with that of the police and, in rural areas, would have given farmers the powers to intercept and question black workers leaving neighbouring farms. The introduction of the new laws complemented a scheme encouraging discharged German soldiers to settle on farms in rural areas. The post-war settlers were clearly seen to have a security role in maintaining control over rural areas.

The efficiency of the system in managing the black labour force has been questioned by both Bley and Drechsler. Bley claims that the existence of a competitive labour market encouraged both employers and employees to evade the regulations and controls on the movement of labour.[6] The shortage of black labour that resulted from the rapid expansion in the number of white farms and the massive number of black deaths resulting from the 1904-1907 war meant that they were able to find new employers and concentrate in particular districts, at the expense of farmers in other more unpopular ones.

The draconian laws may have been tempered by a degree of successful evasion, yet the judicial system served to reinforce the authority of employers over their workers. An analysis of the cases bought before the German courts of the six administrative districts covering southern Namibia over a fifteen month period (1st January, 1913 to 31st March, 1914) indicates the extent to which the criminal law was used as a substitute for industrial relations to punish black workers.[7] Of the

858 offences committed and tried in the region during the period covered, 336 (39 percent) involved cases bought against black workers who were charged with the crimes of 'Insolence', 'Disobedience', 'Negligence', 'Laziness' or 'Refusal to Work'. The ability of patrolling police officers and even employers to dispense instant justice at the workplace for such 'crimes' suggest that the number recorded and punished before a court echo a far greater number that went unrecorded. The cases reflect the brutality of the system, but, also suggests the refusal of conscripted black labour to work willingly.

Bley suggests that the Germans were considering the reintroduction of scattered reserves at the time of the Union invasion, in an attempt to geographically stabilise the shifting workforce. The German Secretary of State, Dernburg, argued that the policy was failing to tie black workers to white farms and might have even more disastrous long-term consequences. Dernburg felt that it was failing to provide the necessary conditions for the expansion of the black labour force at a sufficient pace to meet the needs of the influx of white settlers. Dernburg recognised that:

> We therefore are forced to improve living conditions for the natives, in order to preserve them as a labour force both for present needs and as a healthy new generation in the future.[8]

The motivation for new reserves would be a desire to stabilise, and ensure the reproduction of, the black labour force. World War One intervened before these plans had produced any practical results.

THE MILITARY ADMINISTRATION, 1915-1920

The Union operations against the German forces in Namibia led to considerable disruption. The absence of male white farmers on active service, for example, provided opportunities for many farm workers to escape. The impact of the brief military operations was particularly significant in southern Namibia. The first

report on the administration of the territory noted that:

> ... with the approach of the Union Forces from the South the German troops cleared the whole of the Southern area as far as Keetmanshoop of all native inhabitants, and took them North as far as Grootfontein, Otavi, etc.[9]

The additional disruption to the farming economy created by this dispersal of the black labour force and resulting confusion made it inevitable that the new military administration would retain legislation designed to enforce controls over black mobility and conscript black labourers to work for white employers.

Within weeks of accepting the German surrender in the north of the country, E.H.L. Gorges, the first Administrator of the territory, circulated a Memorandum detailing the labour policy for the territory:

> Every able bodied Native [is] to be self-supporting and in employment somewhere, or else be treated as a vagrant. It is undesirable to force natives to any particular employer, but <u>provided they are given their choice compulsory service should be insisted on</u>. Any Natives unable to obtain employment should be referred to the Office where labour requisitions from Government units are dealt with [My emphasis].[10]

The significance of the Memorandum is the extent to which it confirmed the assumptions of the previous German colonial regime that the black population were to be forced to play a particular, subservient, role in the economy. The assumption would not be shared by black stockowners who falsely equated the German defeat with liberation from their previous economic bondage.

The motivation for the insistence on the incorporation of the black population into the economy as a labour force remained similar to that of the Germans. Economically autonomous black communities were perceived as idle and even a potential threat, being beyond the control of the frail administrative structures. The

solution was to deal with the black residents of the territory in martial style. Gorge's Memorandum warned officers that:

> ... there is always a tendency on the part of idle Natives to concentrate in towns, locations, unoccupied farms or uncontrolled cattle posts, and these places should be raided periodically.[11]

The priority was to regain control over the local black labour force, thus land inhabited by black pastoralists was deemed unoccupied and uncontrolled.

The policies implemented by the Union military administration with regards the black population of the newly conquered territory were predictably influenced by those prevalent within South Africa at that time. The new Administrator's first Annual Report acknowledged that 'native policy' had been based on that of the Transvaal, rather than the Cape.[12]

The reality however was that the military administration made few changes to the existing German legislation:

> Subject to a few necessary alterations in the interests of servants, the German laws relating to natives are being applied so far as circumstances permit. On paper these are not unfavourable to the native.[13]

The new administration did make two significant changes regarding the pass law and corporal punishment.

The motives for the selective reforms came both externally and internally. The primary reason for the amendment of the laws relating to corporal punishment was an external one. The occupation of the territory by Union troops did not mean that the post-war fate of Namibia was clear. It remained conceivable that the territory could be returned to Germany as part of a negotiated peace settlement.

The Union were therefore anxious to demonstrate the faults of German colonial rule and stress the liberal nature of their own policies. The Administrator explained the position plainly at a conference in 1917 attended by all the magistrates and senior police officers in the territory:

> We hope to keep the country which is a very valuable asset for the Union, and all our plans have that object in view ... We must not do anything during our present tenure to prejudice our position.[14]

The issue which the authorities seized upon to demonstrate the unsuitableness of Germany as a colonial power was corporal punishment. An official Circular of 28th October, 1915 quoted from Paragraph 111 of a German Imperial Decree dated 22nd April, 1896. The Decree prescribed corporal punishment for offences ranging from idleness and insubordination to desertion, but the main criticism was the fact that it:

> ... contemplates the summary informal infliction of punishment, without any regular form of trial.[15]

In crude terms the law had given police patrols the authority to whip workers whom employers complained about. The new military governor demanded that all cases should be dealt with according to formal criminal procedure, before magistrates.

The evidence of cases of assault and maltreatment of black workers were wrapped up in the notorious 'Blue Book' published in 1918 which catalogued a series of violent incidents from the period of German rule.[16] The corollary of the German treatment of black workers was alleged to be seen in the policies of the new administration. In his preface to the Blue Book, Gorges claimed that:

> ... our officials afford protection to all and assist every labourer to secure fair treatment and a fair wage.[17]

The assertion was that labour contracts would be mutually acceptable and no longer dependent upon the use of force and fear to retain labour. An explicit contrast was made between the new approach and the conditions prevalent under German rule, when:

> ... natives were compelled to work for any master selected for them by the Police.[18]

The maintenance of an adequate black labour force on white farms had been dependent on the rule of fear:

> Theoretically, of course, they could terminate their contracts by giving notice, but in practice they dared not do so.[19]

The proposed curbs on physical compulsion were however negated by the retention of laws attempting to control the mobility of the black labour force.

Changes were made to the laws governing the freedom of movement of the black population of the territory, but these reforms were mainly cosmetic or designed to actually increase the efficiency of the state Apparatus. The system used to register the work force had been changed by 1916:

> The registration of natives and the wearing of brass badges round the neck or on the wrist have been abolished, and a Pass Law substituted [my emphasis].[20]

The new Pass Law, based on South African legislation retained the key tenets of the German law:

> The two main principles of the German Law - that every native must carry a means of identification and be in employment unless he has visible means of support - remain in force.[21]

The new regulations did have two innovatory clauses that extended the number of people who were given exemptions. The Administrator pointed out that:

> ...the law is applied only to males above the age of fourteen years, and to females above that age resident in urban areas. Females living outside towns are not required to carry passes.[22]

Boys between the ages of seven and fourteen were no longer required to carry identity documents, but more significantly the new laws gave rural black women a freedom of movement that was denied to men. The prospect existed that this new freedom might prompt an influx of women into urban areas in search of better opportunities.

The new pass system created three distinctive forms of pass. The most common were 'Passes for Employed Natives' which operated as a contract of employment between a black worker and his white employer. The second type were 'Passes for unemployed persons to seek for work', issued for a strictly limited period of time by the police to 'unemployed' black workers. Whilst the German police had been able to conscript workers on behalf of particular farmers or other white employers, under the military administration this authority rested in the district magistrate. However the end result appears to have been the same.

Failure to accept employment during the period granted on the temporary pass would be indoor as a worker being 'wilfully dilatory' in finding employment. Action could then be taken to force a labourer into waged employment as:

> ... an employer can be indicated and if he refuses to engage himself he can be prosecuted under the Vagrancy Laws. Before sentencing natives under the Vagrancy Laws, Magistrates are required to give the offender an opportunity of taking employment in preference to undergoing imprisonment.[23]

The strong element of compulsion in the legislation was blunted by two factors.

The first was the continuing labour shortage, particularly in the most disrupted regions of southern Namibia. If workers were still compelled to work they were able to exercise a greater degree of choice over where they worked. Workers used their increased mobility to move towards more familiar or attractive areas. The consequence was that some regions faced a worse labour shortage than others. The second mitigating feature was the introduction of a third form of pass, one that granted a 'Certificate of Exemption from Labour'. Exemption Certificates were granted to the old and disabled, but also to those owning at least ten large or fifty small stock[24]. The introduction of these Certificates and relaxation of the restrictions on movement and choice of employment aggravated the two problems which had led the Germans to consider the establishment of reserves.

The first problem was that any increase in the freedom of movement of the labour force tended to increase the number of localised labour shortages and increase demands from white farmers for stricter controls to ensure a 'fairer', more even, geographical distribution of labour. The second problem was that once black stockowners were able to accumulate stock the question arose of where they should keep them. If they lived on a white farm their stock could be a cause of friction and disputes with the owner. Yet encouragement of white settlement by the authorities meant that they discouraged the occupation of vacant Crown Land by black stockowners.

Officials from the Union argued that the establishment of reserves in the various districts of Namibia would provide an incentive for workers to remain there and provide a controlled environment in which the accumulation of black stock could be monitored and managed. The informal policy of the military administration was to allow certain farms to be used for this purpose. Wealthier black stock owners were able to obtain temporary grazing licences on unoccupied farms.

The Secretary to the Protectorate explained the two primary considerations behind

the policy:

> Since the occupation of this territory it has been the endeavour to locate the natives who are too old to work, or who are exempted from the operations of the native laws, on farms specially set aside for them. It is considered necessary to do this as a large number of them working on private farms find the owner unable to allow grazing for their stock, thus the already deficient supply of labour is still further decreased by the native clearing out into the Desert or squatting on vacant Crown Land in order to maintain his cattle.[25]

The Secretary (who was the official in charge of 'Native Affairs' in Namibia) felt reserves were necessary to stabilise the labour force. 'Labour reserves' it was claimed would provide black workers with an incentive to remain in districts predominantly intended for white settlement.

The lack of adequate provision for black workers who, because of old age or sickness, were unable to find work also presented difficulties. The Secretary argued that reserves could be used to reduce the demands made on the administration by this group as:

> ... the old and infirm are able to maintain themselves on these reserves instead of living in the locations in the towns depending upon pauper rations from the Government.[26]

Limited investment in the creation of reserves, to which the 'unproductive' element of the black urban population might be removed, would provide a cheaper alternative.

The award of control over Namibia (as a 'C' Class Mandate of the League of Nations) to the Union of South Africa, acting on Britain's behalf, on 17th December, 1920 meant that further practical steps could be taken to formalise and

consolidate the 'ad hoc' network of reserves that had come into existence during the period of military administration. The urgency of the administrations concerns about the need to rationalise the informal patchwork of reserves that had developed over the five years of military rule was immediately apparent. Just four days after the confirmation of their authority over the territory (ie. on 21st December, 1920) the retitled 'Secretary for South West Africa' appointed a Commission to investigate the whole question of 'native reserves'.

THE NATIVE RESERVES COMMISSION OF 1921.

The Native Reserves Commission of 1921 acts as a landmark in the development of the role of the reserves in the context of the broader labour market. The details of the exact geographical extent and location of the reserves will be dealt with in a later section, the aim here is to discuss their function in a broader policy context.

The concept of reserves was not new to the Union Government and they recommended that the reserve policy should follow that based on the Beaumont Commission and Land Act (No. 27 of 1913) in the Union. The broad political principle underscoring this policy was one of racial separation or 'segregation'. The 'Native Reserves Commission' of 1921 consisted of just two members. The two man Commission submitted its report in June, 1921 and four more members were then appointed to discuss its initial recommendations.[27] The Commission was entrusted with two central aims:

> a) To secure contentment and welfare of the natives as far as possible, and <u>to establish certainty to the whites as to permanent places of abode of the natives.</u> [My emphasis]
>
> b) To tighten up Native Administration in order to prevent vagrancy and idleness.[28]

The Commission, mindful of these two aims, was responsible for the demarcation of suitable sites for reserves, but 'suitability' was not the only consideration that influenced the Commission in making its choices. The Union Government was clear that the principle of total segregation should be the paramount goal of the reserves policy and explained that:

> ... the Acting Prime Minister is of opinion that the South-West Africa Administration should divide the country roughly into what will ultimately become native areas and European areas respectively, then to apply the same policy as in the Union.[29]

In theory the reserves of Namibia were to represent merely an extension of the system already deemed to be operating successfully within the Union.

Whilst 'suitability' was, therefore, a factor in the location of reserves, equal importance was given to the principle of 'segregation'. Drew and Kruger explained how this principle had influenced their selection of sites:

> We have studiously avoided the creation of 'black islands' in the various districts, and for this reason have selected large areas in outlying parts of the country.[30]

The local black population were consternated to discover that the land claims of German farmers were respected over and above their own. The political principle of racial segregation guided the positioning of reserves far more than the recognition of any historical antecedents for black land claims.

The Administrator's Report for 1920 contains a famous quote asserting that, in Namibia:

> The native question ... is synonymous with the labour question.[31]

The local black population was conceived by the authorities purely in terms of its labour function within the settler economy serving, in particular, the needs of white farmers. Thus, whilst recognizing the political compulsion behind the siting of reserves, one must also recognise the economic incentives for the creation of permanent reserves.

The predominant view of the reserves was that they were to be an instrument of control. Reserves were to be an essential element of the apparatus that was required to enable the administration to effectively monitor the accumulation of stock by black stock-owners, recruit black labour and regulate the geographical distribution of the black labour force. In a competitive labour market, restraints on the mobility of the local labour force were introduced to protect the interests of the white community. The reserves were to perform a number of functions:

Labour reserves.

The reserves were presented as a direct administrative response to complaints by white farmers. The shortage of black farm labour would be dealt with:

> ... by tightening up control in such reserves as are established and in town locations.[32]

The Commission argued that the lack of 'effective control' over the occupants of the existing reserves was:

> ... bound to affect the labour conditions of a district.[33]

The implication was that effectively run reserves would maximise the supply of local black labour in a district. Supervision would be assisted by the consolidation of the scattered farms that had initially been occupied by black stockowners into a number of larger reserves. The reserves could be situated to ensure that each district

retained a reserve of local workers.

Controlling the black pastoralists.

The reserves would reduce the threat of direct economic competition with white farmers posed by black stockowners in rural areas. The Administrator stressed the economic motivation for the rationalisation of the reserve network:

> Early demarcation of such reserves, which is in contemplation, would greatly facilitate and render more effective the proper registration and branding of all native-owned stock.[34]

The confinement of the animals of black stockowners to reserves would facilitate the measurement of herd and flock sizes and the subsequent taxation of black farmers.

The fact that in a pastoral economy herders might, if unrestrained, roam many miles with their animals in search of grazing or useable water holes meant that a method was needed to control their movements. The establishment of reserves enabled the state to 'capture' the pastoralists and integrate them into a capitalist economy. The reserves would provide the administration with the means of measuring the wealth (in stock) of black farmers and thus the ability to extract a proportion of it.

Reserves were to be an essential part of the apparatus being constructed to maintain control over the accumulation of stock by black pastoralists and confine their mobility to prevent them '<u>clashing against white interests</u>' [My emphasis].[35] The existence of reserves would serve as a justification for limitations on the number of black stock that could be held on a white farm and on the access to farming land given to black stock owners. The large numbers of black stockowners who were grazing their animals on Crown Lands (and who were classified as 'squatters') could be cleared off the land and moved into the reserves. The Crown Land could then be offered as 'vacant' farm lots for purchase or lease by white settlers.

Reducing the factor costs of black farm labour

The local black labour force was able to use the shortage of labour to obtain permission for their own animals to be granted grazing rights on their white employer's farm as a condition of their labour contract. The cost of accommodating the, often considerable, herds and flocks of black workers must be seen as an additional factor of production raising the 'cost' of black labour to white farmers.

The Commission recognised the particular problems created by workers' stock in Namibia:

> In this Territory owing to water difficulties and the fact that grazing easily becomes trampled out - especially within the neighbourhood of wells and boreholes - Europeans naturally object to natives with stock settling on their farms, large as the latter are, and the necessity for reserves is perhaps greater than in the Union.[36]

The establishment of reserves where workers' 'surplus' stock could be sent would reduce the cost of labour to white farmers.

The problems of urban areas.

The administration operated on the principle that it was undesirable to have a black urban population that was 'surplus' to that required for 'providing for domestic and similar essential services'. It was argued that:

> ... they are liable to contract, or infect others with diseases which spread rapidly, and in any case they generally deteriorate physically and morally, besides embarrassing the white population in regard to the use of commonages and water.[37]

The fact was that municipalities were unwilling to provide adequate sanitation in

black locations whilst the limited communal facilities encouraged the rapid spread of any epidemics.

The complaints about health were symptomatic of other complaints about drunkenness, prostitution and laziness which were directed by white residents against the black urban population. The removal of unemployed, old and sick members of the urban black population was considered to be the simplest way of removing (at least from sight) these various social problems. The reserves were an essential corollary to urban removals, if people were to be removed there had to be a place that one could remove them to !

Reproducing the black labour force.

The reserves were deemed necessary to ensure the reproduction of a healthy local black labour force:

> "During the war period nothing concerning permanent allocation of ground could be done, though even the comparatively few Government farms, which in the emergency were granted by our Administration as temporary reserves, were much appreciated by natives entitled to such accommodation, and healthy well-nourished children born during that period are now to be observed there, representing potential labourers of the future [My emphasis].[38]

The biological view of the reserves was that they were necessary evils to guarantee the continued breeding of a work force. The link between the reserves and maintaining birth rates was rarely put so crudely, but derived from a persistent strand of the discourse of officials. District reports were rife with reports of the degeneration of urban blacks and concern over birth rates.[39]

THE EVOLUTION OF RESERVE POLICY.

The five economic incentives for the creation of reserves were recognised by the administration. Indeed the administration had to justify their creation in economic terms in order to overcome the opposition of white farmers who feared that the creation of permanent reserves would drain their farms of labour. The reserves were conceived as labour reserves, not tribal homelands. Indeed the point was repeatedly made that the criteria upon which the reserves were designed were economic, rather than cultural.

Herbst, the Secretary for the Protectorate, had specifically pointed this out in 1921:

> These Reserves are not the same as the areas known as Native Reserves in the Union; they merely consist of farms set aside in each district ... and there is no intention of creating reserves to which tribes could remove themselves and thus restore their old tribal methods of living under their Chiefs (my emphasis).[40]

The 1921 Commission itself explicitly stated that the reserves were being established to accommodate '... natives belonging to more than one tribe' [my emphasis].[41] The reluctance to provide a distinct geographical base for the reconstitution of pre-colonial political identities and organisations was probably a direct consequence of the comparatively recent use of such units to mobilise resistance to German rule.

The mapping of reserves was seen as a necessary concession to the demands of the local population for the return of land confiscated from them during the German military operations:

> The Natives, who of course had been the original owners of the land which had as a result of war been confiscated by the German Government, cut up into farms and sold or allotted to Europeans, had formed the expectation that

> this Administration as the natural result of the war would similarly confiscate German owned farms and thus the Natives would recover the lost land and homes previously occupied by them.[42]

The administration recognised the need to produce some response to the demands for the return of land, but resisted the repeatedly articulated demands for the recreation of 'tribal areas':

> Almost without exception each section asked for the allotment of the old tribal areas, in which vested rights had accrued and the utmost difficulty was experienced in making them realise the utter impossibility of complying with such a request.[43]

The 'vested rights' of blacks, many of whom seen their land taken away less than a decade previous to the German defeat, were considered to carry less weight than the claims of those that had displaced them. The policy that the revival of geographically and politically distinct identities should be confounded was a symptom of the continuing fear of the white community of a black uprising. Territorial claims were treated with suspicion as were attempts to revive 'tribal' institutions.

The philosophy behind the reserves policy pursued in Namibia therefore differed significantly from that found within South Africa where it was argued that 'tribal' institutions should be strengthened and incorporated into the administrative structures to facilitate effective supervision of the reserves. The Report of the Native Economic Commission, published in 1932, presented an influential synopsis and advocacy of Union policy:

> Granted that it is essential to change much in the social system of a primitive people before they can be civilized, such change is brought about more easily, and with least harm to them, if the advanced ideas of the civilised race are grafted to the deep-rooted stock which already exists.[44]

The Commission concluded that:

> Where the tribal institutions are still a vital force ... the policy should be to strengthen these and to make them centres of progress from within.[45]

The Commission's argument was one that gained advocates within the 'Native Affairs' Department in Namibia. By 1936, Hahn, the highly respected Native Commissioner stationed in Ovamboland in northern Namibia argued that the system used in South Africa and in northern Namibia should be extended to the Police Zone:

> I think an urgent necessity in the South is the establishment of a system akin to the tribal council system which is proving so effective here in Ovamboland ... The late German policy was to destroy completely any system because they were afraid of it politically. I do not think that we need have any fears whatever in this direction.[46]

Hahn's view was that the administration could build a reciprocal relationship with those in authority in the reserves. In return for official support against opposition the local rulers could be used as a cheap means of enforcing legislation within the reserves.

Legislative steps were taken in 1939 to set up 'tribal trust funds' to revive the authority and influence of 'tribal' institutions, but little change was apparent. Lord Hailey found, in 1945, that the reserves still differed considerably from those found in South Africa:

> The reserves... are not in the true sense tribal reserves ... they have not been proclaimed in the name of particular tribes and their residents are still on occasion moved from one reserve to another. Moreover, an African tribesman previously resident outside a reserve cannot take up residence in it by right; he needs the sanction of the officer in charge.[47]

Mr Neser, the recently appointed 'Secretary for South West Africa', told Hailey that Namibia's reserves:

> ... have never had the true character of tribal areas. They have ... mixed tribal elements.[48]

Neser was eager to build up distinct 'tribal' identities within the reserves and superimpose a structure of 'tribal' authority and identification above that of the fragmented local reserve boards. Evidence of Neser's commitment to a transformation of the basis of the reserves can be found in the speeches he made to meetings held in the reserves. In May, 1947, for example, the minutes of a meeting held in the reserve of Waterberg East recorded Neser's proposals:

> He would like things to develop so that each tribe would have a headquarters ... They must be a Nation having a seat somewhere. He did not want them scattered over different reserves so that he did not know where the people really were.[49]

The need to reconstruct 'tribal' identities and authority was increasingly the primary reason given to justify the existence of the reserves. The reserves were presented as the means of preserving cultural identities, rather than a local labour supply. The reconstruction of the administration's aim was such that, by 1960, an official handbook claimed that the reserves had been established:

> <u>With a view to the reconstruction, as far as practicable, of tribal organization</u> (my emphasis).[50]

The government was anxious to use the Odendaal Commission's Report to oppose the principal of 'a single multiracial central authority'.[51] The conclusions of the Odendaal Commission were the logical consequence of the evolution in official thinking about the role of the reserves.

THE CHRONOLOGY OF LABOUR CONTROL

The legislation and guidelines that were of major significance to the black population of the Police Zone can be divided into six main categories. The first, legislation dealing with the creation of the reserves themselves and their administration, will be covered later in this chapter. The black population were subjected to constraints in five other crucial economic areas.

Limits on the freedom of movement.

Proclamation 25 of 1920 concerning Vagrancy combined with the general pass law (contained in Proclamation 11 of 1922) to ensure that the administration was able to exercise firm control over the movements of the black population. The Proclamations continued many of the controls over black mobility that had been found in German legislation and operating under the subsequent military administration.

The Vagrancy law, for instance, gave any "owner or occupier of land" (my emphasis), the right to challenge anyone "found wandering abroad" and possessing "no visible lawful means or insufficient lawful means of support". Vagrants could be punished with up to three months imprisonment. Trespassers on farms could also face imprisonment or a fine of up to five pounds (the equivalent of about ten months wages for a farm worker).[52] Workers who had enough animals to satisfy the authorities that they had sufficient means of support could fall foul of the general pass law contained in Proclamation 11 of 1922. The pastoral mode of production pursued by most black stockowners meant that the restrictions that this placed on movement were significant in economic, as well as social terms. Proclamation 11 of 1922 also restricted the number of families allowed to reside on any white farm (without a special permit) to ten. In 1928, Proclamation No. 11 narrowed the limit further to just five black male workers.

The laws restricted the freedom of workers to find their own employers and

restricted workers' bargaining power. The unemployed were dependent upon passes to allow them to travel to seek work and officials were able to specify the time and area in which the search was to take place. The measures could therefore be used to limit the movement of black labourers and control the labour market.

Mechanisms for the control of black labour.

The idea that the reserves might provide a 'refuge for vagrants' was a claim made repeatedly by white residents. The accusations were repeatedly denied by officials, but they were also constantly reminding staff directly responsible for the supervision of reserves that they should persuade healthy, unemployed black workers to take up jobs. The 1928 'Report of Natives Reserves Commission' took the accusation so seriously that they recommended that only those who obtained a certificate (signed by both the magistrate and local Native Commissioner) stating that they were "over 55 years of age" should be allowed into the reserves.[53] The recommendation was not implemented, but the suggestion that the reserves should act merely as old peoples homes indicated the reluctance of officials to countenance pastoralism as an economic option for the local black population in the reserves.

The regime continued to seek ways of limiting the number of young and able bodied who could stay in the reserve, particularly during periods when the white farming community complained of acute labour shortages. The labour shortage of the early 1950s for example led to official intervention to increase pressure on the reserves to provide workers. A Circular sent to all officials supervising reserves in 1950 argued that:

> There is really no place in a Reserve for 'won't works', ie. those who live on the assets or labours of others, and if they will not go out to work or assist in the development of the Reserve they should be ordered to reside at spots that are the least attractive and where the chances of their living on their relatives and friends will be minimised.[54]

A Government Notice was actually issued in 1952 that authorised reserve Superintendents to order any black resident who he considered was leading an 'idle existence' to take up employment.[55]

The restrictions placed upon the mobility of the black labour force were not just those found in legislation. An official Report from 1937 admitted that an informal 'gentleman's agreement' existed to prevent workers from the Police Zone taking the more lucrative jobs in the mining industry:

> ... it was decided that the requirements of the Mines should be met as far as possible from beyond the Police Zone and, in return for this concession, a gentleman's agreement was arrived at, that the mining industry would refrain from recruiting within the Zone. The Railways were left to recruit their labour from the Union.[56]

The labour market was manipulated to restrict the choice of the black residents of the Police Zone in order to satisfy the demand of white settlers - and in particular the demands for action to tackle the shortage of black farm labour.

Proclamation 34 of 1920 established the regulations regarding contracts of service between 'Masters and Servants' with particular reference to the relationship between farmers and their workers. The Proclamation did not consider it necessary to insist on an official presence for written or even oral contracts of up to twelve months to be binding. An official witness was only required for contracts that were to last from one to five years (the maximum legal length for a written contract).

The delicate position of a black farm worker's family was confirmed by Clause 11 which stipulated that upon the death of a male worker during a contract, his wife and children should be given one month to leave the farm. The implication was that the families of workers who had spent many years working for the same farmer might suddenly find themselves homeless and forced to leave the farmer's property. Workers who carried out their duties 'carelessly or negligently' or who were

disobedient could be prosecuted under the criminal law. Such prosecutions were lumped together under a 'Masters and Servants' category in the annual returns presented by magistrates. The punishment for a first offence consisted of a one pound fine or up to a month in prison, a second transgression could result in a fine of up to three pounds or up to six months in prison with hard labour and "with or without solitary confinement and with or without spare diet". The second degree of punishment was applied immediately to herders for a variety of crimes, including that of losing stock through neglect.

Controls on black stockowners.

The legislation which attempted to constrain the bargaining power of the labour force was supplemented by legislation that sought to regulate and limit the accumulation of wealth (in the form of stock) by black pastoralists. The initial priority was to acquire accurate information about the number of animals held by black stockholders. 'Native Stock Brands Proclamation No 15 of 1923' enforced the free, but compulsory, branding of animals. The identification of the individual ownership of each horse and cow over six months old was necessary before individuals could be taxed according to the size of their herd. The dipping of small stock for scab also provided the authorities with the opportunity to compile stock registers.

The Proclamation removed the right of individual black stockowners to own personal branding irons. All those who possessed private branding irons were required to surrender them to the superintendent of their reserve within three months of the promulgation of the Proclamation.[57] The Proclamation was partly geared to deal with white assumptions that black stockholders in the reserves were using their irons to acquire ownership of stray animals, but it also allowed the white Superintendents in reserves to monitor the accumulation and distribution of black stock. The intervention may have also been intended to serve as an obstacle to black stockowners who hoped to distribute a large number of animals amongst their extended family as a means of avoiding qualifying as an individual to pay a higher

rate of taxation.

Government Notice No. 68 of 1924 introduced an incremental system of grazing fees (see Table 1).

Table 1: Scale of Grazing Fee for Reserves, 1924.[58]

Large Stock.	From 1 to 25	... 2d per head per month
	From 26 upwards	... 3d " "
Small Stock.	From 1 to 100	... 1/4d per head per month
	From 101 upwards	... 1/2 d " " "

The Notice represented a marked increase in the rate of fees being levied. The charges for grazing in temporary reserves and locations had previously (since 1st January, 1918) been fixed at 2d per head (regardless of herd size) for Large Stock and 2d per ten Small Stock.[59] Under the new regulations 2d would only pay the monthly fees due on eight animal whilst the scale of fees payable on small stock (goats and sheep) doubled if a black stockowner assembled a flock of more than 100 animals. The system can be contrasted with the payments made by white settlers who were obliged to make fixed contributions to pay off the purchase price of their farm regardless of the number of stock that they had running on the farm.

In January 1927 the Administrator addressed a conference attended by all the magistrates in Namibia. The conference assembled the most senior officials responsible for 'Native Affairs' in each district and allowed the Administrator to review the effectiveness of the new legislation and issue guidelines to his officials.

The Administrator commented extensively on the failure of the existing level of grazing fees to:

> ... achieve the object in view, which is to increase the number of labourers available for farm work.[60]

The Administrator suggested three measures that would inhibit the development of a class of wealthy black stock farmers, whilst forcing poorer black workers to work for white farmers, rather than for black relations. He proposed:

> That only owners of a certain number of stock should be allowed to live in the reserve; natives with a smaller number, although they may still be permitted to regard the reserve as their homes, must be out of them for at least 8 or 9 months in the year.[61]

The Administrator provided guidelines that rights of residency in the reserves should only be given to those owning at least 150 units of stock. The threshold set was significantly higher than the ten large stock or fifty small stock that was taken as sufficient to show adequate 'visible means of support' under the Vagrancy Laws.

The second instruction given by the Administrator was that '... grazing fees be steepened'. The instruction was directly aimed at limiting the accumulation of stock by black pastoralists within the reserves. The Administrator proposed a new staircase of fees (see Table 2) On paper the new rates seemed to suggest that black farmers would now be able to pay a lower rate of tax on flocks of up to 150 goats, in contrast to the previous tax threshold of 100 goats. However the proposed minimum number of units required before a black stockowner could gain entry into a reserve would mean that anyone granted entry would have to pay the higher tax rates on part of their flock. The more serious impact was on black cattle owners who faced an increase of 1/2d per animal on the first fifteen and a massive £1.3/4d increase in the charge per animal for the next ten. The Administrator pointed out in his Annual Report for the year that different rates could also be used as a tool to

encourage changes in the type of stock kept in the reserves.[62]

Table 2: Proposed Scale of Grazing Fees for Reserves, 1927.[63]

1 to 150 units	1/4d per unit per month
151 to 300 units	3/8d " " "
from 301 upwards	1/2d " " "

The final suggestion, and the one that most blatantly demonstrated the anxiety of the administration regarding the emergence of independent and competitive wealthy black farmers in the reserves, was that there should be a reduction in the maximum number of animals that each individual black stockholder was allowed to own. The size of black herds and flocks were already limited to 300 small stock and 100 large stock (or 1300 units). The Administrator proposed that this limit should be reduced further to 250 and 50 (or 750 units) respectively.[64]

The stock choices of local black pastoralists were restricted by the difficulties they faced in gaining access to stock markets, but were also not simply motivated by commercial concerns. The reluctance to switch brands was related to the higher costs involved and higher risks run. The purchase of breeding stock, for example, required capital or credit. Black pastoralists were also reported to be reluctant to rear new stock brands which they felt:

> ... were not acclimatised and which they felt were less immune from drought and sickness and would perish.[65]

Variations in the enforcement of grazing fees could also be uneven. The tariff charged for European stock grazing on Crown Land was reduced to one-third the level charged in the reserves during the drought of the early 1930s.[66]

The tightening legislative screw on black stockowners in the reserves served two purposes. The difficulties faced by black farmers who attempted to sell their animals meant that they were often forced to seek employment in order to meet the fees levied on their stock, whilst the regulations and sliding scale of fees made the accumulation of stock wealth difficult. The Administrator admitted that, by 1937, the grazing fees paid by the residents of Namibia's reserves involved:

> ... the payment of much heavier sums than under the Union native taxation system ... [with the result that]... the natives are compelled to obtain cash to meet the fees either by sale of their stock or by working or sending members of their families out to work.[67]

In the next two years the administration imposed grazing fees on the final two reserves (both in southern Namibia) that had used the argument of historical privilege to avoid payment previously. Government Notice No. 167 of 1938 set grazing fees for Berseba reserve. The final loophole in the system was closed with the passing of Government Notice No. 136 of 1939 which set grazing fees for payment by the residents of the Bondels reserve.

The maximum stock levels for black stockowners normally permitted in the reserves had been fixed at 100 large stock or 300 small stock (limitations which were particularly harsh upon the predominantly small stock reserves of southern Namibia). In Soromas, one of the reserves in southern Namibia, the restrictions on black stockowners were made even tighter. Government Notice No. 62 of 1941 imposed a ceiling on the number of livestock per owner in Soromas of 15 Large Stock and 100 Small Stock.[68] The scale of grazing fees was amended in 1934 and by 1946 had been qualified to encourage stock changes (see Table 3).

The fees incorporated measures designed to improve the quality of stock held on the reserves by reducing the size of goat herds and number of Scrub Bulls through the use of retributive tax bands. A special low rate of fees was applied to flocks of sheep with black owners. The lowest tax band for goats and cattle had also been broadened in order to increase the number of stock that could be held before a higher rate of grazing fees was triggered.

Table 3: Scale of Grazing Fees for Reserves, 1946.[69]

LS [Large Stock] 1 to 50	2d per head per month
51 upwards	3d ″ ″ ″
Scrub bulls	4d ″ ″ ″
SS [Small Stock] Sheep	1d per month per lot of 5.
1 to 200 goats	1/4d per head per month.
201 upwards	1/2d ″ ″ ″

Measures concerning the financing of the reserves.

The 'Native Reserves Trust Funds Administration Proclamation', No. 9 of 1924, had established the right of every reserve to have a trust fund into which grazing fees would be paid to assist with the development of the reserve. The justification of high grazing fees thus became the fact that the money was being used in the long-term interests of the residents of the reserve. The reserves that were established by the administration were covered by the Proclamation, but the few reserves that had survived from the German period had to be initially persuaded to pay grazing fees to support their trust funds on a voluntary basis.

Official reluctance to subsidise reserve development and the impact of the subsequent drought and recession led to the decision that from 1932 any future 'development' in the reserves would have to be paid for purely by monies accumulated in the relevant trust fund.[70] Yet it was generally local white officials rather than the residents' reserve boards who made decisions about the use of these development funds, indeed spending decisions were often made against the advice of the reserve residents. The 'Native Reserves Fencing Proclamation', No. 12. of 1926. obliged reserve funds to bear half the cost of any fencing erected between a reserve and a farm by the neighbouring farmer.

The Administrator's Annual Report for 1937 summarised the philosophy behind these financial measures:

> In the earlier years the Administration did spend substantial sums out of the general revenue for the purpose of developing the water supplies, but it is of opinion (sic) that to continue this policy would not be in the interests of the native population. The knowledge that they must depend on themselves is in itself a useful lesson ... <u>The Administration is, therefore, opposed to making grants for accelerating the development of the reserves as much in the interests of the natives themselves as of the European</u>. At the same time it holds that it would be unfair to burden the European section of the population with further taxes for native development [my emphasis].[71]

The reduction in the funding by the state of development in the reserves was translated into a necessary lesson to the black community in the importance of the Protestant Work Ethic. However the final sentence betrays the fact that the administration was, in fact, also acting in response to lobbying from the franchised white community for a reduction in their tax burden.

The next notable change in the official policy on the funding of the reserves was marked by Proclamation No. 23 of 1939 which provided for the establishment of 'tribal trust funds'. The Herero were the first target group for this innovatory idea

with seven being sent to South Africa in the same year:

> ... to give them an insight into the working of the Council system in the Union in view of the contemplated introduction of such a system into South West Africa.[72]

Yet whilst the ostensible aim of the new law was to reconstruct common 'tribal' identities over the broad geographical area covered by the scattered reserves, the impact was to encourage political division on an ethnic basis within the reserves. The implementation of the Proclamation was delayed until after the end of World War Two; however the reconstruction of 'tribal' identities was also encouraged by the convening of annual 'tribal' meetings for representatives from the towns and reserves of the Police Zone.[73] The date at which these meetings first started is a matter of some dispute. The Odendaal Report of 1964 claimed that:

> ... annual meetings of the people have been held ever since 1947 for the Herero, Nama and Damara.[74]

Olivier claims that the first Herero gathering took place in 1950 and the first Nama meeting only in 1953.[75] However the notification and minutes of a meeting to be held in Keetmanshoop on 22nd November, 1951 suggest that the first official meeting of the Nama took place on that date.[76]

Restrictions placed on the black urban population.

The final category of legislation that must be considered is that concerned with the regulation of black residents living in urban areas. 'Natives (Urban Areas) Proclamation', No. 34 of 1924, applied the restrictions on black urban residence that were already common in the Union, making permanent resident's status dependent on a lengthy (ten or fifteen years) period of urban residence and employment. Legislation could also be used to place further restrictions on the

entry of black workers to urban areas during periods of recession and drought. The most significant example of the use of this mechanism was the application of the Amendment of Natives (Urban Areas) Proclamation, No. 4 of 1932, (Section 11). The Proclamation resulted in a number of Government Notices restricting the entry of black workers into towns.[77] The legal restrictions on admission to urban areas were supplemented by a more dubious use of the administrative structures to stem, and indeed reverse, the drift of black workers into urban areas.

The authorities were especially concerned about the use black women were making of their freedom from the pass laws. A Circular sent to every district in Namibia in 1932 dealt specifically with this subject and provided advice on the way in which officials could tackle the 'problem':

> Well-founded complaints have been made that women from the reserves proceed to urban areas where they become demoralised and detribalised and never return to their parents or husbands. Consequently passes should not be issued to them to proceed to such areas unless the circumstances are very exceptional. In this way it should be possible to reduce the number of female entrants to the urban areas very considerably for there is a general opinion amongst them that they are under a legal liability to carry passes and of this idea they should not be disabused.[78]

The policy was simple - where the law did not exist it could be assumed to exist. Women were to be refused the passes that they didn't need.

The direct relationship between the drive to restrict black migration to urban areas and the distribution of the black population between the towns, reserves and white farms can be found in a simple comparison of the figures for the Police Zone in the years 1930 and 1935 (see Figure 1).[79] The percentage of the black population that were categorised as living in urban areas dropped from 26 percent to 17 percent as the black urban population was squeezed out.

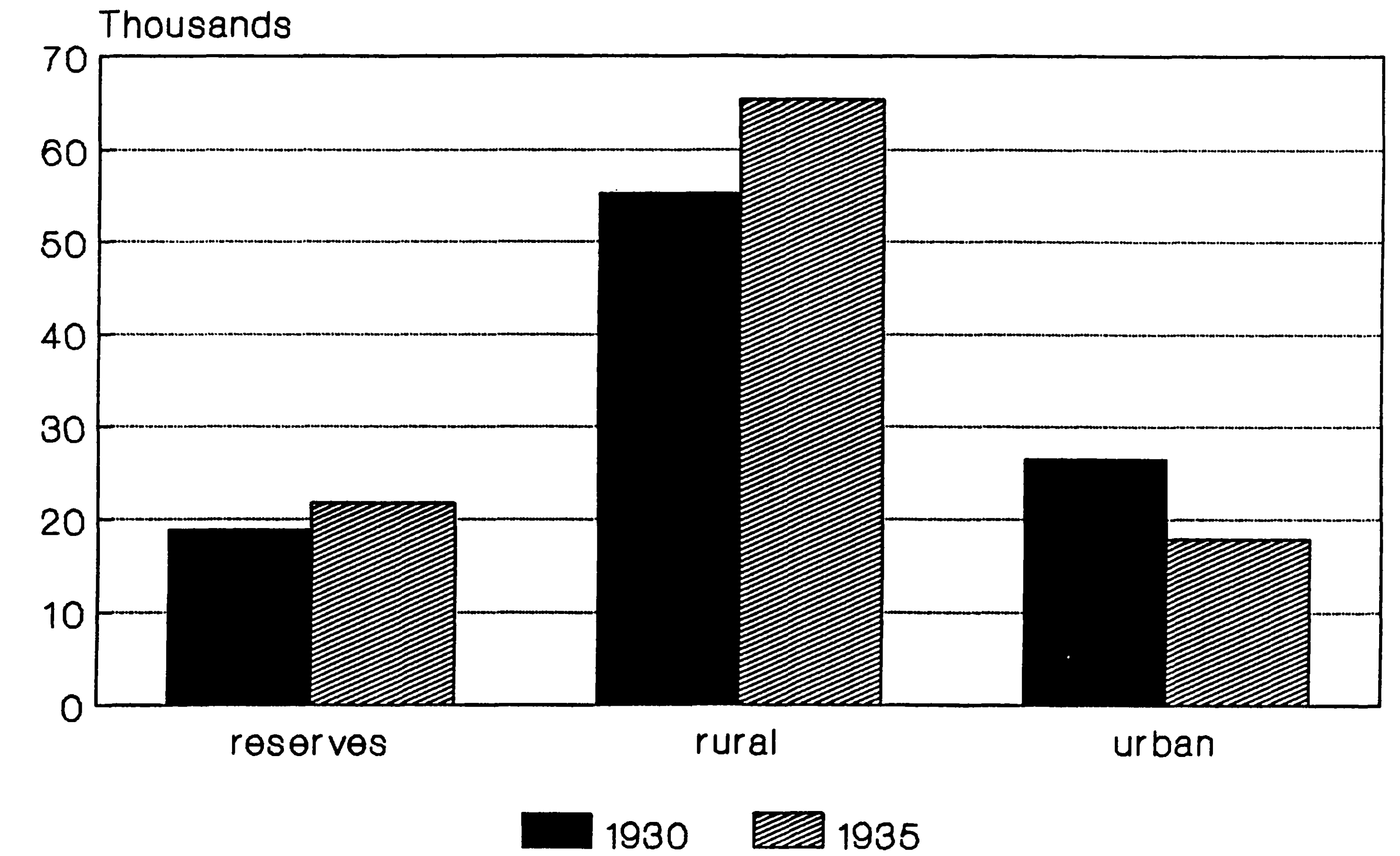
The legislative apparatus established by the administration introduced the laws necessary to manage the labour market. The laws, however, if necessary, were not sufficient. The ability of the administration to control the local labour force was also dependent upon the size and efficiency of the security and administrative structures that were set up to operate and enforce the system. The final section of this chapter will focus on the reserve network and those that administered it. The system can be broken into three components. Firstly one must consider the geographical extent and location of the reserves. Secondly the role of the white administrative hierarchy and finally the role of the local black leadership.

THE SPREAD OF THE RESERVE NETWORK.

When the South Africans took over control of Namibia they found that seven black communities in the Police Zone were still in possession of land which they had been granted under German Treaties. Of these seven only two, Berseba and Bondels, were situated in southern Namibia. However these two combined to make up 77 percent of the small areas of land that blacks still retained rights over in the Police Zone in 1915. Large amounts of land were also effectively occupied by black communities north of the Police Zone, but these fall outside the scope of this study.

The Treaty of Peace and South West Africa Mandate Act, No. 48 of 1919, of the Union guaranteed that land in Namibia set aside as 'native reserves' could not be sold or removed from the occupants without the permission of the Union Parliament. Native Administration Proclamation No. 11 of 1922 granted the Administrator the right to establish and set aside additional reserves and confirmed the rights of those living in areas granted to them under German treaties. The residents of reserves such as Bondels and Berseba who retained rights gained under earlier agreements with the Germans were able to use these to resist and delay the imposition of new regulations within their reserves.

The extended Native Reserves Commission of 1921 made a series of recommendations about farms that could be set aside as reserves or for future use

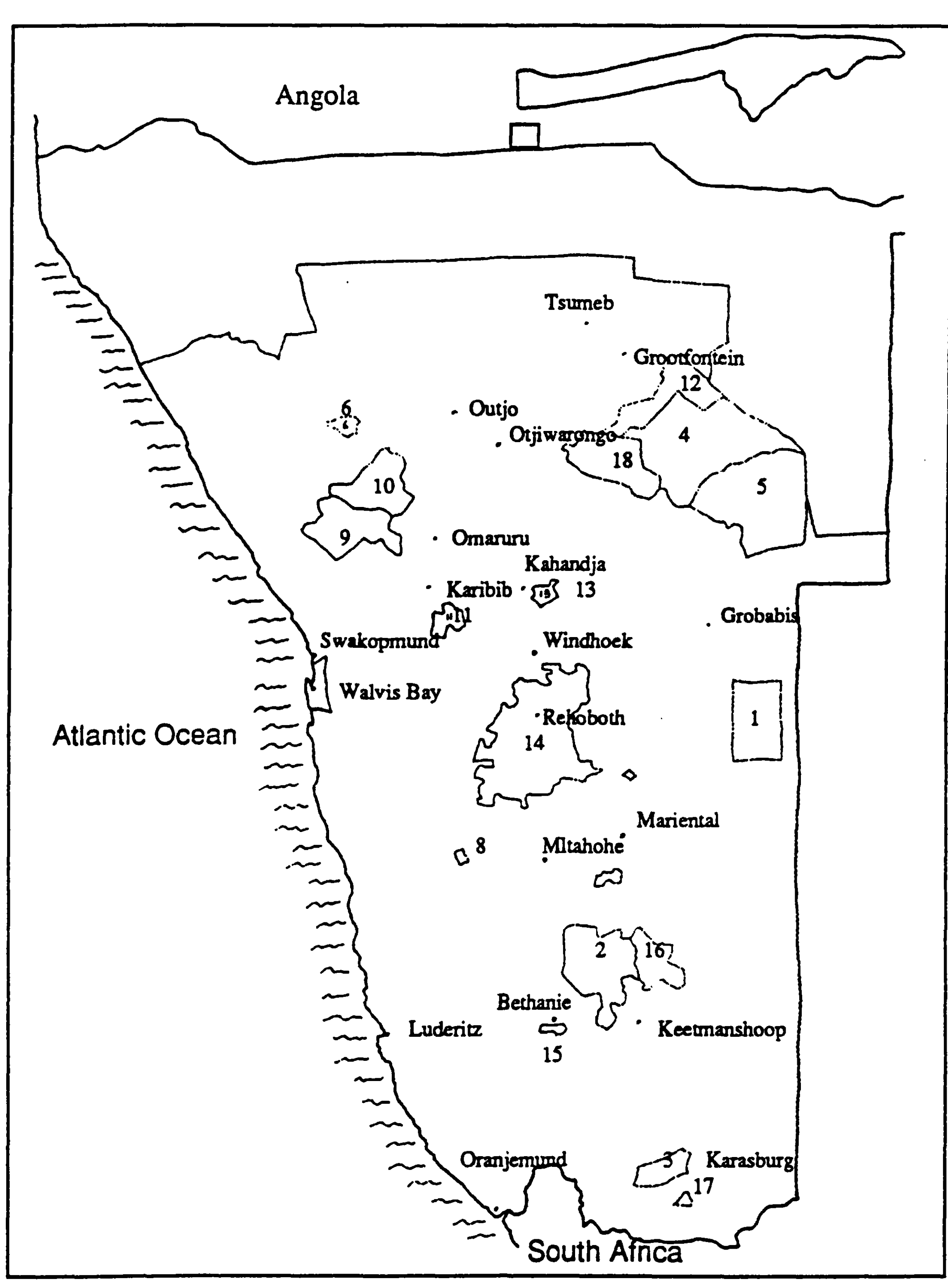


AR LoN 1930 and 1936.

by black farmers. Many of the new reserves did not contain natural watering holes and occupation had to be delayed whilst boreholes were dropped and sufficient supplies of water located. The confirmation of permanent rights to new areas of land did not finally come, therefore, until 1923. Government Notice 122 of 1923 included two schedules. The first confirmed the land rights granted to the residents of six areas by the German Government, this excluded the two smallest areas in the northern central district of Outjo, but included an additional area at Soromas near Bethanie in the south. The second schedule established six new reserves in the Police Zone, two of these, Tses and Neuhof, were in southern Namibia.

Over the next twenty-seven years seven more reserves were added. Only two of these, Gibeon and Warmbad, were in the South. The position of all the reserves in the Police Zone by 1955 can be seen on Map 1.[80] The full details of the expansion of the 7 reserves in southern Namibia can be found in Table 4.[81] By 1951 the total extent of the southern reserves, with the addition of Warmbad in the far south, had reached 1,101,478 hectares and they were scattered over five districts containing 14,988,888 hectares of land suitable for farming.[82]

M1 Namibia - showing reserves in the
Police Zone and main urban areas, 1955



Key to reserves in the Police Zone

1. Aminuis
2. Berseba
3. Bondels
4. Eastern
5. Epukiro
6. Franzfontein
7. Gibeon
8. Neuhof
9. Okombahe
10. Otjihorongo
11. Otjimbingwe
12. Otjituo
13. Ovitoto
14. Rehoboth
15. Soromas
16. Tses
17. Warmbad
18. Waterberg

TABLE 4: The Expansion of the Reserves of Southern Namibia.

Reserve	Size	Government Notice.
BERSEBA		
Original	c. 575,000 ha.	Gk. 122/1923 and Gk 237/1930
BONDELS		
Original	c. 174,505 ha.	Gk. 122/1923 and Gk 237/1930
SOROMAS		
Original	8,212 ha.	Gk. 122/1923 and Gk 237/1930
Extension	8,618 ha.	Gk. 8/1928
,,	6,743 ha.	Gk. 485/1951
NEUHOF		
Original	20,500 ha.	Gk. 122/1923
TSES		
Original	229,929 ha.	Gk. 122/1923
Extension	24,666 ha.	Gk. 61/1935
GIBEON		
Original	38,782 ha.	Gk. 44/1924
WARMBAD		
Original	14,523 ha.	Gk. 122/1951

THE MANAGEMENT OF THE RURAL LABOUR FORCE.

The military administration that occupied Namibia in 1915 found a situation of confusion following the recent conflict. Despite the brevity of the military operation in Namibia much of the black population, especially of southern Namibia, had been dislocated and large numbers of stock had been moved over vast distances by the retreating Germans or killed to feed the soldiers of the opposing armies. The first task of the army was to restore some degree of order and organisation to the country.

The situation was judged to have stabilised sufficiently by the end of the year for the number of officers assigned to deal with 'native affairs' to be reduced and control to be passed to the military magistrates based in each district.[83] The white superstructure of the 'Native Affairs' Department had three layers. The first consisted of the Senior Officials responsible for 'Native Affairs' in the central administration, the second those responsible at the district level and the lowest those with direct supervisory duties over specific reserves.

The second strata of the structure was the one that, potentially, had the greatest ability to implement change. The judicial powers of district magistrates seemed to give them a central role in the implementation of policy, however the effectiveness with which they could institute change was hampered by two weakness. The first was the lack of co-operation between the judiciary and the police and the second the lack of adequately trained and experienced personnel.

A number of court cases were brought against police officers in the first few years of Union rule, demonstrating both an initial willingness to rein in the police, but also the tendency of the police to continue with previous working practices - including the measured assault of black workers. In one letter to the Administrator in 1917 the Crown Prosecutor listed 19 separate cases of police assault.[84] The suspicion remained strong that for each reported case there were many that went unreported. The difficulty of movement for black farm workers over the long

distance to the magistrate's office made complaint physically difficult. Official visits to farms took the form of infrequent police patrols, yet the association of the police with the infliction of 'instant justice' made it unlikely that workers would risk reporting minor assaults to them.

The Administrator warned a conference of senior policemen in 1917 that he had little confidence in the ability of the police to keep their actions within the law:

> I am very much afraid that I have been living in a fool's paradise for the last twelve months. Cases of ill-treatment are taking place but about them one seldom receives a proper report at headquarters ... It is not right that the very people on whom I rely to look after things should take the law into their own hands, and the attitude of the Constabulary leaves me very uneasy.[85]

The Administrator went on to criticize the calibre of his officials, and complained that:

> ... a great many of the officials employed in the Magistrates' Offices are entirely untrained ... the Staffs are weak.[86]

Military magistrates (who after the end of the period of military rule were replaced by civilian magistrates) were the most senior officials in each district. The effective application of regulations and supervision of the police was dependent upon the action of these officials. The consistent and fair interpretation of the laws by magistrates in court cases was also central to any attempt to engender black confidence in the legal system, yet the rapid turn-over of officials in this key position was high and unlikely to encourage such consistency.

The magisterial office at Maltahohe provides a clear example of the problem of maintaining continuity in the key post in the district. In the period from 17th September, 1915 to 1st February, 1932 there were fourteen different magistrates in

Maltahohe, the equivalent of a change every fourteen months. The District Record Book noted that the magistrate's office was then removed from Maltahohe for fifteen years, during which time cases were heard in neighbouring courts or by a visiting Special Justice of the Peace. On 18th June, 1947 a magistrate returned to Maltahohe with an additional dual role as the 'Native Commissioner' for the district. Ten different officials held this post from this date up to 30th November, 1964. The rate of change remained high, with on average a new magistrate every 21 months with few magistrates staying in the district for more than two years.[87]

The weakness of this lack of consistency in the administration at the district level was recognised as a serious impediment to the effective implementation of legislation. Hahn, one of the most experienced 'Native Affairs' officials in the country complained in 1936 that the unstable nature of the middle tier of administration was a fundamental weakness:

> Magistrates frequently change office and with their coming and going the policy changes is at the best a spasmodic affair.[88]

The tempo of change in Maltahohe may be an extreme example. It was a particularly small rural seat and may, accordingly, have held little attraction or prestige for ambitious magistrates. However a long serving official, Olivier, made a more general evaluation based on his own extensive experience:

> The average duration of a magistrate in a given district is 4 years after which he is usually transferred to South Africa and replaced from that place [My translation].[89]

The return of the majority of magistrates to South Africa after a single posting in Namibia must have given it the image of the Magisterial equivalent of a military 'tour of duty'. The temporary nature of the Magisterial strata of the administration meant that they had only a brief time in which to familiarise themselves with a district and win the confidence of the residents. The police, in contrast, were often

locally recruited and permanently based in a particular district. The gap between the two layers of the administration seems to have been initially emphasised by a tendency for the magistrates to be English-speaking South Africans, whilst the police were recruited locally and seem to have been mainly Afrikaans or German-speaking.

The weaknesses of the vital middle stratum of the administration increased the importance of the strength of direction given by senior officials and the influence of the most junior officials at a local level. However the apparatus established to deal with the black (majority) of the population of Namibia was inadequate to its task. The state apparatus became 'overdeveloped' in the extent to which it abrogated the powers that might have been exercised by local black community leaders, but 'soft' when it came to the depth of the administrative machinery constructed to take over those powers.

The Treaty of Peace and South West Africa Mandate Act of 1919 had delegated responsibility for the administration of Namibia to the Governor-General of South Africa. The responsibilities included that of 'Native Affairs'. After the end of military rule these powers were exercised by the Administrator, the senior government official in Namibia. Under the Administrator, the chief executive officer, entitled the 'Secretary for South West Africa' bore direct responsibility for 'Native Affairs' and the additional title of 'Chief Native Commissioner'.

The post was first filled by the transfer of the Resident Commissioner in Ovamboland to Windhoek in 1921. The combination of the posts of Secretary and Chief Native Commissioner resulted in an excessive workload and led to the appointment of an Additional Native Commissioner who devoted his whole time to 'Native Affairs'. Superintendents were appointed to take direct responsibility for the larger reserves. The only one to be stationed in a reserve in southern Namibia in 1921 was posted to the politically sensitive Bondelswarts reserve in Warmbad district. The magistrate alone bore direct responsibility for supervision of the reserves in the other southern districts.[90]

The constitution of 1926 established an electoral system for the white community and a 'whites only' Legislative Assembly with limited powers, but kept 'Native Affairs' firmly under the direct control of the Administrator. Native Administration Proclamation No. 15 of 1928. granted the Administrator the powers of the "Supreme Chief of the Natives". The definition of these powers included the power to recognize, appoint or remove any chiefs or headmen and the power to define 'tribal' areas and move 'tribes' from one area to another. The absolute power of the Administrator over the affairs of the black population was justified as his right:

> ... to exercise all political power and authority held and enjoyed by any supreme or paramount native chief.[91]

The Administrator tended to spend little time exercising these extensive powers, but instead left much of the work to his Chief Native Commissioner.

The criticism of officials in the field was that the administration gave 'Native Affairs' a low priority - abolishing the post of Chief Native Commissioner, for example, during the recession of the early thirties.[92] Senior officials insisted that even minor decisions should not be made without their authority and demanded the completion of regular written reports on the reserves. It was said, however, that they were not in touch with the demands of the black population or local difficulties faced by more junior officials as they rarely ventured out of Windhoek, preserving a rather detached and formal relationship with the black community.

The most succinct description of these frustrations can be found in a letter from Hahn in Ovamboland to Trollope (who was the 'Assistant Native Commissioner') in 1936. Hahn complained that:

> For some reason or other the 'powers that were' thought it expedient to abolish the system of a whole-time Chief Native Commissioner ... however, I must say that, as you presume, the step of abolishing the post was, I believe, dictated largely by the necessity for economy.[93]

Hahn criticised the combination of the job of Chief Native Commissioner with that of Secretary for South West Africa, pointing out the problems that this created in the case of the current postholder, Mr Courtney Clarke:

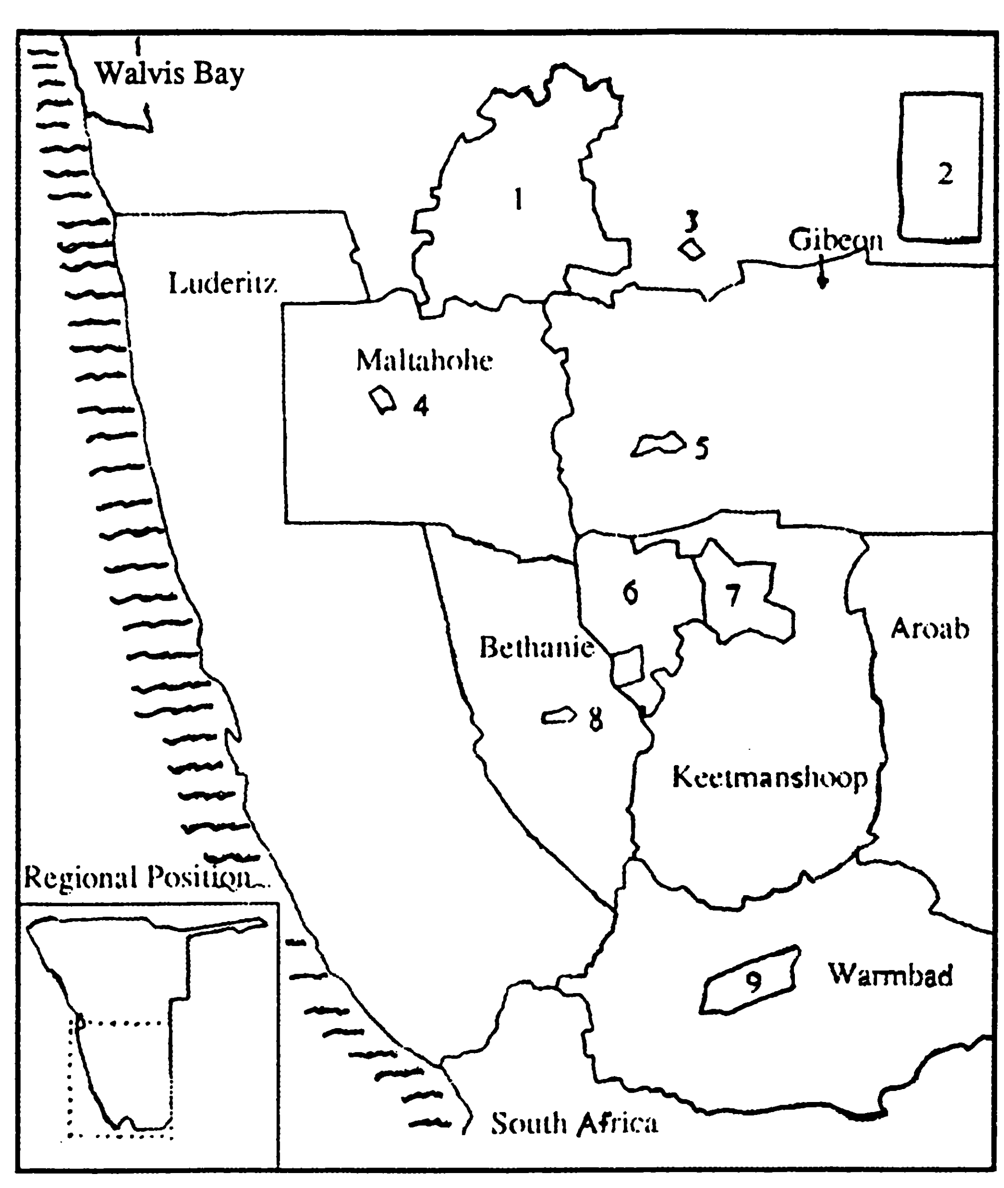
> At present this personal touch on the part of the Chief Native Commissioner with the magistrates, Superintendents of Reserves and Natives is practically non-existent. Mr. Clarke rarely finds a opportunity to visit the reserves and to hold representative tribal meetings with the natives. For information as to the work done in each reserve he has to rely almost entirely on reports by superintendents who are comparatively junior officials.[94]

The aloofness of the senior responsible officials and temporary duration of the magistrate's tours of duty meant that the information provided by the junior officials based in the reserves acquired a heightened importance in influencing the policy-making process.

The officials on the ground in the reserves may have provided the primary source of information to the administration, yet their numbers remained small. By 1939 there were 16 permanent reserves in the Police Zone; six of these were located in southern Namibia. The location of these and the Magisterial boundaries in the region are shown clearly in Map 2.[95] The direct supervision of these reserves was carried out by ten full-time 'Welfare Officers' (one covered Berseba and Tses and another Bondels) and a number of part-time staff. A Welfare Officer was stationed on a part-time basis in Gibeon, whilst Neuhof and Soromas were visited on an irregular basis by Special Justices of the Peace stationed at Maltahohe and Bethanie respectively.[96]

The fragility of the 'Native Affairs' Department - which covered the entire black population of Namibia, both in the Police Zone and in the north of the territory - can be shown by reference to its staffing levels in 1946. After thirty years of rule and the establishment of 24 separately administered reserves within and beyond the Police Zone the entire staff consisted of just '27 Europeans and 94 Natives'.[97] The

M2 Southern Namibia
adapted from Survey General's Map of Namibia 1937



Reserves

1.	Rehoboth	5.	Gibeon
2.	Aminuis	6.	Berseba
3.	Hoachanas	7.	Tses
4.	Neuhof	8.	Soromas
9.	Bondelswarts		

Police were sometimes used to carry out tasks such as the branding and dipping of stock in the reserves. The division of labour relieved the pressure on the under-resourced 'Native Affairs' Department, but increased the burden of work carried by the Police. The total size of the South West African Police force, in 1946, was itself surprisingly small. A total of just 248 white and 169 black police officers were based in Namibia, a country larger in area than Britain and France combined.[98]

The South West Africa Affairs Amendment Act, Act No. 23 of 1949, removed the power of the Administrator to draw up legislation on a number of issues (including 'Native Affairs') and transferred it to the South African Parliament, although a few of his powers were restored in 1951. In 1954 the small 'Native Affairs' Branch of the South West African Administration ceased to exist altogether. The South West Africa Native Affairs Administration Act (No. 56 of 1954) transferred responsibility for 'Native Affairs' in Namibia to South Africa. Its former duties became the responsibility of the Ministry of Bantu Administration and Development from 1st April, 1955.[99]

The primary distinction between the whites in junior management positions in the department was that between those classified as Superintendents (and later as Welfare Officers) and those who were known as Native Commissioners. Superintendents lived and worked in a reserve, whilst Native Commissioners were responsible for all matters concerning the black residents of a particular district. The latter post was initially combined with that of magistrate in many districts.

The responsibilities of the 'Native Commissioners' were multiple and set out in an instruction entitled "Duties assigned to Native Commissioners and Assistant Native Commissioners by the Minister of Native Affairs in Terms of Section two (2) of Act No. 38 of 1927". The duties included assisting with the recruitment of labour, supervising the efficient collection of taxes, investigating any complaints made against officials, convening quarterly meetings of the residents of the reserves and producing an annual report on 'Native Affairs' within each district. The Native

Commissioners were intended to take a key role in enforcing legislation relating to the land issue and gathering intelligence about possible political agitation amongst the black population.

The enforcement of the laws relating to squatting, over-crowding and over-stocking was seen as one of the most serious duties to be carried out by 'Native Commissioners':

> They should recognize that one of the most important and difficult of their duties is the efficient and tactful administration of the laws and regulations relating to land.[100]

The political sensitivity of the issues arising from the demands of black stockowners for access to more land was also recognized:

> These regulations ... are regarded by many natives as irksome and an infringement of their ancient rights and privileges.[101]

The Native Commissioners were also given the important role of detecting and monitoring any signs of political agitation amongst the black population, being ordered to:

> ... report to the Chief Native Commissioner any attempts to stir up strife, discord, dissatisfaction, enmity or disloyalty amongst the members of the tribe or between the chief and members of his tribe or between natives and the Government.[102]

The definition of the role of the Native Commissioner in terms more appropriate to a functionary in the security apparatus, than the welfare branch of the administration, makes it less surprising that in many districts the post was combined with that of local magistrate. Black residents were, theoretically, to take their complaints about mistreatment to the very man who might well earlier have

sentenced them under the Masters and Servants legislation.

The combination of the two posts also raised doubts about the degree of familiarity that Native Commissioners could obtain with the problems facing the black population in their district. Hahn pointed out in 1936 that magisterial duties were given a far higher priority by officials than their dual position of district Native Commissioner:

> The Magistrates are, of course, Native Commissioners but how often does one see minutes or reports from them in their capacity as Native Commissioners signed as such. This alone shows that, because of their many other duties, they cannot give the time and attention to purely Native Affairs work.[103]

Officially the Native Commissioners were only obliged to visit the reserves once every three months to attend the quarterly meetings at the reserve and, once formed, the concurrent, meetings of the reserve board. One of these meetings served as the annual meeting and, where possible, was attended by the 'Chief Native Commissioner' or 'Additional Native Commissioner'.[104]

The main burden of responsibility for the implementation of policy within the reserves, therefore fell upon the shoulders of the Superintendents/Welfare Officers actually living in the reserves who were in daily contact with the black residents. The Welfare Officers were responsible for controlling the flow of workers in and out of a reserve through the issue of permits, providing monthly reports to the 'Chief Native Commissioner' via the district 'Native Commissioner', to allot residential sites, brand stock, collect grazing fees and other sums to be paid into the reserve trust fund, administer the native reserve regulations (as set out in Government Notice No. 68 of 1924) and:

> ... in conjunction with the Native Reserve Board assist the natives in making improvements in the Reserve.[105]

The Welfare Officer thus had considerable powers within the reserve. The authority to judge the right of admission of applicants to the reserve, to collect taxes and to 'initiate' expenditure from the reserve fund gave considerable scope for patronage in favour of particular individuals or groups or discrimination against others.[106] The qualifications and suitability of those appointed as Welfare Officers was questionable. Welfare Officers were appointed who were unable to speak the language of the black residents of the reserve whom they were responsible for, whilst no specialised training was given prior to appointment until the 1950s.[107] The job of Welfare Officer was considered to offer poor pay, poor career prospects and social isolation. A senior official recognised, as late as 1946, the unattractiveness of the post:

> Position of Welfare Officer is anomalous and their prospects poor... The initial pay would have to be raised to say £35 instead of £25 in order to get men who could rank as III grade clerks.[108]

Even granted this increase it was felt that the salary would only be sufficient to attract young and unmarried men "who would not be suitable".

The lack of sufficient inducements to attract the usual calibre of officials employed in the 'Native Affairs' Department meant that special measures had to be taken to fill the posts in Namibia:

> They are engaged on the nomination of the Public Service Commission in the Union, on special rates of pay, which reflect the fact that they have not as a rule the qualification prescribed for holding a post in the Native Affairs Department, namely, the passing of the civil service lower law examination or its equivalent.[109]

Officials were therefore appointed who would not have been considered sufficiently qualified to hold an equivalent post within South Africa.

The low level of investment in the white administrative structures that were established to monitor the affairs of the reserves was linked to efforts to encourage a layer of black leaders within the reserves. The aim was not to revive the old leadership, but rather to incorporate a new generation of leaders in a system of rule in which they provided a cheap means of controlling the black residents of the reserves:

> As the connecting link between the European officials and the natives, headmen, elected by the people, are appointed by the Government and receive a small salary. They are responsible for the good behaviour of the people, settle civil disputes amongst them, represent any grievances they may have and are in fact, <u>the substitute for the old native chiefs.</u> As a rule they are assisted by a council of the leading natives [my emphasis].[110]

Legislation made it very clear that the new black leaders should see their role limited to that of administrative agents rather than political leaders.

The legislation concerning the role of the new headmen and reserve boards seemed contradictory. On the one hand it seemed to enable the election of popular leaders, whilst on the other paying them a salary as government workers. The duties that the leaders were expected to carry out were primarily designed to facilitate control and taxation of the reserves, rather than allowing the leaders to represent and promote the wishes of the people. Strict restraints were put on the political involvement of the new headmen:

> They shall not become members or take any part in the affairs of any political association or any association whose objects are deemed by the Administrator to be subversive of or prejudicial to constituted Government or good order.[111]

The responsibilities given to the headmen were detailed in Government. Notice No 68. of 1924 which provided guidelines for the management of the reserves. The

reserves were to be divided up into wards, where necessary, by the magistrate and each ward placed under the control of a 'headman'. A Government Notice of 1929 identified six main areas of duty assigned to black leaders (see Table 5).[112]

Table 5: Summarised Duties of Reserve Headmen.

1) to help compile a register of tax payers.
2) to encourage the dipping of stock.
3) to advise on the allotment of land and prevention of squatting.
4) the prevention and detection of crime and reporting of unlawful meetings.
5) the supply of labour
6) to report the presence of strangers/strange stock,

One of the key functions of the headmen was to try and exercise effective control over the distribution and ownership of stock within the reserves. The temptation for black owners to distribute their animals amongst their relations as a way of avoiding high rates of grazing fees could only be curbed by the incorporation of local black residents with the necessary knowledge to frustrate such schemes. One of the regulations the headmen were to enforce was, accordingly, the rule that:

> ... no person shall keep or cause to be kept within a reserve any animal unless he be the bona fide owner or the person having the lawful custody thereof.[113]

The headmen in each reserve were to meet regularly at meetings of the reserve board. The boards were intended to supersede the existing political structures within communities. The establishment of a reserve board in Berseba in 1928, for example, was to replace the existing 'Raad' (Council) of seventeen appointed by the Captain.[114] The primary purpose of the meetings of the reserve board was to make decisions concerning the distribution of funds from the reserve trust fund. The boards consisted:

> ... usually of the headman ... and not more than six other adult male natives, who are required either to be domiciled in the reserve concerned or to possess substantial interests therein. The members are elected by their fellow residents [my emphasis].[115]

The legislation sought to incorporate the wealthier residents of the reserve into the administration. However, ironically these were the very residents that were likely to be most adversely effected by the efficient enforcement of the legislative restrictions on stock. Board members might well have had their own economic motives for performing their supervisory duties with reluctance.

The identification of black leaders with the government meant that there was a clear risk that they would become alienated from their followers. The choice leaders faced was that of attempting to enforce unpopular legislation at the risk of losing their credibility as community leaders or, alternatively, reflecting the opposition of their communities to legislation at the risk of losing their job. The majority of leaders were reluctant to take the latter risk with the result that by 1946 the Annual Report for the territory was forced to conclude that:

> Board members have little or no influence with their followers and with a few exceptions are not much of assistance to the authorities in the administration of the reserves.[116]

The administrative role given to black leaders in the reserves gave them authority

without power. However the administration argued that the limited managerial role given to the boards was:

> ... designed to meet present requirements for the acquisition by natives of training and experience in the problems of administration, ... [and provided] ... sufficient indication of the Administration's readiness to grant the indigenous inhabitants some form of participation in the administration of their own affairs.[117]

The scope for gaining experience through the boards was surely exaggerated. The boards met irregularly, financial decisions were subject to the agreement of the Welfare Officer and the boards themselves were limited in size.

CONCLUSION

The reserve system in Namibia was established as an element in a broader state strategy to capture and geographically stabilise the black labour force. Legislation was formulated that inhibited the ability of black stockowners to compete effectively with the wave of white immigrant farmers. The powers given to the state were considerable. However the administrative structures built to enforce them were weak.

The implication was that the legislation had a gradual, rather than immediate, impact and that reserves (at least initially) had the potential to nurture economic activity that might evade the full supervisory weight of the dtate. However the division of land intrinsic to the reserves policy in Namibia and the tightening police restrictions on the mobility of labour meant that hopes of black autarky would be short-lived. The next chapter will chart the impact of the legislation on the reserves of southern Namibia by examining in detail the economic experiences of the black stockowners within the reserves.

NOTES - CHAPTER ONE

1. Drechsler. H. Let Us Die Fighting - The Struggle of the Herero and Nama against German Imperialism (1884-1915). Zed Press. London. 1980. p 114-116.

2. Leutwein to the Col. Dept. Sept. 1904. Quoted in Drechsler, H. Let Us Die Fighting - The Struggle of the Herero and Nama against German Imperialism (1884-1915). Zed Press. London. 1980. p116.

3. Deutsche Kolonialwirtschaft, p286. Quoted in South Africa, Union of. Report on the Natives of South-West Africa and Their Treatment By Germany Pretoria. Cd 9146. 1918. p18-19.

4. Quoted in Drechsler, 1966. p215.

5. Translation of Proclamation of the late Governor of this Protectorate regarding the obligation to possess passes of Natives. Issued on the 18th August 1907 (Colonial Gazette Page 1122) with amendment of the 20th July 1911. LMA 3/1/1 - 1916/20].

6. Bley. H. South West Africa Under German Rule, 1894-1914. Northwester University Press. Evanston. 1971. p 173.

7. Hasuur (Aroab), Bethanie, Gibeon, Keetmanshoop, Maltahoehe and Warmbad. Statistics obtained from 'Crimes and Offences committed during period 1st January, 1913 - 31st March, 1914'. A41.

8. Quoted in Bley. H. South West Africa Under German Rule, 1894-1914. Northwester University Press. Evanston. 1971.p 230.

9. Administrator's Report to General Botha for the period 09.03.1915 -31.03.1916. Dated 01.04.1916. ADM. 137 - 6.

10. "Memorandum ... for the information of Military Magistrates and Detached Assistant Military Magistrates of those districts wherein a special Native Affairs Official is not stationed..." E.H.L. Gorges, Chief Secretary for the Protectorate. 24th September, 1915. LMA 3/1/1 - 1916/17.

11. Memo 'To all Military Magistrates and Detached Assistant Military Magistrates' from E.H.L. Gorges, Chief Secretary for the Protectorate. LMA 3/1/1 - 1916/17.

12. Administrator's Report to General Botha for the period 09.03.1915 - 31.03.1916. Dated 01.04.1916. P 23. Point 19. ADM. 137 - 6.

13. Administrator's Report to General Botha for the period 09.03.1915 - 31.03.1916. Dated 01.04.1916. P 21. Point 18. ADM. 137 - 6.

14. Conference of Magistrates and Police Officers held at Windhoek, 28th November, 1917. ADM 157 - W41.

15. Circular No: 26. 'Criminal Law relating to Masters and Servants' 28th October, 1915. LMA 3/1/1 - 1916/17.

16. Report on the Natives of South-West Africa and their Treatment by Germany. HMSO. 1918. Cd 9146.

17. Report on the Natives of South-West Africa and their Treatment by Germany. HMSO. 1918. Cd 9146. 'Preface' p 6.

18. Report on the Natives of South-West Africa and their Treatment by Germany. HMSO. 1918. Cd 9146. 'Preface' p 6.

19. AR. 1916. p 24. ADM 106 - 3370.

20. AR. 1916. p 56. ADM 106 - 3370.

21. AR. 1916. p 56. ADM 106 - 3370.

22. AR. 1916. p 56. ADM 106 - 3370.

23. AR. 1916. p 57. ADM 106 - 3370.

24. AR. 1916. p 57. ADM 106 - 3370.

25. J.F. Herbst, Sec. for Protectorate to Sec. for Lands, Cape Town. 20th March, 1920. SWAA 1119 A158/1 Vol 1.

26. Sec. for Protectorate to Sec. for Lands, Cape Town. 20th March, 1920. SWAA 1119 A158/1 Vol 1.

27. Mr Drew (a former Magistrate at Uniondale in the Union who had been appointed 'Inspecting Magistrate' in Namibia) and Col. Kruger. The four additional members consisted of Col. De Jager (Commander of the armed forces stationed in Namibia and leader of the 1917 expedition against Mandume), Major Manning (Commissioner for Native Affairs), Mr Schneider (Senior Officer, Lands Branch) and Mr Landsberg (Surveyor-General). Administrator to Acting Prime Minister, Cape Town. 8th April, 1919. ADM 157 - W41.

28. AR LoN. p13. 1921

29. Sec. to the PM. to Sec. SWA. 3rd August, 1921. SWAA A50/1

30. Report of Natives Reserve Commission. 8th June, 1921. p20.

31. AR LoN. 1920 p13.

32. AR LoN 1921. p12.

33. Report of Natives Reserve Commission. 8th June, 1921. p 6.

34. AR LoN. 1920. p13.

35. AR LoN. 1920. p13.

36. AR LoN. 1920. p13.

37. AR LoN. 1920. p13.

38. AR LoN. 1920. p13.

39. The District Reports for Warmbad contain particularly prolific references to the moral and biological degeneration of the local people, whilst as late as 1944 one publication raised the spectre of birth control as resistance ! Steenkamp, W. Is the South West Africa Herero committing Race Suicide ? Cape Town. 1944.

40. Sec. for Protectorate to Sec. for Lands, Cape Town. 20th March, 1920. SWAA 1119 A158/1 Vol 1.

41. Report of Natives Reserve Commission. 8th June, 1921. p20.

42. AR LoN 1922. p13.

43. AR LoN 1922. p13.

44. Report of Native Economic Commission, 1930-1932. Pretoria. UG 22. 1932. para199. p30.

45. Report of Native Economic Commission, 1930-1932. Pretoria. UG 22. 1932. Para 212. p32.

46. Hahn, NC, Ovamboland to Trollope, Assist NC. 22nd January, 1936. p3. SWAA - A73/17

47. Hailey. A Survey of Native Affairs. p 110.

48. Hailey, Lord. 'Talks with Mr Neser (4th Sept. 1946) Assorted Papers used for 'A Survey of Native Affairs in South West Africa' [Unpublished foolscap notes].

49. Sec. SWA., Mnr. Neser. Minutes of Meeting at Okakarara, Waterberg East. May, 1947. p8. Quoted in Olivier. p114.

50. Official Yearbook of the Union of South Africa. No. 30. 1960. Bureau of Census & Statistics. Pretoria. p610.

51. Memo. 'Decisions by the Government on the Recommendations of the Commission of Enquiry into South West Africa Affairs. WPH - '64

52. AR LoN 1922. p16

53. Report of Native Reserves Commission, 1928. LA 2-28. pii. para 6.

54. 'Native Affairs Circular No. 6 of 1950' 17th October, 1950. SWAA A158/131 vol. 1

55. Govt. Notice No. 121 of 1952. 1st May, 1952. Official Gazette No. 1673. SWAA 418 - A158/131 vol 2.

56. 'Native Labour in South West Africa'. 1937. SWAA A521/13/2].

57. Sec. SWA to 'All Police Officers ...' 9th October, 1923. SWAA 1439 - A219/2 vol. 1

58. Grazing Fees: Native Reserves' Sec. SWA to Admin. 02.04.1934. SWAA 1121 - A158/3/1

59. Sec. Protectorate to Military Magistrate, Maltahohe. 18th December, 1917. LMA 3/1/6 - 22.

60. Memo 'Native Grazing Fees'. NC to Sec, SWA. 11th May, 1927. SWAA A158/2 vol.1

61. Memo 'Native Grazing Fees'. NC to Sec, SWA. 11th May, 1927. SWAA A158/2 vol.1

62. AR LoN 1927 p33.

63. Memo 'Native Grazing Fees'. NC to Sec, SWA. 11th May, 1927. SWAA A158/2 vol.1

64. Memo 'Native Grazing Fees'. NC to Sec, SWA. 11th May, 1927. SWAA A158/2 vol.1

65. Windhoek Advertiser. 10th July, 1929.

66. Grazing Fees: Native Reserves'. Sec SWA to Admin. 2nd April, 1934. SWAA 1121 - A158/3/1

67. 'Native Labour in South West Africa' 1937 p 5/6. SWAA A521/13/2.

68. 'Native Affairs' SWAA - A 50/188/6

69. 'Grazing Fees: Native Reserves.' Sec. SWA to Administrator. 2nd April, 1934. SWAA 1121 - A158/3/1. AR LoN. 1946. p12. It should be noted, however, that whilst guidelines were laid down the exact level of charges made in each Reserve remained the responsibility of locally based 'Native Affairs' officials One visiting South African wrote on 6th August, 1947 that "There is no standard scale for grazing fees", but that "a scale commonly adopted is 3d a month for oxen, 2d for cows, 1/4d per month per head of small stock up to 100 and 1/2 d per head if the number exceeds 100. The Dog tax is 5/- per dog and 2/6 for every additional

dog; the Wheel Tax is 7/6." [Extract. Report of H.A. Melle (Senior Assistant Director of Native Agriculture) to Director of Native Agriculture, Pretoria. KAP vol. 1 AC 6/1].

70. NC to Deputy Admin. 17th August, 1928. SWAA 1119 A 158/1.

71. AR LoN, 1937 p 46.

72. AR LoN 1939. UG. No. 30/1940. Quoted in Olivier, M. 1961. p191.

73. Lord Hailey recorded the official explanation that "... the Proclamation of 1939 ... regarding Tribal Trust Fund and Tribal Councils has not come into effect. Intention was to have Tribal Levy (quite separate from Reserve Trust Funds) applying to all members of Herero, Damara or Hottentot [sic] Tribes, and a Tribal Council (elected from Board Members) who would administer it". Hailey, Lord. Unpublished foolscap notes for 'A Survey of Native Affairs in South West Africa' 1946.

74. Odendaal. p73.

75. Olivier, M. 1961 p192

76. Minute No. A50/238 from Admin. to all Magistrates. 16th October, 1951. and 'Vergadering van die Namastam-Leiers ...' SWAA 491 - A 50/238 vol.1.

77.

Urban Area	Government Notice
Keetmanshoop	No. 110 of 1932
Luderitz	(Circular Instructions)
Swakopmund	No. 160 of 1932
Walvis Bay	No. 129 of 1932
Windhoek	No. 77 of 1932

[Draft Circular. No. 50/28. 'To Native Commissioners ... from C.N.C. SWAA A50/28. vol. 3]

78. Draft Circular. No. 50/28. 'To Native Commissioners ... from C.N.C. SWAA A50/28. vol. 3

79. AR LoN 1930 p63. and AR LoN 1936 p93.

80. Adapted from the Odendaal Report

81. Information from letter from CBC to the Registrar of Acts, Windhoek. 22nd May, 1958. Quoted in Olivier. p123. and Odendaal p 69. Tables XXVII, XXV111 and XXXIX.

82. The total area of all the Reserves in the Police Zone was 4,039,443 hectares. One Reserve, Aukeigas, had been proclaimed in 1932 - but then deproclaimed in 1945. AR on South West Africa. 1946. p14. SWA Handbook. 1965. p66.

83. Administrator's Report to General Botha for the period 09.03.1915 - 31.03.1916. Dated 1st April, 1916. ADM 137-6.

84. Crown Prosecutor to the Administrator. 22nd November, 1917.ADM 157 W41. At least six of the cases listed took place in the South. One example was a case recorded in Maltahohe - "3. About the 3rd. June, 1916, Mrs Smit of Maltahohe complained to the MC at Maltahohe, that a native woman in her employ would not do her work properly. Apparently with the approval of his OC. Sergt. Badenhorst took the girl to his OC's house and there flogged her with a stirrup leather."

85. Conference of Magistrates and Police Officers held at Windhoek. 28th November, 1917. ADM 157 - W41.

86. Conference of Magistrates and Police Officers held at Windhoek. 28th November, 1917. ADM 157 - W41.

87. The book records that 'Magistraatsetel afgeskaf vanaf 01.02.1932' and when revived incorporated the position of 'Naturellekommissarisse'. 'Inhoudsopgawe Maltahohe Distriksrekordboek'. Maltahohe Magistrate's Office. The Magistrate's Office in the neighbouring District of Bethanie was closed in May, 1931 and only reopened sixteen years later in May, 1947. Cases from 1931 to 1944 were heard during a monthly visit to Bethanie by the Magistrate from Keetmanshoop. 'Bethanie, 1915-1954' ARG8 - 15/3/7.

88. Hahn, NC, Ovamboland to Trollope, Assistant NC. 22nd January, 1936. SWAA - A73/17. p2.

89. Olivier, 1961. p 186. "Die algemene verblyf van 'n landdros in 'n bepaalde distrik is 4 jaar waarna hy dikwels na Suid-Afrika verplaas word en uit daardie oord vervang word."

90. AR LoN. 1921. p 11.

91. Odendaal. p53

92. Notes to CNC. 22nd December, 1944. SWAA - A 521/13 vol.3.

93. Hahn, NC. Ovamboland to Trollope, Assistant NC. 22nd January, 1936. SWAA - A73/17. p 1/2.

94. Hahn, NC. Ovamboland to Trollope, Assistant NC. 22nd January, 1936. SWAA - A73/17. p 1/2.

95. Adapted from Surveyor-General's Map of Namibia. 1937. No.18 The Magisterial District of Aroab was dismantled in 1941 and added to neighbouring Districts.

96. AR LoN. 1939. p 140.

97. AR LoN. 1946. p 14.

98. Union of South Africa. South West Africa and the Union of South Africa: The History of a Mandate. South Africa Government Information Office. New York. 1946. p19

99. 'Report of the Committee on South West Africa to the General Assembly' GA. 11th Session. Supplement No. 12 (A/3151). New York. 1956. SWAA 915 - A 73/27/1 vol. 2.

100. Official Gazette No. 1746. 21st December, 1928.SWAA - A50/216

101. Official Gazette No. 1746. 21st December, 1928.SWAA - A50/216

102. Official Gazette No. 1746. 21st December, 1928.SWAA - A50/216

103. Hahn, NC. Ovamboland to Trollope, Assistant NC. 22nd January, 1936. SWAA 910 - A 73/17.

104. AR. LoN 1937. p46. The Annual Meetings were convened according to Section 5 of Proclamation 9 of 1924.

105. Govt Notice No 68. 'Native Reserve Regulations' dated 06.06.1924. SWAA - A 158/2 vol. 1AR LoN 1937 p46.

106. Extract. Report of H.A. Melle (Senior Assist. Director of Native Agriculture, SA.) to Director of Native Agriculture, Pretoria. KAP v1. AC 6/1

107. AR LoN 1924. Mnr. McIntyre Speech. BAC 37 - HN 1/15/2 vol. 4.

108. 'Talks with Mr Allan'. Unpublished foolscap notes. Hailey, Lord. Assorted Papers used for 'A Survey of Native Affairs'. 1946.

109. Hailey, Lord. A Survey of Native Affairs. 1946. p 93.

110. AR LoN 1922. p9. UG No. 21/1923.

111. 'Regulations Prescribing the Duties, Powers and Privileges of Chiefs and Headmen'. 1929. SWAA - A 50/32 vol.1.

112. 'Regulations Prescribing the Duties, Powers and Privileges of Chiefs and Headmen'. 1929. SWAA - A 50/32 vol.1.

113. 'Native Reserve Regulations' 6th June, 1924. GN 68 of 1924. SWAA - A 158/2.

114. Mag. Keetmanshoop to Sec. SWA. 28th June, 1928. LKE 3/1/23 - 2/13/2

115. Memo. 'Native Reserve Boards' from NC. 30th May, 1928. SWAA. A 158/1 vol. 2

116. Konsep-verslag: Administrasie van Suidwes-Afrika, 1946. p204. Quoted in Olivier. p190

117. Dokument No. 382. 'Biblioteek van Wetgewende Vergadering', opgestel deur Dept. van Buitelandse Sake, 1949. p28. Quoted in Olivier. p 188.

CHAPTER TWO: THE ECONOMY OF THE RESERVES, 1915-1955.

INTRODUCTION.

A network of reserves had been established, throughout southern Namibia by 1924. Yet these reserves failed to completely achieve their role of recruiting and regulating the flow of labour to the surrounding farming area. The aim of this chapter will be to examine the internal factors and within the reserve economy that contributed to the disruption of this intent. The chapter will utilise evidence taken from the experiences of the residents of five of the principal reserves in southern Namibia - three comparatively large reserves (Berseba, Bondels and Tses) and two smaller reserves (Gibeon and Soromas).[1]

The establishment and maintenance of reserves in southern Namibia was designed to achieve two economic goals. The reserves were to provide a permanent reservoir of labour to service the surrounding farms and provide a storage space for the surplus stock of those employed on the farms. Reserve residents, however, had their own economic agenda. Black stockowners wanted to use the reserves to rebuild their economic independence or at least gain an economic base that was sufficiently strong to enable them to enter the labour market with some discretion. The storage and supply functions of the reserves were thus inherently contradictory.

White farmers feared the pastoral potential of the reserves and the competition that they might face from black pastoralists. The accumulation of black pastoralists had to be constrained and controlled. The prospective prosperity of black stockowners depended upon parameters of mobility and development that changed over time to their disadvantage. The German policy of land alienation and stock dispossession was less vigorous in impact on southern Namibia than in central Namibia. Southern Namibia was sparsely settled during the German colonial period and contained the largest areas that remained 'reserved' for black stockowners. Land alienation

proceeded at a particularly fast pace in southern Namibia following the South African occupation in 1915. The consequence was rapid restriction of the mobility of black pastoralists in the region. The area of land to which black pastoralists had access shrank with increasing competition for the resources within the limited dimensions of the reserves. The commercial viability of the stock within the reserves was therefore dependent on investment in the development of the livestock economy. Black pastoralists had to accumulate stock of sufficient quality and quantity to enable them to have a marketable surplus. The application of grazing fees, development of water resources, fencing of reserves, control of stock diseases, breeding and quality control of stock and access of animals to stock markets were all key elements in deciding the commercial combativeness of the reserve residents.

The economy of southern Namibia in the South African colonial period was, in both communal and commercial farming areas, based on pastoralism. The erratic and discrepant pattern of precipitation within the region combined with the rarity of permanent surface water to make mobility an essential ingredient for successful farming. Wellington's rainfall figures for southern Namibia for the period 1883 to 1960 cover 77 years, of which 34 were described as 'drought' years.[2] The Long Term Agricultural Policy Commission of 1948 argued that flood and drought should be accepted as 'normalities' in Namibia and reached the pessimistic conclusion that:

> ... no cycle or secular change can be worked out on the available data that will have any value in the planning of farm management.[3]

The Commission advised that inadequate rainfall and drought should be anticipated and strategies developed accordingly.
The difficult environmental constraints on pastoral farming played an important role in shaping political and economic affairs.

Political rivalry in the pre-colonial years reflected the economic realities of the region, with conflicts being centred less on claims for land ownership than on

disputes over access to water holes and pasture. Territories were not measured according to rigid cartographical boundaries, but rather areas within grazing distance of a number of water holes periodically visited by the livestock of a particular community.[4]

The predominance of small stock in southern Namibia was a direct and rational response to the ecological limitations of the region. Cattle were simply more vulnerable to drought and the general scarcity of open water. Cattle needed to drink water every 2 to 3 days, which restricted them to pasture within 15 kilometres of the nearest water hole. In contrast goats could healthily survive for up to 5 to 6 days and thus gain access to pasture within a 30 kilometre radius of a water hole. In addition goats were able to digest a wider range of vegetation and were thus able to make optimum use of the limited flora available in the region.[5]

The rigid land divisions introduced by white settler farmers in southern Africa created environmental problems. Wilson reports that, as early as 1785, a visiting scientist noted that in South Africa:

> ... pastures suffered more from Dutch farmers who were settled than from Khoikhoi who moved continually.[6]

Yet it was the pastoralist who was to bear the blame for environmental deterioration in much of the colonial literature. Black pastoralists were cast in the role of environmental villains, one writer arguing that:

> ... the nomad is not so much the 'son of the desert', but its father.[7]

Mobility and livestock accumulation were not perceived by the majority of colonial commentators as crucial components in the survival strategy of pastoralists within arid ecosystems. Resistance to policies which restricted stock accumulation or confined mobility was presented as the irrational product of traditional conservatism.

The struggle for freedom of access to pasture and water holes can be seen as the core economic motivation behind the 1904-1907 War against the German colonial regime. Mayor, a German missionary provided the following diagnosis of the conflict:

> As long as the people could still freely move with their cattle, no friction occurred. But the land owners finally made use of their right and often asked them to stay within their boundaries. These were drawn so narrow, however, that the natives grew afraid.[8]

The confiscation of vast areas of land previously used by black pastoralists was to be the most significant consequence of the German victory in the War. One significant regional distinction was the fact that land alienation was less absolute in southern Namibia than it had been in central Namibia. The land of the Berseba community was not confiscated as the inhabitants remained 'loyal', whilst special concessions were extracted by the Bondelswarts. The appropriation of land and restrictions on livestock ownership were never as easy to enforce as they were to pronounce, however the measures certainly had a profoundly damaging impact on the pastoral economy of black communities. The South African occupation resulted in the removal of these measures and increase in the area of land officially set aside for the exclusive use of black pastoralists.

The chronology of dispossession in southern Namibia should be contrasted with that in South Africa. The decline of the peasantry in South Africa was charted through the second half of the nineteenth century. A general consensus seems to have been reached by historians that by 1920 the black peasant economy in South Africa had been so underdeveloped that it had ceased to pose any significant economic threat to the commercial farming sector.[9] An official report recognised the fact that hostile economic measures had been used to inhibit the development of successful black farming. The few aspirant black farmers who were able to purchase land before the passage of the 1913 Land Act were forced to pay prices far in excess of those paid by their white counterparts for similar acquisitions.[10] The emphasis on

possession of land in South Africa contrasted with the primary concerns of black pastoralists in southern Namibia which was access to land.

The mapping of boundaries in southern Namibia was less important than the effective policing of those boundaries. It would also be premature to date the destruction of the black pastoral economy in southern Namibia as early as 1920. The modest nature of white settlement, confusion generated by the fighting of 1915, subsequent relaxation of restrictive measures and sheer volume of unsold land available led to a period of optimism and expansion amongst black pastoralists. In 1917 1,475 of the 1,733 grazing licences issued to stockholders grazing on crown land were issued to black, not white, pastoralists. The period was one of stock recovery, not regression.

The 1920s saw a massive influx of aspirant white farmers, but the poverty of many of the new settlers meant that the decade was still one in which access to land and labour was contested, with black pastoralists in southern Namibia retaining a relatively strong negotiating position. As in Zimbabwe the determining factor in the competition was the ability of the colonial regime to exclude blacks from equal access to land and to markets. In Zimbabwe under the colonial regime farms were sold to blacks, but at inflated prices, so that by 1925 only 14 had black owners.[11] In Namibia black stockowners relied primarily on their ability to exchange their labour for grazing rights in order to gain access to land outside the boundaries of the reserve. Dispossession must therefore by related to shifts in their negotiating strength within labour contracts.

The fact that the borders of the reserves were becoming increasingly impermeable for residents wishing to find alternative grazing for their stock placed considerable stress on black stockowners. However the administration also developed more direct means to regulate the accumulation of stock within the reserve. The measures were to include limitations on the total number of stock that might be owned by any one individual within certain reserves and restrictions on the number of animals that could enter a reserve with a new resident, but taxation was designed to provide the

most effective mechanism of control.

The fact that any reserve resident with 50 small stock or 10 large stock could obtain a Certificate exempting them from compulsory work, meant that some form of taxation was necessary to ensure that these residents would still need to leave the reserve and seek waged employment. The main difference between the tax structure in South Africa and that imposed on Namibia was that the latter reflected the strongly pastoral nature of the Namibian reserves. Wealth amongst traditionally mobile communities was better measured in stock than in huts. Consequently it was grazing fees, on an escalating scale relating to the size of the herds and flocks owned by each individual that were the most important form of taxation in the reserves of southern Namibia.

The introduction of grazing fees was to mark a major increase in the financial burden being placed upon the black stockowner by existing forms of taxation, such as dog tax. Grazing fees were introduced from 1st January, 1918 in the majority of farms recognised as temporary reserves. Few reserves officially existed at this time and many black stockowners were grazing their stock on vacant land. The uncertainty of the situation meant that the distribution of stock remained fluid and the most practical form of taxation was on the basis of monthly grazing licences. The rate of grazing fees charged in the reserves was however significantly cheaper than that being paid by most black stockowners on Crown Land. The cost of running a flock of 100 goats on Crown Land was 2s.6d per month, compared with only 1s.5d for running the same flock in a reserve. The aim was obviously to concentrate black stockowners within the reserve areas. The difference became less significant for black pastoralists with larger flocks. The owner of a flock of 500 goats paid 10s. in a reserve, and 11s.10d for hiring grazing on Crown Land.[12]

Wealthy black stockowners might feel justified in paying for better grazing outside the reserves during difficult periods. However their ability to do so rested on two preconditions - the ability to gain access to such land and the necessary capital to pay the relatively high charges. Courtney-Clarke (the Secretary for South West

Africa) admitted in 1937, that stockowners in Namibia faced a far higher level of taxation than their counterparts in South Africa[13]. The level of the monthly grazing fees was, however, to remain frozen in Namibia until 1954 when the rate was doubled. The escalating scale of grazing fees was intended to discourage the accumulation of stock, but also served to encourage the distribution of stock within the community in order to evade the higher tax brackets, thus strengthening the social and political networks of the wealthier individuals within the reserves.

The interests of wealthier stock owners who gained exemption and access to the limited resources of the reserves were in preserving those resources by restricting entry to the reserve and in using the distribution of their assets and influence over development plans within a reserve to build a political power base. The fact that reserves were communal meant that conflict in arid regions often centred around the question of access to water. Leaders in neighbouring Botswana were able to direct the sinking of boreholes to localities that would assist their own clientage network[14]. A period of drought would aggravate conflicts over water-holes and increase the tendency for individuals to seek exclusive access to water-holes.[15] The internal economic development of the reserves equally involved decisions that were heavy with political implication.

The extended drought of the early 1930s was a critical period. The closer occupation of land under the restocking schemes for white farmers that followed the drought resulted in a rapid increase in the number keeping high quality karakul sheep. Goats accompanying workers from the reserves became less welcome and the boundaries between reserves and surrounding farms were closely enforced and enfenced. Whites occupied and excluded black stockowners from the land on which they had fallen back in case of need. The corollary of this was to be a growing problem with 'overstocking' in the reserves themselves.

The accumulation of stock was one of the primary survival mechanisms adopted by pastoralists in arid climates. The necessity is to ensure that even if severe losses are experienced a sufficient number of animals remain to provide a 'basic herd'. A

basic herd would be the minimum size necessary to provide for the subsistence needs of the owner and that was capable of reproducing itself. The maintenance of a 'basic herd', even during a succession of drought years was essential for the food security of the community that it supported:

> ... stock accumulation, however exhausting of grazing resources, is a sensible insurance policy designed to build up capital assets and to offset the deleterious effects of future lean years. It is no more irresponsible, and often indeed a great deal less selfish than other forms of capitalistic speculation.[16]

The risks of concentrating stock in one area could also be reduced by dividing a flock for care amongst members of the extended family scattered over a wide area.

Initially wealthy stockowners in the reserves were able to
use the insatiated demand from white settlers for labour to spread their flocks between family members working on farms. Black farm workers were able to negotiate access for a number of stock as part of their contract, a device that could also sometimes be used as a means of moving stock when grazing in the reserve became sparse. However as farmers would often themselves be experiencing difficulties maintaining their stock during periods of drought, the range of options available to stockowners in the reserves became increasingly restricted.

The South West Africa Commission, reflecting on the devastating losses suffered by the occupants of the reserves during the severe drought of the early 1930s, conceded that the administration's reserve policy had contributed to these losses:

> The establishment of reserves and the introduction into the Territory of fencing laws, have somewhat restricted their liberty of movement, therefore diminishing their resistance, according to their habits of life, to the periodic droughts.[17]

The concession can be linked to the concern already expressed that overcrowding of the reserves in South Africa would escalate the three perils of irreparable ecological damage, increased squatting and uncontrollable black urbanisation. It was even predicted that if the present trends continued the reserves would be transformed into deserts.[18] Hyperbole was used in the Namibian context to justify economic constraints on reserve pastoralists:

> ... in view of the prevalent diseases of stock, the contraction of markets for pastoral products, and the diseases which ravaged the Natives themselves, the Administration had to choose between their reasonably constrained survival or allowing them to become extinct.[19]

Black stockowners had been rhetorically presented with a choice between dearth and death.

The attempt to resurrect autonomous economic and political pastoral communities was broken by the rigours of the drought and restrictions on pastoral mobility of black stockowners. The next two decades saw the increasing economic stratification of the reserves between a small minority striving to preserve their resources and accumulate stock within the confines of the reserves and the vast majority. The latter increasingly sought to escape the reserve, yet evade their scripted role as a reliable rural proletariat supplying the surrounding farms with labour. The economic struggle of the reserves was thus a dual one. The majority were either elderly or using the reserve to help them determine the terms of their engagement within the labour market, whilst the minority retained their pastoral ambitions.

By the late 1930s there was a significant improvement in both the economy and climate of southern Namibia. The restraints placed upon the mobility and accumulation of black stockowners and negligible amount of state support for the development of pastoralism within the reserves meant that the emergence of a successful strata of commercial black farmers in southern Namibia was stymied.

The reserves became increasingly peripheral to the economic ambitions of young workers in southern Namibia who sought to benefit from urban economic opportunities during World War Two. Pastoral prosperity was confined to a few families within each reserve and those that they supported. Exclusion from the reserves left the local population with the choice of seeking urban employment or the accommodation of stock on white farms in exchange for labour. The rise of both these trends in the early 1950s fuelled pressure for an expansion of the area provided as reserves, pressure that was to culminate in the publication of the Odendaal Plan in 1964.[20]

THE SPATIAL CONTEXT OF THE RESERVES.

The Berseba and Bondelswarts communities retained comparatively large areas of land dating from agreements made during the German period (see chapter one). The reserves established by the South Africans in southern Namibia were on a smaller scale. The economic viability of both the larger reserves was diminished by the new regime. The stockowners of Berseba lost a large section of their land which was purchased by the administration to create a new reserve, Tses, and a number of farms for white settlers. The Bondelswarts community faced wholesale stock losses twice within the first seven years of South African control. One community lost land and the other lost livestock.

The Germans had feared that the fiercely independent Bondelswarts would join the invading South African forces in 1914. When the Germans retreated they therefore razed the Bondelswarts' homes to the ground and loaded virtually the entire community on a train to the north. The few men that were not packed onto the trucks, were forced to drive their stock north ahead of the advancing Union forces. The aim was to ensure adequate supplies of meat and milk for the German forces, whilst depriving the Union forces of a convenient local source of the same.

The consequence of the forced migration of such a concentrated flock confined to

a narrow route, without sufficient pause or dispersal for grazing, was the devastation of the Bondelswarts' stock:

> ... during the trek the animals died wholesale and only a small percentage of the stock which originally started on their journey from Kalkfontein were saved.[21]

The new administration recognized that the Bondelswarts had '... lost practically everything'.[22] They had been perhaps the greatest economic victims of the short campaign in Namibia, and looked to the victors for compensation from the stock seized from the vanquished. A Bondelswarts delegation travelled to Windhoek following the German defeat to lobby for the return of their land and compensation for the stock lost during transportation.[23]

The administration offered them no land and offered compensation that only met a fraction of their stock losses. The military magistrate estimated that the Bondelswarts lost 15,227 small stock and 123 cattle during World War One. One out of every twelve animals lost were replaced. The inadequacy of the compensation offered to the Bondelswarts converted a wealthy community into a poor one and was the first in a series of grievances that the community accumulated against the new authorities.[24] Five years later the Bondelswarts were still petitioning the South African Prime Minister for further compensation.[25]

The Bondelswarts were determined to preserve their pastoral economy, upon which the wealth of the community had been built for decades, but suffered a further blow to the recovery of their flocks when all their animals were confiscated as a result of the 1922 Bondelswarts Rising. The Administrator's official report on the Rising claimed that the 12,470 small stock, 700 donkeys and 800 large stock captured during the Rising consisted largely of animals seized from neighbouring farmers by the Bondelswarts.[26] Yet there is evidence that contests this view and suggests that the Bondelswarts own flocks had increased significantly.

The Attorney-General in his earlier internal report claimed that the stock seized:

> ... formed only a portion of the total number owned by them.[27]

At least 3,000 small stock had been received in compensation, 600 had survived in the South and 3,400 more arrived with Jacobus Christiaan and his followers in 1919.[28] The evidence suggests that natural increase may even have enabled flocks to recover to their pre-war levels. The white Superintendent of the reserve later recalled counting 30-40,000 small stock during a stock count in the reserve during 1922.[29]

The administration returned the Bondelswarts stock at the end of the 'rebellion', but claimed that drought, scab and poverty had led to heavy losses during their custody. Only 2,415 sheep and goats, 712 cattle and 691 donkeys were handed back to the Bondelswarts.[30] The Bondelswarts lost over 80 percent of their small stock as a direct result of the 1922 Rising, having previously lost over 90 percent of their stock in 1915. Small stock levels in the reserve would not pass 12,470 again until 1950.

The poverty of the community after the Rising was such that some residents had to be issued with rations (7lb mealie meal and 3lb of meat per week) to save them from starvation.[31] The exploitation of the reserve's resources by white farmers (dealt with at greater length later in this chapter) and extreme poverty of the residents meant that the rate of consumption exceeded that of reproduction. The few surviving stock were returned to the reserve in November, 1922, yet by August of the following year the local magistrate was reporting that many of the returned animals had been eaten.[32] Only 709 small stock remained in the reserve by September, 1924.[33]

The German defeat had raised hopes that black stockowners would once again be able to graze their flocks over a wide area. Land, it was widely believed, would be taken from the vanquished Germans and returned to the original users. The

situation seemed particularly hopeful in southern Namibia which had been relatively sparsely settled under German rule (see Table 6).

TABLE 6: Land Alienation in the Southern Districts, 1913.[34]

District	Suitable as farm land (ha).	No. of Farms*.	Extent in ha.	Percent remaining.
Gibeon	4,650,000	92	1,217,729	74
Maltahohe	1,937,700	60	917,711	53
Bethanien	1,855,000	31	405,235	78
Keetmanshoop	1,832,087	34	601,511	67
Hasuur	1,825,622	52	722,499	60
Warmbad	2,888,479	36	907,465	69

* Excludes farms within area owned by German companies.

The size of the small reserves, such as Krantzplatz and Soromas, placed clear physical limits on the accumulation of stock. Yet the inadequate size of the reserves could be offset in some cases where a reserve's location enabled its residents to stray beyond its boundaries without attracting official attention. The extent of all the reserves in the first two decades of the South African occupation were not determined strictly by the geographical boundaries found on a map, but by the

boundaries of enforcement. Bondels reserve in Warmbad district bore the full brunt of the wave of poor white immigrants from the Cape, whilst the stockowners of Berseba reserve had easier access to unoccupied Crown Land.

The inadequacy of the administrative apparatus, the weakness of the police force and the fact that many farms around Berseba reserve (particularly in the mountainous area known as the 'Swart Rand') remained unoccupied by white farmers made it easier for stockowners to leave the reserve surreptitiously in search of pasture. In 1922 the police, looking for the residents of Berseba reserve, were told by the community's leader:

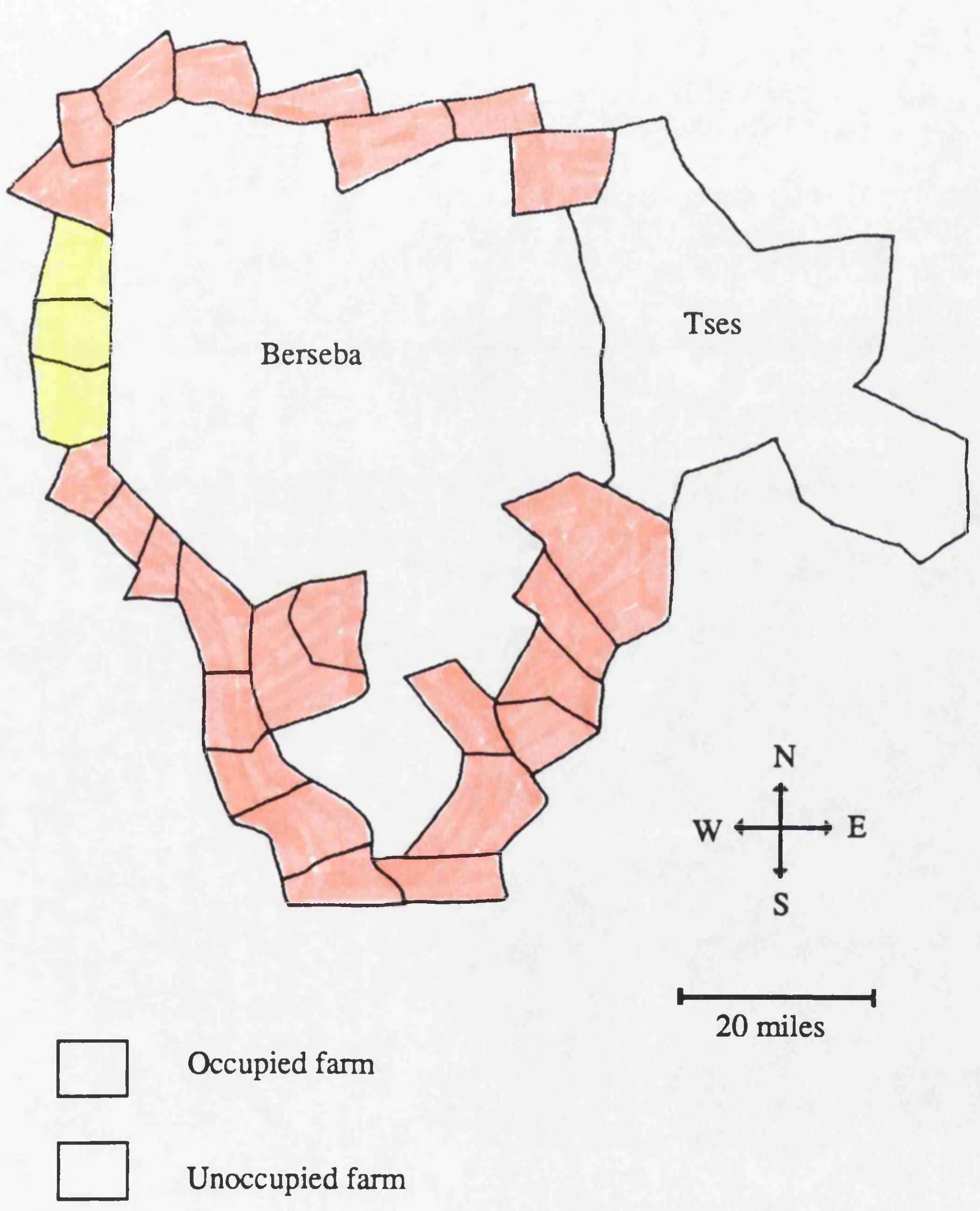
> ... that all his people are concentrating on the Swart Rand, and that some of them have actually crossed the Gibeon border, as that was the only place where it had rained and there was available grazing for their stock.[35]

The assumption that farms neighbouring reserves suffered high rates of stock theft may explain the reason that these farms were often purchased belatedly. As late as 1930 a number of farms adjoining Berseba remained unsold (See Map 3).

The Bondelswarts occupied land that enabled them to accumulate stock with the minimum of interference from officials or white farmers. An influx of refugees from the Richterfeld in the Cape with their stock after 1915 increased the demand for pasture. The land attached to the Mission Station at Heirachabis proved popular, whilst others moved onto unoccupied farms in the district. The fact that the Bondels had recent (pre-1906) memories of ownership claims over a far larger area of land than the 175,000 acres falling within the officially demarcated reserve, meant that they felt quite justified in making use of land beyond the borders of the reserve.

The formation of the reserves at Gibeon, Neuhof, Soromas and Tses was an administrative attempt to clear Crown Land of black stockowners following the spontaneous occupation of vacant farms by black stockowners during and

M3 Unoccupied farms
bordering Berseba Reserve 1930



immediately after the campaign against the German forces. The creation of the reserve at Gibeon provides a good example of the way in which the concentration of flocks previously dispersed over a wide area had a damaging impact.

The military magistrate for Gibeon district encouraged black stockowners to concentrate their stock on a farm near the town of Gibeon, called 'Freistadt'.[36] The farm was treated as a 'reserve' from 31 December, 1918 with residents paying grazing fees.[37] The residents were soon complaining that the farm was too small to allow them to successfully accumulate animals. Twenty-nine black stockowners were sharing the farm by the beginning of 1919. The small farm (4,841 hectares) was overcrowded, being used by 3,114 small stock and 61 large stock.[38] Generous estimates of the carrying capacity of the land in the district suggest that a farm of at least 14,500 hectares would have been required to sustain such stock numbers.[39] The consequence of the concentration was a rapid deterioration in the quality of the animals, placing black stockowners at a disadvantage if they wished to compete in the market place with white farmers.[40]

The residents' complaints led to an order that they should move (in October, 1919) from Freistadt to a larger farm at Witbooisvlei (10,400 hectares). The residents argued that, whilst larger, the new farm had an inadequate water supply and that they would have to buy salt due to the dietary shortcomings of the grazing.[41] The move was carried out reluctantly, but the community continued to seek an alternative. The Chair of the 1921 Commission set up to propose the location of permanent reserves suggested that the community moved to Tses. However a group sent by the community to visit Tses declared the farm unviable as:

> ... there is no grazing for their stock and the only water obtainable is that which results from rain - there is no permanent supply, and ... the land consists solely of stones.[42]

The stockowners sought land in sufficient quality and quantity to meet their pastoral ambitions. A series of deputations visited the local magistrate in Gibeon and the

Secretary for South West Africa in Windhoek. Eventually, in 1923, a delegation met the Administrator himself and presented a petition carrying a request:

> ... that farms may be given us for our own property for life.[43]

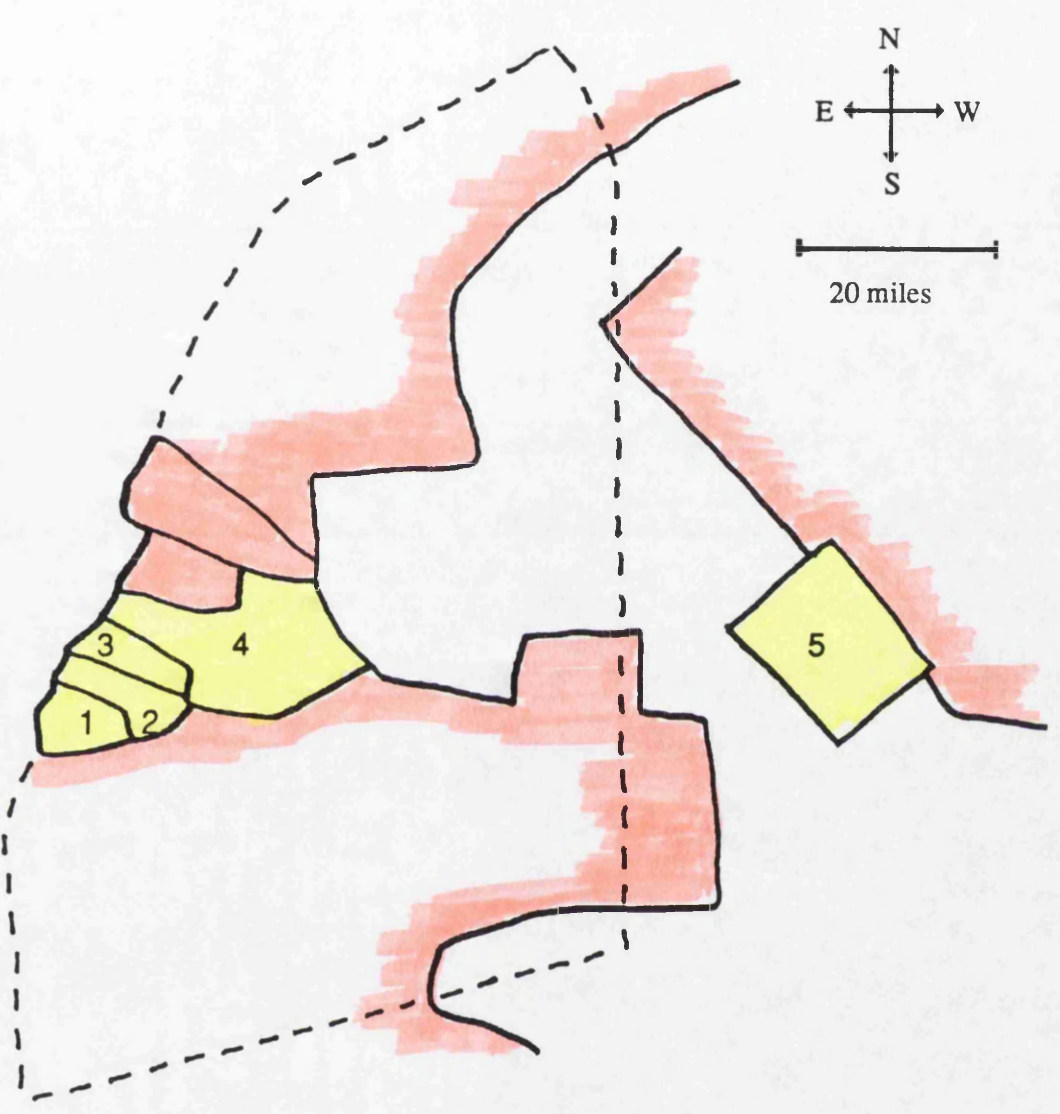
The stockowners sought farms within a large reserve that would stretch along the Fish River from Kameelhaar to Jakalsfontein and across to Rietmond in the north (See Map 4). The campaign was partially victorious. In 1924 a permanent reserve was proclaimed at Gibeon, but excluding the town and on a far smaller scale than had been envisaged by the delegation. The administration simply reverted to an earlier proposal for expanding the old reserve at Freistadt by adding a neighbouring farm (See Map 4)[44]. The new reserve was not sufficient to satisfy the accumulative ambitions of the stockowners, 41 of the 130 stockowners registered on the reserve during 1924-1926 left to seek better conditions and the average flock size of those that remained fell drastically.[45]

Complaints from black stockowners about the damaging consequences of concentrating their stock in inadequate reserves were pervasive. The residents of Soromas demanded and obtained a meeting with the Administrator as early as December, 1922 to complain about the paucity of the grazing.[46] Despite their efforts Soromas became the permanent reserve for Bethanie district in 1923, although the local magistrate admitted that it was:

> ... not adequate for the purpose. At the present time it is just a sandy waste.[47]

Tses reserve was created with the aim of draining the black stockowners from the surrounding Crown Land in Keetmanshoop district, however the pastoral potential of the new reserve was also greeted with scepticism by its intended occupants.

M4 Portion of Gibeon District 1921
showing Witbooisvlei and the farms
that were used to create Gibeon Reserve



1.	Freistadt
2.	Schwarzdorn
3.	Kranzplatz
4.	Falkenhorst
5.	Witbooisvlei
---	Approximate size of area claimed by 1923 delegation
☐	Land occupied by white settlers 1921

The pastoralists local knowledge of the district led their spokesperson to claim that at Tses:

> ... the grass only grew after good rains and was even then of a temporary nature and the area very stony.[48]

The Chair of the 'Native Reserves Commission' dismissed this opinion having had 'a favourable report' from Colonel Kruger, one of the Commissioners and argued that:

> ... it seemed unnecessary for me to visit the area or to inquire further into Native representations.[49]

The community view was to prove the more prophetic. The new reserve had inadequate supplies of water to provide for the large numbers of stock that were expected to move onto it. Following a personal visit to Tses reserve in 1932 the Assistant Secretary gave his scathing opinion that:

> The Tses reserve is totally unsuitable for its purpose and why it was ever selected is a mystery to me. All the best farms were cut out and allotted to Europeans and what was absolutely worthless was constituted as a reserve.[50]

Once again the rapid concentration of stock on inadequately developed land was fatal.

The statistics available for the early years of the reserve were viewed with scepticism by the authorities, but perhaps this was partly due to the fact that they suggested that there had been massive stock losses in the first three years of the new reserve's life. The magistrate estimated that, by 1925, 44,000 small stock and 3,000 large stock were contained within Tses, yet by 1927 the figures had dropped to 15,906 and 2,624. Whilst the earliest figure seems to have been speculative the

impression of a dramatic drop in the number of animals living in the reserve seems to be corroborated by more detailed evidence. One of the wealthier stockowners, Gideon Matundu, saw his flocks of 926 sheep and goats reduced within two years to just 200 in number.[51]

The boundaries of the reserves became more rigid as they were increasingly 'fenced in' during the 1920s by surrounding white commercial farms. The smaller reserves such as Gibeon and Soromas were too spatially constricted to support any significant number of black pastoralists. The size of the larger reserves such as Tses, Bondels and Berseba gave them greater pastoral potential, once water supplies were secured. The Administrator admitted that, as late as 1929, the size of the larger reserves made it impossible to control the entry and exit of the residents.[52] Ironically development also made the larger reserves seem more desirable to surrounding white farmers. A resolution was actually passed by the Legislative Assembly (representing the minority white franchise) in 1941 unsuccessfully calling for the closure of the 'absolutely worthless' Tses reserve and its subdivision into farms for white farmers.[53]

MOBILITY AND CONSTRAINT .

Mobility and Control.

The mobility of animals was a crucial element of the pastoral economy. The constraint of the freedom of movement by black pastoralists from the reserves was dependent upon the efficiency of the mechanisms of control within and around the reserves and the proximity and number of white farmers in the surrounding district. The legislation of stock control was not applied evenly. Historical precedent meant that the residents of Berseba and Bondels reserves did not officially require permits to remove stock from their reserves, unless they planned to cross a district border.[54] Yet if freedom of movement was necessary for pastoralists operating in underdeveloped reserves, it was not sufficient. Black stockowners needed not only to be able to move, but also to have somewhere they could move to.

The initial frustration of officials attempting to control the movement of black pastoralists with inadequate resources was evident in the Annual Report of the military magistrate at Warmbad in 1917:

> The machinery provided for the preservation of law and order in this District is disgracefully inadequate and unsatisfactory... There are only 18 men in the whole District available for police duty and they have an area of nearly 13,000 square miles to patrol, in addition to 300 miles of border between this District and the Union, and it is altogether impossible for so small a force of more or less incompetent and inexperienced men to effectually control such an area.[55]

The force was therefore unable to adequately interview black stockowners:

> ... squatting on Crown Land in different parts of the District.[56]

Within the reserves the monitoring capabilities of the administration were also limited. The first official count of the animals in the largest reserve in southern Namibia, Berseba, that was considered reliable was only carried out in 1929 - fifteen years after the first occupation of the area by Union forces.

The inadequacy of the resources available within the reserves meant that the ability to cross boundary lines and utilise grazing beyond the confines of the reserve was often crucial to black stockowners trying to sustain their flocks. The stockowners living in Soromas reserve in 1926, for instance, ran 123 large stock and 753 small stock within the reserve, but owned a far greater number (226 and 1,720) on land outside the reserve.[57] The ability of reserve residents to move their stock outside the reserve was to become increasingly constrained during the period of rapid white settlement in southern Namibia that took place during the 1920s.

Constraint

White land settlement had a restrictive impact on the practices of black pastoralists. The geographic location of the Bondels reserve meant that its residents were the first to suffer the consequences of white immigration and land alienation. A comparison of two maps showing the extent of white land occupation in 1911 and 1921 reveals the rapidity and scale of the process (see Maps 5 and 6). The settlers who purchased three farms bordering the reserve in 1923 found them occupied by local stockowners. The Attorney-General reported that:

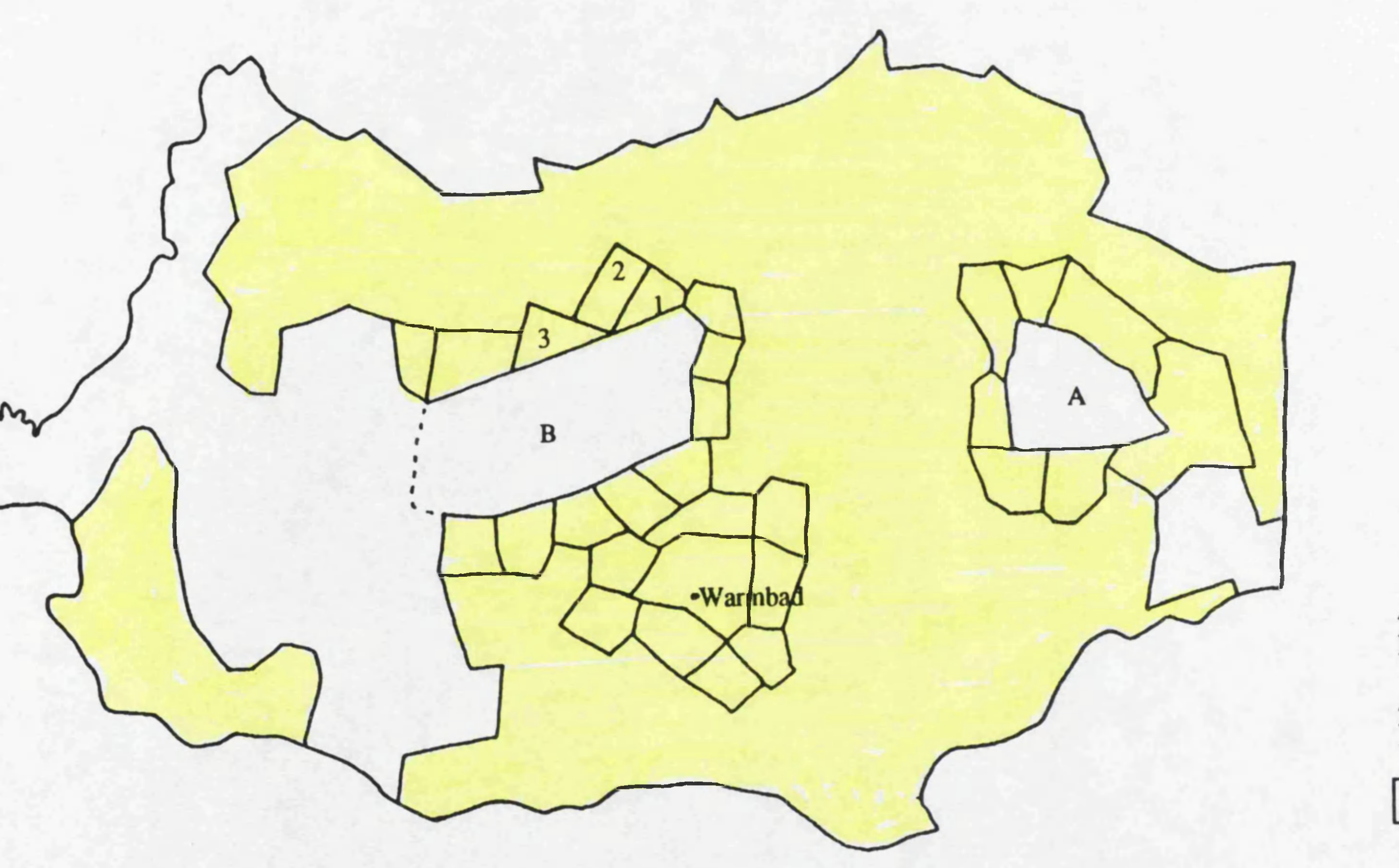
> Notwithstanding proper enquiry and proof of their misconception [by a surveyor] they defiantly remained where they were and police measures became necessary to ensure their removal.[58]

The constraints imposed by boundaries became apparent once the use of seasonal grazing and water points beyond the cartographical edge of the reserve became redefined as trespass. The threat posed to the community's pastoral economy by confinement was identified as one of the key causes of the Bondelswarts Rising of 1922.[59] The 'Secretary for South West Africa' acknowledged the damage caused by land settlement to the prospects of pastoral economy based in the Bondels reserve:

> What hit them hard was, of course, the land policy. In the Bondelswarts' days and the German days, all the ground round about was unoccupied, and they could wander round with their stock from place to place; when grazing and water were scarce, they had no difficulty in finding it round about elsewhere. When these farms were all given out to Settlers, the position became entirely different; they became hemmed in and restricted to their own Reserve; and, of course, in no time, the grazing gave out... the grazing and water are such that they are sufficient in normal times, but, when you get three, or four or five years drought, there is no grazing at all, and they have to trek. Well, there was no land to which they could trek.[60]

M5 White settlement in Warmbad District, 1911

M6 White settlement in Warmbad District, 1921



A direct correlation was noted by the 'Native Commissioner' for the territory between the decline in the quality and quantity of the Bondelswarts stock and the encirclement of the reserve by farms occupied by white farmers. By 1929 he doubted that the resources available within the reserve would be sufficient to enable flocks to recover to their former levels.[61]

The system prioritised the needs of the aspirant white farmers above those of black pastoralists. Attempts to improve the viability of Tses reserve in 1928 by adding three neighbouring farms was defeated when it was discovered that they had already been occupied by white farmers.[62] The occupation of farms gave no security of tenure to black pastoralists. The Tses case revealed a contrasting set of values. The local magistrate noted the clash of interests over the use of one of the farms, but concluded that:

> It is ... impossible to turn Europeans off the farm to make way for natives.[63]

The increasing density of white farmers on the land gave them the power to control stock movements by black pastoralists. The residents of Tses reserve were given official permission in 1928 to trek with their animals to vacant Crown Land on the fringe of the Kalahari to save their animals from drought. However the farmer occupying the farm through which they would have to pass to reach the fresh pasture refused them entry.[64]

Almost half (81) of the 167 listed black stockowners in Tses reserve in 1928 owned over 100 small stock and/or 20 large stock. The wealth of black stockowners, despite their losses over the previous years, rivalled that of many of the recent poor white immigrants. Josef Katzuminanini, for example, kept a herd of 22 cows and flocks of 279 sheep and 385 goats. The total stock figures for Tses reserve in 1928 were 18,500 small stock and 2,487 large stock giving an average of 228 small stock and 30 large stock per head.[65]

The accumulation, or even survival, of black pastoralists' animals depended on their access to land beyond the reserves - either on the diminishing sections of Crown Land or by negotiating access to land controlled by white farmers. The magistrate at Bethanie admitted that large numbers of stock would have 'died from starvation' if he had not given their owners permission to graze their animals on land outside Soromas reserve during 1924.[66] The wealthier black stockowners were able to obtain grazing licences, but only on a temporary basis. Black stockowners from Soromas reserve were able to hire grazing on Uims and Brakwasser farms, for example.[67]

The temporary nature of their occupation seriously impeded the prospects of wealthier black stockowners establishing themselves as independent propertied farmers. Development work such as the building of a permanent well at Uims by the temporary occupants failed to convince the administration that they should have any permanent rights to the farm.[68] The official policy that even empty farms bordering the reserve, such as Schwarzkuppe, should only be used by residents as a temporary measure meant that black pastoralists lacked the security of tenure, enjoyed by their white counterparts, over much of the land that they used during the 1920s.[69]

BLACK PASTORALISTS, WHITE FARMERS.

Barriers to mobility and access to land created obstacles for black pastoralists based on communal land, whilst the emergence of black farmers with individual property rights was stymied. The 'reserves' were supposedly reserved for black stockowners, yet at times it seemed as if the pastoral communities had been given property without the means of exercising control or enforcing their rights over their land when faced with the competing interests of white farmers.

The Berseba Territory under the German Regime provides one of the earliest examples of the intersection between a capitalist interpretation of property rights and a more flexible concept of boundaries of allegiance. The 'Kapitaen' at Berseba,

Goliath, 'sold' 21 identified farms to another wealthy resident, David Christian Izak, on 11th January, 1909.[70] Izak provided a single horse in exchange for the farms.[71] The interpretation put on the exchange by the two men was very different, one claiming it had commercial roots and the other that the land would remain essentially communal. Goliath saw it as signifying a bond of allegiance, claiming to a Commission of Inquiry in 1922 that:

> I sold the ground on the advice of my elder raadsleden so that David Izak could protect me later.[72]

Goliath therefore claimed the right to reclaim the farms (19 in 1913 and the remaining 2 in 1919) when he no longer felt he could rely on Izak's support.[73] Izak presented the purchase, very differently, describing it as a calculated financial investment:

> I bought this ground for myself and family to live on because I was told by traders that it would be better to buy ground as later other people would come in and get the ground from Chief Goliath.[74]

Izak realised the commercial value of the land, renting out Tses Farm to Klukowski, a white farmer, for an annual rent of £12. The revival of Izak's claim to land rights over the farms in 1922 also indicated his commercial acumen. The disputed farms made up a considerable proportion of the land which the administration proposed to buy for £12,909 16s.3d. in order to create the new Tses reserve and some additional farms for white settlers.[75] The renewed agitation by Izak at this time was surely not coincidental, but would have been linked to the hope that he might be able to claim part of this purchase price as compensation for the farms that he had lost. Goliath had received half the rent obtained by Izak, yet popular resentment at the alienation of grazing land within the Berseba Territory and resentment at the individual profit being accrued seem to have motivated him to seek the return of the land.[76]

The disagreement over the basis of the land deal resulted in a simmering feud that survived beyond the 1922 Commission of Inquiry and split the community for decades to come. The broader significance of the Commission was its conclusion that 'intertribal sales of land' would not be recognised by the administration.[77] The decision reflected the harsher views about black land ownership that had been embodied in the 1913 Land Act in the Union. However the refusal to countenance individual property rights even within the areas reserved for black stockowners may also have been a response to the need to maximise the number of black stockowners that the reserves could contain and the need to protect poor white immigrants from the competitive threat that black farmers would have posed.

The purchase of a large portion of the Berseba Territory was justified by the authorities as a means of preventing the residents becoming the victims of a familiar cycle of debt and dispossession. Izak had leased out farms, whilst Goliath had arranged for the transfer of a 12,000 hectare farm to a trader in 1916 to settle a £600 debt.[78] The land purchase, it was argued, would liberate the community from their debts, whilst maintaining access for black stockowners to the majority of the land. Fifty-five percent of the payment of £12,909. 16s.3d made to the Berseba community in 1921 was immediately swallowed up by the demands of eight local white traders for the settlement of outstanding debts.[79] Yet the forced resettlement of black squatters on the land meant that the community did lose control over it, whilst land containing water holes that played an important role in grazing patterns was set aside as white farms. The decision that all the money would be placed into a communal Trust Fund meant that it could not be used as collateral by individual black stockowners seeking to buy their own farms.

Reserve borders were crudely defined by widely distanced cairns, with fencing of the extensive farms only becoming common during the 1940s. Numerous border disputes resulted from the efforts of black stockowners to evade and of white farmers to invade the reserve borders. However despite the physical fragility of the boundary markers it was black stockowners who paid the heaviest penalties for infringing them, whilst numerous cases existed where reserve residents received no

compensation where farmers had illegally used their land for years.[80] The movement of one beacon on the edge of the Berseba reserve added 100 hectares to a neighbouring farm, yet it took sixteen years of protest before the error was corrected.[81]

The cost for black stockowners whose stock strayed onto a neighbouring farm was heavy with farmers impounding or even confiscating stray stock.[82] The payment of these penalties was deeply resented by black stockowners. The fact that white farmers owned their own branding irons, whilst their possession by black stockowners was forbidden fuelled suspicions that farmers were claiming stray stock and adding them to their own flocks and herds.[83]

The determination of the new regime to support the white farming community during the first decade of the occupation meant that their interests received preference even when this created a conflict of interests within the perimeters of the reserves themselves. Once again the Bondels reserve suffered the most. The Bondelswarts' stock were decimated during the World War One campaign in Namibia and the South African forces chose to utilise their 'reserve' to accommodate the thousands of animals that they had rounded up during their operations. Thousands of 'loot stock' (1,500 cattle alone) were herded into the reserve.[84] The community which had suffered such grievous stock losses themselves were allowed to consume milk from the animals, but the animals were returned to their owners, including German farmers, following their demobilisation. The benefits to the residents seemed negligible whilst they complained that the concentration of animals finished off grazing that their own flocks required.[85]

The dramatic reduction of the Bondelswarts flocks following the 1922 Rising created a further grazing opportunity that was used to the benefit of white farmers. In 1926 the Executive Council agreed that flocks belonging to white farmers in the drought-stricken Cape district of Kenhardt would be allowed to trek into Namibia with their stock.[86] Officials claimed that the reserve escaped a period of poor rain fall that affected southern Namibia and the northern Cape from 1924. It seems more likely

that the collapse of stock levels within the reserve had actually protected the pasture after it had become exhausted in surrounding areas. The argument was given that the hire of the reserve to white farmers could provide an essential source of income to the impoverished reserve. A temporary Trust Fund was established in August, 1927 and by the end of the year farmers had contributed £135 19s. in grazing fees to the Fund.[87]

The entry of the farmers was neither as controlled, nor as beneficial as the figures might initially suggest. It was reported that the farmers had:

> ... warned the Superintendent at Dreihoek that if they were not given grazing they would be forced to trespass rather than allow all their stock to die of starvation.[88]

The farmers bought an excessive number of animals into the Bondels reserve with serious environmental consequences. A list of the 29 farmers using the reserve in December 1927 showed that they possessed 24,250 head of small stock alone and when the animals belonging to residents were added the total reached 29,373.[89] The evidence suggests that during the peak use of the reserve the figures may have climbed even higher.[90] The maximum carrying capacity of the reserve in 1927 was estimated locally to be 25,000 sheep and 2,000 large stock[91]. The figures suggest that the farmer's stock would have left little pasture for the residents own stock. A reporter from The Star newspaper confirmed this implication when he visited the reserve, reporting:

> ... the influx of great droves of cattle and sheep belonging to European farmers, which having picked the veld bare, are removed to fresh pastures.[92]

The Bondels reserve had been used to save the flocks of white farmers, but this had destroyed much of the vegetation within the reserve. The purchase of animals by residents working on the Mines and Railways swelled the number of small stock in

the reserve (from 5,123 in 1927 to 11,576 in 1929), yet as the reserve itself slid into a prolonged drought its ability to support these new flocks had been seriously weakened. By the end of the year the majority of the residents were reported to have been reduced to subsistence levels, generally owning no more than five to fifteen goats.[93] A survey, during 1929, of the sixty pupils at the school at Wortel in the reserve found that only six had eaten during the day.[94] Little tangible evidence could be found that the majority of the residents had benefited economically from the fees paid by the farmers.

Officials later alleged that reserve leaders had colluded with this process. The removal of the reserve's Welfare Officer for seven years (1928-1935), as an economy measure, had, it was claimed, allowed farmers to use bribery to obtain grazing rights for their flocks within the reserve.[95] The widely voiced accusations were not pursued, but suggests the existence of conflicts of interest within the reserve. The ability of a resident Welfare Officer to prevent such incursions was also questionable. The fact that six public roads crossed the Bondels reserve meant that rain in the reserve attracted an immediate influx of farmers with their stock. Early rains in the reserve following the drought of 1946 led a particularly large number of farmers to enter the reserve. The Welfare Officer complained that:

> ... these farmers are worse than locusts and the Welfare Officer has all his time occupied to shase (sic) after these people trying to save some of the grazing for the Hottentots. If some of the roads can be closed to the trekkers a lot of native stock can be saved yearly from dying.[96]

This stood in marked contrast to the difficulty faced by black stockowners if they sought alternative pasture outside the reserve. The Welfare Officer recognised the inequality of the system:

> The natives are very unfortunate that they cannot trek with their stock when there is no grazing for they have to carry a pass and the farmers will shase (sic) them where ever they go and no body will help them with grazing.[97]

The reserves served to confine, rather than protect the occupants and their livestock and provided one of the structural mechanisms that prevented the transition of black pastoralists into black farmers during the 1920s and early 1930s. Spatial obstacles to expansion were matched by financial barriers.

THE IMPACT OF GRAZING FEES ON THE RESERVES.

The introduction of grazing fees in the reserves by the military administration from 1918 was designed to achieve two goals. The first was a limit to the number of animals owned by any individual within a reserve and the second to compel the residents to take up waged labour on neighbouring white farms. The second aim would only be achieved if the residents were unable to meet the demands made on them by other means (such as by urban employment or the sale of stock) and if farmers were able to pay an adequate wage in cash. The two largest reserves in southern Namibia claimed historical rights that enabled them to successfully contest the right of the state to impose grazing fees upon them. These factors meant that grazing fees remained flawed as a tool for labour recruitment, especially in the period up to 1930.

The limitation of stock accumulation within the reserves by individuals was initially of minor importance as wealthier stock owners were able during the early 1920s to retain access to other land either through a grazing licence on Crown Land or by a 'squatting' agreement with a white farmer. The fees became more significant towards the end of the 1920s when drought produced a concentration of stock in the reserves and legislation extended grazing fees to the remaining two reserves making all stock liable for taxation.

The administration made its first attempt to impose grazing fees in Berseba reserve in August, 1928 asking the leaders to support a 'voluntary' levy. David Goliath argued that the fees asked were too high and that the community should only pay a half rate. The request was refused as the 'Native Commissioner' feared that the

negotiation of a reduced level of grazing fees by a community would set a dangerous precedent.[98]

The impact of grazing fees was twofold. Wealthier stockowners redistributed their stock to avoid falling within the higher tax bracket. The Superintendent noted that:

> those ... who rearly (sic) possess a large number of stock, has got them devided (sic) into small flocks under the care of others who have none, and thus supports several families by providing them with milk and slaughter stock.[99]

The distribution of stock was bound to complicate the question of ownership and responsibility for grazing fees. The strategy, combined with the inability of the majority of the surrounding white farmers to provide cash wages (see Chapter Five), meant that the level of tax arrears steadily rose. Within a year arrears had reached £163 17s.7d and the administration had been forced to comply with Goliath's original proposal and half the level of payments due.[100]

The fact that the residents of the Bondels reserve, the Warmbad commonage and the mission farm at Heirachabis all enjoyed free grazing meant that they were able to escape the full weight of taxation and use the bulk of their income to expand their flocks. One of the unintended impacts of the introduction of grazing fees in many of the reserves was an influx of population to those areas where grazing fees were not levied, such as the Bondels reserve or the mission farm at Heirachabis. The population of Heirachabis, for instance, had been swollen by 1926 by the arrival of an additional seventy families with their stock.[101]

The administration was forced to respond to the claims of farmers that such 'tax havens' as the Bondels and Berseba reserves were acting as sponges that absorbed the local labour force to the detriment of the white farming community. Government Notice No. 239 of 1930 announced the voluntary application of grazing fees upon the community, following the earlier introduction of fees in Berseba

reserve. The introduction of fees seemed to be a direct response to continuing settler concern that the Bondels reserve was serving as a shelter for the unemployed. The need to make payments conveniently coincided with a decision by the Mining Companies to cease the recruitment of labour in the reserve, increasing the pressure on residents to acquire the necessary cash through farm labour.[102]

The final loophole in the network of grazing fees in southern Namibia was plugged by Government Notice No. 5 of 1942 which applied grazing fees to the Location at Warmbad.[103] The Notice had been provoked by an alarmed report by the local magistrate that a pattern had emerged of stockowners moving to the Location to avoid compulsory work on development projects and the grazing fees levied in the Bondels reserve.[104]

DROUGHT AND THE DESTRUCTION OF THE PASTORAL ECONOMY.

Drought is endemic to southern Namibia, but the pattern of drought becomes disastrous when there is a succession of two or three years of bad rainfall. The devastating drought of the early 1930s hit hard and early in the South, 1929 was described as the:

> ... most disastrous one experienced in the history of the Berseba tribe.[105]

as it followed a three year chain of poor rain in the reserve. The smaller reserves with restricted access to alternative grazing were the ones that felt the impact of drought most immediately and severely. Half the animals in Gibeon reserve, for instance, were alleged to have died in the drought by 1929, whilst it was claimed that 40 percent of all the small stock in Tses reserve had died as a result of the drought as early as 1928.[106]

The impact of the drought on the reserve economy was negative in a number of different ways. The expulsion of farm workers with any substantial number of stock

from surrounding white farms increased the pressure on resources in the reserves. The inability of many white farmers to pay the remaining workers in anything other than kind also had a knock on effect on the ability of reserve stockowners reliant on contributions from relatives working on farms to meet their grazing fees. One member of the Gibeon reserve board asked in 1931 whether, as farm wages were being paid in the form of goats, grazing fees could also be paid in kind. The request was turned down - deferral of payment might be considered, but substitution would not be.[107] The weakening of stock also made it extremely difficult to find a market for animals and dried up the supply of milk, an important component of the local diet.

One of the most visible economic indicators of the impact of the drought and the difficulties residents were facing in obtaining a monetary income was the rapid accumulation of grazing fees arrears throughout the reserves during the early 1930s. The register for the Berseba reserve revealed that 97 percent of all its stockowners were in arrears with their payments by 1930 and the wealthiest stockowners were those owing the largest sums.[108] The voluntary payment of grazing fees in Bondels reserve was abandoned after just four months in 1931 when debts of £173. 18s.6d had already accrued and only reintroduced after the drought had broken.[109]

The drought and concurrent depression crippled the stock market, but also had a catastrophic impact on stock levels within the reserves. The residents of Tses reserve lost 63 large and 871 small stock in the reserve as a direct result of the drought in the first three months of 1933 alone.[110] The residents of the Bondels reserve had been reduced to just 765 small stock and 201 large stock by May, 1934 and most of these animals had recently arrived with three newcomers. The average flock size of the remaining 67 stockowners in the reserve was just 12 animals.[111]

The exhaustion of the resources available in the Bondels reserve due to overstocking at the start of the drought and the relatively dense and early white settlement of the surrounding district meant that stockowners confined to the reserve suffered particularly heavy losses. The Bondels reserve was to suffer its third devastating

economic blow within twenty years. One wealthy stockowner known as Tieties was reported to have seen flocks estimated at 1,700 animals prior to the drought reduced to just 37 goats by 1934.[112] The local magistrate recognised that stock levels in the reserve had fallen to sub-subsistence levels:

> The majority of the residents of this Reserve do not own any stock at all. How, and on what they exist is a miracle to me but the least I can say is that their plight must be a terrible one.[113]

The magistrate was forced to arrange for the distribution of paupers rations within the reserve to prevent the community from starving to death.

The gathering of grazing fees during the drought proved as difficult as the collection of payments due from white farmers. The concentration of stock in the reserves had left the owners liable to pay large grazing fee bills, but the concentration and consequent death of many animals had also removed the means to meet these debts. The residents of Soromas reserve contributed just 1s. (one shilling) in grazing fees in the entire period from October, 1932 to July, 1935 and arrears rose to £197 1s.2d[114]. The administration was forced to write off substantial debts. In February, 1935, for example, the administration agreed to discount £2,337 8s.5d of arrears owed by stockowners in Tses reserve. An indication of the scale of the arrears and collapse of stock levels can be found in the fact that the sum would have been sufficient to pay the grazing fees charged that month for the surviving stock in the reserve (315 large and 3,576 small stock) for over 29 years ![115]

The options available to black stockowners were extremely limited during the drought. The majority lacked the capital to pay for grazing and desperately sought 'work for grazing' arrangements with white farmers.[116] The drought made such agreements hard to secure and stock concentration in the reserves led to rising stock deaths and debts. The residents of the Bondels reserve were reported to be walking over 100 miles to the Orange River in their efforts to find work and pay their grazing fees[117]. The few wealthier stockowners had the option to hire grazing,

but the conditions were harsh and the survival of their stock still not guaranteed. One of the wealthier stockowners from Gibeon reserve secured grazing on a farm in Rehoboth district, but had to pay the owner 20-30 goats for the short period he used the farm. The owner of a small subsistence flock would not have been able to afford this level of payment.[118] The wealthier black stockowners were forced to pay inflated charges to secure grazing outside the increasingly congested and denuded reserves, to pay excess for access.

The crisis facing white farmers led the administration to make extra land available to them at reduced rates. White farmers were given access to vacant Crown Land and charged a reduced rate of grazing fees at just seven and a half pence per hundred small stock. In contrast a wealthy stockowner in the reserve was paying grazing fees of two shillings and one pence (twenty-five pence) for his first hundred small stock and four shillings and two pence (fifty pence) for his second hundred[119]. A white farmer grazing two hundred sheep on Crown Land would therefore pay just fourteen pence in grazing fees, whilst a black stockowner grazing the exact same flock in Gibeon reserve was charged seventy-five pence. The injustice was apparent, but the grazing fees were not amended until the 23rd April, 1934, by which time the drought had passed and the residents of the reserve had compiled substantial debts.

The difficulty of finding and paying for grazing was aggravated by the difficulties of reaching it. Three black stockowners from Tses trekking towards Rehoboth were forced to pay £1 10s. (the equivalent of three months pay to a farm worker at contemporary local rates) in order to cross just one farm on their journey. The journey would force them to cross dozens of farms. Once again it was only the wealthiest black stockowners who could afford to move their animals; the three stockowners were travelling with 332 cattle and 3,036 small stock.[120] By the end of April, 1934 41 of the wealthiest stockowners in Tses reserve had moved with their stock to Rehoboth.[121] The Superintendent of the Tses reserve carried out an analysis of his grazing fee register in September, 1934 and discovered that of the 282 stockowners that had been listed in 1928, 81 had left the reserve and 121 of

those that remained in the reserve had lost practically all their animals[122]. Many of those who had left the reserve, understandably, showed little inclination to return. The majority of those that had moved to the Rehoboth Gebiet moved from there to different reserves (at Ovitoto and Otjimbingwe) further north, and only nine chose to return to Tses.[123]

The minority who moved their animals were forced to pay heavily for water and grazing and still lost many animals in payment and from the rigours of trekking and the drought. Gideon Matundu left Tses reserve with 73 large stock and 260 small stock and travelled to the Rehoboth Gebiet. However by the time he left there for the Ovitoto reserve he had only 21 large and 80 small stock left.[124] The direct result of the drought was to push many of the stockowners who had been able to claim Exemption Certificates as owners of over 50 small stock below the safety threshold. Andries Keyster, a Gibeon reserve board reported that his 60 head of small stock had been reduced to just 5 by 1934.[125]

The evidence suggests that the internal result of the prolonged drought was increased differentiation. An analysis can be made of the flocks belonging to twenty of the wealthiest stockowners in Berseba reserve in 1930 at the start of the drought in the reserve and in 1935 after its end. The results are summarised in Table 7.

TABLE 7. A comparison of the flock size of the wealthiest residents in Berseba Reserve,1930 and 1935.[126]

Stockowner.	Small stock.	
	1930	1935
Anton Kairorwe	122	210
Langman Tjito	524	451
David Vries	700	416
Diedrik Vries	54	234
Daniel Karolus	217	163
Edward Izaak (old)	1284	532
Amon Tobias Amon	991	958
Jeremias Windstaan	870	961
Jeremias Kahuka	255	440
Jonas Oarum	185	206
Jacob Kapsido	221	159
Lukas Tsumbe	253	192
Paul Kahuka	417	339
Eduard Kahuka	364	538
Eduard Izaak Jnr.	39	344
Saul Kahuka	365	617
Diedrik Izaak	50	133
David Ch. Izaak	16	105
Andreas Kabuka	300	279
Andreas Matinga	40	134
TOTAL	7267	7411

The figures show a slight increase in the number of animals held by the twenty stockowners, indeed the increase of under 2 percent over a five year period seems unremarkable. However if one considers the broader pattern of stock levels in the reserve the statistics are cast in a totally different light. In 1930 the total number of small stock in the Berseba reserve were numbered at 30,600. In 1935 this figure had fallen by over 34 percent to just 20,079.

The statistics represent a substantial concentration of stock in the hands of the wealthier members of the reserve. If the stock belonging to all twenty-eight of the stockowners included in the 1935 list is computed the total number of small stock in their flocks adds up to 9,142. If we calculate that there were 653 stockowners in the reserve at the time we arrive at some startling conclusions. In 1935 just 4 percent of the stockowners in the reserve owned over 45 percent of the small stock. The figures suggest that the poorer stockowners had been forced to leave the reserve during the drought and to work on neighbouring farms, whilst the richer stockowners were able to remain. Yet the population of the reserve did not substantially decline over the period, in fact the adult population even rose slightly.

The solution to the dilemma that this seems to create can be found by placing the statistics in a broader context. The fact that the total adult population of the reserve remained fairly static concealed a substantial shift in the composition of that group. The evidence suggests that the poorer stockowners were pushed out of the reserve by the stock losses that they sustained during the drought, they may even have passed some of their animals on to richer relatives remaining in the reserve. An influx of people who had been removed from urban areas would have created an influx to balance the exit of poorer residents and explain (at least in part) the relative stability of the population. The statistics for Keetmanshoop district show that the black urban population fell from 1,720 in 1929 to 1483 in 1934, whilst the rural population increased dramatically.[127]

The impact of the drought had been to concentrate the remaining stock in the hands of a smaller group of stockowners. The result was a substantial increase in the

degree of economic differentiation within the reserves. A larger number of black stockowners saw their flocks reduced to levels that were barely sufficient for subsistence and became dependent upon external means of support. Bondels reserve, the hardest hit by the drought, was impoverished with those lacking family support moving to Warmbad, "... on the verge of extreme starvation".[128]

The administration issued 500 goats to the residents, but divided between 200 destitute families they proved to be more of an addition to the diet than the economic reconstruction of the community.[129] The few wealthier stockowners who had been able to move and save at least some of their animals were in a more advantageous position. Two black stockowners who entered the Bondels reserve in 1936, for instance had over 700 goats each.[130] Eighteen individuals in the reserve owned 57 percent of the livestock. The remainder were divided between a further 182 owners. Thus, whilst the richest eighteen owners had flocks that contained an average of 192 animals, the majority had, on average, just fourteen animals.[131]

RECOVERY AND RESTRICTION.

The drought had exposed the difficulties of pursuing a pastoral ambition within the reserves and forced a large number of the poorer residents to enter employment outside the reserve. The population of the Bondels reserve had shown a male majority in 1931, but by the end of the decade the men resident in the reserve were outnumbered by double the number of women.[132] The irony was that whilst the administration tried to maintain the economic subsistence base for black workers within the reserves, the workers demonstrated a reluctance to invest in the dubious economic potential of the reserves.

Workers from the reserves working on the Railways were to have one third of their wages deducted and sent to the reserve to purchase goats. However by 1939 it was reported that:

"The deferred pay scheme is unpopular ... Hottentots in Railway employ move from place to place and gang to gang to get lost sight of and to escape the contributions.[133]

The strategy suggested a shift in the economic aspirations of the residents of the reserve. The majority of the residents seemed to no longer believe that the reserve provided a realistic opportunity for them to establish themselves as independent stock farmers.

The recovery of black pastoralists' flocks in the late 1930s faced restriction. Soromas reserve provides the best example of the way in which the expansion of black pastoralists was thwarted. Stock recovery started early in the reserve with a steady increase in the number of small stock within the reserve throughout the period 1931-1939.

Residents were told by the 'Chief Native Commissioner' at the end of 1938 that '... the people here have become too rich', and he warned that the growing number of stock on the reserve could '... spoil the ground and the grazing for future generations'.[134]

A survey of the 86 black stockowners in Soromas reserve in June, 1939 revealed that 58 had over 100 small stock and/or 20 large stock. The stockowners owned, in total, 12,989 small stock and 873 large stock. The average flock size had accordingly risen to over 150.[135] By the end of the year the number of small stock had reached a peak of 15,677. One might suggest that for the first time in the reserve a substantial number of the stockholders seemed to have reached a level from which they might hope to sustain an independent economic existence. Yet the problem of 'overstocking' could be seen from two angles - the result of too many animals or too little land.

Stockowners in Soromas reserve argued as early as 1936 that their pastoral success required an expansion of the land which they could utilize for their flocks. Yet two

farms suggested as possible additions to the reserve were both later sold to white settlers.[136] The failure to expand the land available to the stockowners resulted in an environmentally dangerous level of overstocking, by 1939 it was estimated that Soromas reserve contained 1,300 cattle and 6,700 goats more than it could be expected to sustain, and stock levels were continuing to rise.[137] The Special Justice of the Peace based at Bethanie argued that an expansion of Soromas reserve was both necessary and justified:

> When it is remembered that an average farm in this District carries not more than 2,000 small stock and say 30 large stock on 10,000 hectares, it will be realised that the Reserve is chronically overstocked. Yet the number of stock is not excessive for the support of the population.[138]

The strain placed upon the reserves by stock expansion in the reserves at the end of the 1930s was not, however, only due to the natural recovery of flocks. In March, 1938 all licences allowing black stockowners to graze their flocks on Crown Land had been cancelled.[139] Stock that had been grazing on Klipdrift to the west of Bethanie, for example, were evicted[140]. The number of animals in Soromas reserve actually leaped from 264 large and 4,894 small stock in 1937 to 496 and 10,233 respectively in 1938. Rapid jumps in stock numbers such as this caused considerable harm to the reserve's pastoral resources. Ecological damage was matched by rising friction between the residents and the owners of the, largely unfenced, farms bordering the reserve.

The official reaction to the pressure on the resources in Soromas reserve was to seek ways of reducing the stock, rather than to increase its size. It was proposed that the existing limit of 300 small stock per owner in the reserves should be halved or cut to a third in Soromas. Calculations showed that a limit of 150 small stock per head would lead to a reduction of 1,200 stock belonging to 17 owners. A limit of 100 would remove 2,300 small stock belonging to 29 owners. The fact that there were only 106 stockowners listed in the reserve meant that the lower limit would force over 27 percent of the stockowners into a forced sale of their stock. The policy was

clearly one that would favour the local white farmers who would buy the animals in forced sales, rather than the black stockowners whose farming ambitions were being curbed. The only alternative proposed by the administration was that the community should abandon the reserve altogether (so that it could be used as white farmland) and move to another larger reserve further north.

The community refused to abandon their land and so Government Notice No. 62 of 1941 accordingly set a maximum stock level for the reserve of either 15 large stock or 100 small stock (with 1 large stock being equivalent to 10 small stock).[141] However the environmental collapse of the reserve had been such that the enforcement of the regulation was hardly necessary. The Administrator, in his Annual Report for 1941, claimed that:

> The application of this regulation [No 62.] at the present time caused no hardship, as stock losses have been so heavy that only one or two individuals had more than the prescribed maximum.[142]

Despite this assurance a local official reported, eighteen months later, 27 residents still had flocks that exceeded the new limits.[143] The fact once again suggests the concentration of stock possession. The Administrator was however correct that the overuse of the reserve had made its occupants vulnerable. Statistics show that 2,114 small stock died as a result of drought and disease in Soromas reserve during the years 1943-1945.[144]

When stock levels recovered again (in 1951) Government Notice No. 62 of 1941 was invoked once again. All families in possession of over 100 small stock were given six months to dispose of the excess.[145] The emphasis on the family, rather than the individual seems to have reflected the growing official awareness of the practice of stock distribution to evade the higher brackets of grazing fees and, presumably, the extremely low permissable levels of accumulation in Soromas.

Tses reserve provided a further example of the way in which the increase in stock

levels in the reserve following the forced removal of black stockowners from alternative grazing was linked to the enforcement of stock limits within the reserve. The population of the reserve almost doubled between 1935 and 1939 and good rains helped to sustain the swelling flocks. Tses reserve contained 38 stockowners by February, 1940 who owned more than the maximum number permitted by the authorities.[146]

The enforcement of the 300 limit in the reserve (by Government Notice No. 169 as amended by Government Notice No. 117 of 1939) was coupled with a campaign of prosecutions against those in arrears with their grazing fees. The magistrate noted that those who were rich would be prosecuted first.[147] Restrictions were also placed on those wishing to enter the reserve. Jonas Katjerungu was told, in June, 1939, that he could only enter the reserve if he sold 116 of his 216 small stock flock first[148] The reduced access to alternative grazing for black stockowners meant that he had little choice but to reduce the size of his flocks. By the end of the year a total ban had been placed on any further black stockowners moving into the reserve.[149] Attempts to reduce the size of flocks incited efforts to conceal stock. When the administration tried to impose maximum flock sizes on the residents of Tses reserve again, in 1952, the stock figures fell. However the Police and officials strongly suspected that animals were being distributed and concealed during stock counts.[150]

The restrictions on stock accumulation and access to grazing made it extremely difficult for individual black stockowners to successfully compete with their white neighbours. The regulations seemed to mark a abrupt end to the process of increasing differentiation within the reserve. Yet the restrictions also meant that the small numbers of comparatively elite stockowners in each reserve were given a major interest in controlling the entry of new stockowners into a reserve. The intervention was likely to encourage the nourishment of exclusive parochial community identities by the small black stockowning elite within each reserve whilst destroying the pastoral hopes of the poorer majority. The lack of opportunity to gain access to the reserve combined with the tightening squeeze on workers' stock

on white farms left young black stockowners with poor prospects, forcing them to reduce their stock and seek their economic fortunes in urban areas rather than on the land. Youthful pastoral ambition was stifled.

THE STOCK MARKET.

The accumulation of stock by individual black stockowners in a reserve was not in itself sufficient to make them prosperous. The social benefits of stock increase were a motivation, but the ability of black stockowners to also benefit commercially depended upon their access to the market and their ability to sell their stock at fair prices. The criteria applied to the selection of stock by reserve residents were often different to those used by the administration. They were sceptical for instance of the value of animals that they felt were vulnerable to disease or drought, and allegedly rejected merino sheep because of the costs of dipping.[151] The allegiance to goats with 'no commercial value' puzzled officials, but they were hardy and edible and other stock would only be valuable if surplus could be sold at satisfactory prices. Black pastoralists complained about the limited marketing opportunities available to them, about the way in which sales were organised and about the prices offered at those sales. Inadequate investment and circumscribed markets were unlikely to inspire commercial livestock enterprise.

The difficulty facing reserve residents wishing to sell excess animals as their flocks expanded during the late 1930s was that the local white farming community often provided the only marketing opportunity and were able to take advantage of the periodical pressures placed upon the residents. The residents of Soromas reserve sought 15s. for hamel sheep at a local sale in 1937, but found that the assembled farmers would only offer 8s. to 10s.[152] The evidence suggests that local farmers were able to form cartels and control the prices offered to black stockowners at the auctions arranged in the reserves. The refusal of black stockowners to sell stock and to pay grazing fees was at times a result of their refusal to sell their animals at prices that they perceived to be unjust.

Alpheus Karea, a wealthy stockowner at Tses reserve complained in 1938 that buyers were keeping their prices artificially low. The stockowners had been under pressure to sell and thus remove their old kapaters. Karea asked the administration to impose an acceptable minimum price at these sales.[153] The wealthier stockowners refused to part with their stock at prices that they felt had been falsely deflated.

The belief of reserve residents that sale prices were fixed by purchasers was rarely acknowledged by officials. However in 1945 the Welfare Officer at Tses admitted that he had problems persuading residents to bring their animals to the official auctions as:

> ...if I do organise a small sale of the few animals that are available, I will have only the few local buyers whom we had for the last ten years and who are all pals, and who are precisely the people who wrecked a sale, by forming a ring, that was organised by my predecessor at Vaalgras.[154]

The failure of the authorities to intervene and prevent the price-rigging at sales at Tses meant that stockowners might only sell their animals if forced to by the threat of prosecution under the grazing fees legislation. The failure of the auctions could then be blamed on the intransigence of the prospective sellers or the inferior nature of the animals offered. The difficulty of obtaining fair prices for their stock was constantly stressed by residents at reserve meetings. Gerhard Groenewald of Berseba reserve complained at a meeting in 1949 about a recent stock sale that:

> ... had not been a success as there was no competition amongst the buyers (only two) attending it.[155]

The justification for organising auctions of stock in the reserve was that no individual black stockowner would wish to sell a sufficiently large number of stock at any one time to attract buyers. A larger sale would attract buyers from a wider area and produce better prices for the black stockowners. However Hans Jager

explained at a meeting in Tses reserve in 1956 that:

> The residents are dissatisfied with the price that we got for our goats at the auction ... Why can't we sell our sheep outside ? (my translation)[156]

Yet the prices obtained at stock sales had increased significantly during the early 1950s. A stock sale in Gibeon reserve in 1951 had resulted in the sale of 27 cattle for a total of £405 and of 321 goats for £963, similar prices were obtained for cattle the following year whilst the price obtained for goats rose on average from £2 to £3 per head[157]. Only seven years early a sale in the reserve had resulted in the sale of 486 goats for just £261. 19s.6d. and 28 large stock for £197. 17s.6d[158]. The average price for goats had thus more than doubled over the period. The restrictions on entry to the reserve seemed to be providing the basis for the concentration of wealth within the reserve and the consolidation of a small group of black commercial farmers. Yet whilst only the minority profited directly, the ability to accumulate and distribute stock meant that a number of dependent relatives could also be maintained within the reserves by wealthier black stockowners. The increasing prosperity of the reserves, therefore, related to changes in the flow of local labour to the white farms of southern Namibia.

Quality control was often used as the excuse for the low prices offered for stock from the reserves, yet the residents faced considerable difficulty in improving their breeding stock. The white farming community of southern Namibia were able to restructure their farms after the drought to concentrate on karakul sheep, yet reserve residents found it hard to obtain good quality breeding stock. The cost of a karakul ram for breeding purposes was quoted at £15 in 1934, the equivalent (at contemporary prices) of a farm workers whole wage for over two years or the sale of over 30 goats.[159]

The price of breeding stock was prohibitive to poorer stockowners whilst those with the necessary capital were forced to obtain animals of inferior quality from local farmers.[160] black stockowners did not receive the advances and advice enjoyed

by the many white farmers who wished to develop karakul flocks. Indeed the production of karakul pelts in the reserves was discouraged as it was argued that:

> ... it might influence the overseas market adversely[161]

As late as 1954 sixteen stockowners in the Tses reserve were still petitioning the administration to make available good quality karakul rams to them for purchase so that they could improve the quality of their karakul flocks and avoid having to buy the low quality animals that they complained were still offered for sale to them by local farmers.[162]

The local magistrate sought to place a ceiling on the accumulation of stock by the wealthiest stockowners. In 1952 an attempt was made to reduce the size of all the flocks of small stock in the Tses reserve to the statutory maximum of 300. The following year the Welfare Officer at Tses reported that once again the distribution of stock was being used as a means of evading the law:

> When the stockowners had to reduce their small stock to 300 last year, they were cross with me although they were glad afterwards when they found that they can register the excessive stock in the name of relations and therefore the stock was never reduced in the Reserve and are more now than before due to the good lambing season (sic).[163]

The redistribution of stock would result in the construction of a complex maze of economic and social relationships. The division of stock raised questions about ownership of the milk, of the skin of animals that died and of any progeny produced by animals on unofficial loan to another member of the family.

DROUGHT AND DIFFERENTIATION IN THE RESERVES, 1940-1955.

The obstacles on the path to prosperity meant that during the 1940s stock in the

reserves became concentrated in the hands of a diminishing number of stockowners. The residents of Bondels reserve became divided into two divergent groups. The first consisted of the few residents wealthy enough to use the reserve as an economic base and the second, the majority who were extremely poor, and often old or sick. By 1942 four or five of the residents had reasonably large flocks, but the majority still had meagre flocks with less than twenty animals. A sign of modernisation was the fact that two of them had built up flocks of over two hundred karakul ewes.[164]

A sharp drop in the number of stock on the reserve in 1943 was ascribed to drought and the fact that the reserve had been completely surrounded by white farms - restricting stock mobility.[165] The fall was a precursor of the decimation of the reserve's flocks during the severe drought of 1946 when the reserve received no rain at all.[166] Over half the small stock grazing in the reserve died during the drought of 1945-1946 (the number in the reserve fell from 11,411 to 5,668). The Administrator argued that the drought was '... a blessing in disguise' as it reduced the number of animals in many of the reserves which, walled in by white farms, had reached the limit of their capacity. He also felt that the drought would perform a useful function if it:

> ... forced some of the stock owners to take up employment outside the Reserves.[167]

The three reserves that suffered most in the drought were all in the south - Tses, Gibeon and Berseba. The drought produced a spectacular drop in the number of animals in the reserves of southern Namibia between 1945 and 1947. Stock numbers in Tses reserve had by 1947 fallen to 1934 levels, the worst year of the prolonged drought of the early 1930s. The drought was so severe that practically all the surviving cattle in the reserve were removed to the Aminuis reserve. The pressure on reserve residents to gain cash did not mean that they were going to work on surrounding farms. One magistrate reported, in 1947, that:

Many are flocking to the towns in search of work but will not go to the surrounding farmers who are clamouring for labourers.[168]

The movement of people out of the reserve produced less a distribution of labour amongst white farmers, than an increase in the black urban population. One feature of this movement was the large number of women who were noted to have left the reserves and moved into the towns in search of employment.[169]

The 1946 drought was followed by a succession of years of good rainfall during which the stock in the reserves increased dramatically. The increase was evident even in Bondels reserve. In 1948 only one stockowner had over five hundred animals in his flock, by 1950, the majority of stockowners had over one hundred small stock and eight had over five hundred animals.[170] Reserve residents were reported to be buying substantial numbers of animals from neighbouring farmers during 1951 and 1952, further increasing the numbers of stock in the reserve.[171] By 1954 it was reported that a few of the wealthiest stockowners had even purchased cars[172]. The annual or bi-annual stock sales that were held in the reserve were dominated by this handful of the wealthiest stockowners.[173]

The improvement in the economic condition of the reserve led to renewed complaints from white farmers that the reserve had become too comfortable and was used to harbour those that deserted their jobs on farms in the district illegally.[174] The cause of the farmers' frustration was that the slight improvement in the conditions in the reserve allowed workers to refuse work on farms when the pay and conditions offered were insufficient. There is some evidence that the wealthier members of the community were prepared to use their wealth to shelter poorer relatives from exploitation.

The Welfare Officer at the Bondels reserve described the practice succinctly in his Monthly Report for May, 1956:

It is almost daily, here, that farmers leave the reserve empty-handed because

> the inhabitants are simply too choosy. It is with a kind of malicious pleasure that young 'natives' tell you that they herd their father's livestock although the fathers are completely capable of taking care of their livestock themselves (my translation).[175]

Whilst the legislative mechanisms and comparative advantage of white farmers combined to squeeze workers out of the Bondelswarts reserve and onto the farms in the district, the community continued to struggle to retain its economic independence.

One financial legacy of the drought was that once again the Tses Trust Fund which relied on the income derived from grazing fees went bankrupt. As of the 31st March, 1949 it had a debit balance of £45, in contrast to a sizeable credit balance of £3,932 at the end of 1945. The crash of the Fund could be blamed on an extensive capital investment programme to fence the reserve and sink boreholes in an attempt to locate additional water sources within the reserve. The fencing projects alone cost £3,211 in 1947.[176] The administration blamed the problem on the reluctance of the reserve residents to pay grazing fees. However the reserve board provided an alternative perspective claiming that:

> The expenditure on boreholes which had caused them to run into debt was not really their fault as they did not ask for them and had even protested against having so many sunk but no notice had been taken of these protestations.[177]

The lack of consultation over the way in which money collected from the community was spent was bound to diminish the enthusiasm of people for paying their grazing fees.

The wealthiest stockowners in the reserves were able to take some advantage of the karakul boom after World War Two. Thirteen of the wealthiest residents of Tses reserve were reported to have acquired karakul flocks of 100-400 sheep by

1949.[178] The sale of karakul pelts and wool was soon the main source of revenue. The karakul farmers of Tses and Berseba sold £5,500 worth of pelts and £750 worth of wool in 1950 alone. The sum constituted two thirds of the total revenue raised by residents of the reserve in that year, but had been generated by a very small elite within the reserve population. The economic situation was likely to reduce each reserve to the domains of a few wealthy families and their many poorer dependents.

THE RESERVES AND SELECTIVITY IN THE LABOUR MARKET.

The residents of the reserves consistently sought to use them as a base from which they could go to take up work on a selective basis. The residents were more likely to leave the reserves in the early period under study when land was vacant or when white farmers were more willing to share their grazing. Farm labour in prosperous years was generally the least desirable of a range of options, and supply varied between the districts in relation to the range of alternative employment opportunities on offer. The preference of the occupants was clearly to seek semi-skilled work on temporary contracts to gain the necessary money to pay grazing fees, but allowing them to return to the reserve and build up their own flocks, ultimately to the level where they would no longer be required to leave the reserve. Farm labour by the 1940s seldom offered either the remuneration or access to pasture that might serve the interest of black stockowners based in the reserves.

The Bondelswarts' reluctance to work on white farms was perceived by some officials in stereotypical terms as laziness, but was rather a product of their determination to remain economically independent. Yet this image and their history of armed resistance made some employers reluctant to employ them At the beginning of 1924 it had been reported that:

> ... the Railways and Mines appear to be of the same opinion that these Natives are not suitable for their work.[179]

However in June and August, 1924 there was a breakthrough with the employment of 38 men on six month contracts on the railways. The pay and conditions compared markedly with those available on local farms. In September, 1924 the magistrate was reporting that local farmers were paying their workers with food and were seldom able to pay cash wages, often giving the workers 'an old ewe goat' which would be valued at just 2s. or 3s. in the market in Windhoek.[180] In contrast to this monthly 'wage' for farm workers, those with contracts to work on the railway were given food and 1s.3d to 1s.6d per day.[181]

The consumption of stock did compel the residents of the Bondels reserve to seek work, but they were still able to exercise an element of choice, and farm work was generally regarded as the least preferable in a range of work options. In 1929 a visiting reporter from The Cape Argus described the residents' view that:

> ... the withholding of their labour is a passive protest against a set of conditions which is operating to their detriment.[182]

Officials were convinced that there was actually large-scale illegal emigration from 1922 onwards by black workers from the district into South Africa in search of better pay and conditions.[183] A direct correlation existed between the ebb and flow of reserve stock numbers and the supply of farm labour to local farms.

Reserve residents explored a range of alternative employment opportunities. The expansion of stock numbers in Berseba reserve, for instance, during the early 1940s was accompanied by greater selectivity about the type of work that residents would leave the reserve to do. The local magistrate noted, in 1944, that:

> The only jobs on farms they are prepared to do is shearing. When the shearing season is over they wait for the fish season to commence at Luderitz.[184]

Shearing teams were able to exercise a degree of choice in their selection of

employers and avoid lengthy contractual obligations to farmers. The Welfare Officer pointed out that even the economic attractions of the fish factories were balanced against the alternative economic options:

> The Fish Factories at Luderitz required 160 labourers for the season which is now on. I could however, only supply them with 66. Here I beg to point out, that it is not a question of their not being labourers in the Tses and Berseba Reserves but they are unwilling to go to Luderitz. They claim that they can earn more money by shearing sheep in the District.[185]

The workers at Berseba made rational economic choices to enable them to obtain the necessary capital to meet the demands of the state and sufficient time in the reserve to build up their own flocks.

The Soromas reserve provided an inadequate ecological base for a thriving pastoral economy during the 1940s. Yet residents consistently sought and found alternatives to working on the farms in the district of Bethanie. In 1948 many were employed as a drought relief measure by the Public Works Department in the town of Bethanie, but others found work at the Lime Works at Buchholzbrunn.[186] Whilst some organised seasonal work as sheep shearers, other travelled to the coast and worked, during the Crawfish season, in the factories there.[187] By 1949 the magistrate at Bethanie was blaming these factories for the labour shortage on farms in his district[188].

CONCLUSION.

The administration was able effectively to retard and inhibit the growth of a black pastoral economy, but its mechanism of control was too weak to ensure that the labour squeezed out of the reserves exclusively served local white farmers. Black pastoralists were not rich within the reserves, but in the early years of South African rule they were little poorer than many of the immigrant white settlers. The potential of the reserves to provide a base from which a class of commercial black farmers

might emerge was, however, not fulfilled.

Black pastoralists were denied the mobility and access to pasture that was the prerequisite for survival. Immobility and the lack of development funding meant that the reserves were unable to sustain the large number of black stockowners who sought to utilise them. The reserves would only ever be able to support a small number of large stock owners; a broader-based pattern of stock accumulation would have required better access to land, credit and the market.

The failure of the reserves to provide a viable base for all ambitious black pastoralists created tensions that fuelled internal social and political disagreements. The grinding drought of the late 1920s and early 1930s exposed the fragile nature of the access that black stockowners had to grazing beyond the reserve borders. Conflicts arose as stockowners tried to maintain some control over the entry of stock into the reserves and the ruling families in each reserve tried to protect their power base. The changing economic pattern also made it inevitable that those working beyond the reserve boundaries would promote a new agenda of concerns. The political dynamics connected to these economic changes will be the subject of the next chapter.

NOTES - CHAPTER TWO.

1. The Neuhof Reserve in Maltahohe was extremely small and for many years contained only a small handful of people whilst the Hoachanas Reserve initially fell within the District of Rehoboth and therefore beyond the boundaries of this study.

2. Wellington, J.H. South West Africa and its Human Issues. Clarendon Press. Oxford. 1967. p43.

3. Long Term Agricultural Policy Commission. 1948. quoted in Curry, F. The Land Policy of the South African Government in South West Africa, 1915-1939. MA. SOAS. 1967. p2.

4. Gauerke, E. The Population Groups of South West Africa. Parts 1 and 2. Afrikaans-Eeutsche Kulturgemeinshchaft. Windhoek. 1978. p24.

5. Baxter, P. (ed) Property, Poverty and People: Changing Rights in Property and Problems of Pastoral Development. University of Manchester. Manchester. (n.d.) p57.

6. Wilson, M. "The Hunters and Herders" in Wilson, M & Thompson, L. The Oxford History of South Africa. Vol.1 OUP. London. 1969. p41.

7. Reifenberg (1953) quoted in Monod, T, Pastoralism in Tropical Africa. OUP. London. 1975. p56.

8. Mayor quoted in De Vries, J. Mission and Colonialism in Namibia. Ravan Press. Johannesburg. 1978. p169.

9. See Bundy, C. 1979 and Wolpe, H. 1972.

10. Union of South Africa, Report of Native Economic Commission, 1930-1932 Government Printer, Pretoria. UG 26. 1932. p28.

11. Palmer, R. "The Agricultural History of Rhodesia" in Palmer, r. & Parsons, N. The Roots of Rural Poverty in Central and Southern Africa. University of California, Berkeley. 1977. p237

12. LoN AR. 1925 p27.

13. Quoted in First, R. South West Africa. Penguin. Harmondsworth. 1963. p150.

14. Peters, P. "Struggles over water, struggles over meaning: Cattle, water and the State in Botswana". Africa. Vol. 54 (3) 1984 p42.

15. Parson, J. "Cattle, class and the State in Rural Botswana" JSAS. Vol. 7 (2) 1981. p236-255. p243.

16. Lewis, I. "The dynamics of nomadism: prospects for desentarization and social change". Ch. XIV in Monod, T. (Ed) Pastoralism in Tropical Africa. OUP. London. 1975. p428-429.

17. Union of South Africa. Report of South West Africa Commission. Government Printer. Pretoria. UG. 26. 1936. p74.

18. Union of South Africa, Report of Native Economic Commission, 1930-1932 Government Printer, Pretoria. UG 26. 1932. p13 and p16.

19. Union of South Africa. Report of South West Africa Commission. Government Printer. Pretoria. UG. 26. 1936. p74.

20. Report of the Commission of Enquiry into South West Africa Affairs, 1962-1963. RP. No. 12/1964.

21. O/C NA Dept to NC. 22nd September, 1915. ADM 46 - 599

22. AR. LoN. 1923. UG. 21-'24. p16.

23. Bondelswarts Deputation to Major Herbst. 30th June, 1917. ADM 105 - 3353.

24. The Administrator refers to "... over 3,000 goats" having been provided as compensation, suggesting pre-war stock levels of at least 36,000. Contemporary goat prices suggest that one would have expected nearer 4,000 goats for the £2,000 spent by the administration on compensation. The Military Magistrate claimed that 2,960 goats were purchased and distributed between 333 black stockowners using £1,700 obtained by selling 400 cattle that had trekked with the Bondelswarts north to Tsumeb during the campaign. Mil. Mag. Warmbad to Secretary Protectorate.24th June, 1916. ADM 46 - 599. 'Memorandum by the Administrator of South West Africa on the Report of the Commission appointed to enquire into the Rebellion of the Bondelswarts' p8. UG 16 - '23. Rex vs. Hendrik Joseph LKW 1/1/1 - 37/16

25. Mag. Warmbad to Sec. Prot. 13th September, 1920. ADM 105 - 3353.

26. Memorandum by the Administrator of South West Africa on the Report of the Commission appointed to enquire into the Rebellion of the Bondelswarts. p8. 4th April, 1923. UG. 16 - '23.

27. Attorney-General to Admin. 29th November, 1923. p6. SWAA - A 388/1 vol.3

28. In August, 1919 Jacobus Christian returned with 40 followers and many stock. In October, 1919 a further 252 people crossed the Orange River border and travelled to the Reserve with 2,400 small stock, 172 donkeys and 120 dogs. 'Report of the Administrator on the Bondelswarts Rising, 1922'. p2. Cape Town. UG 30 - '22. 1922. Lt. Jordan, 1st Reg. MC to Mil. Mag. Warmbad. 7th August, 1919. ADM 105 -3353.

29. "In 1922 bv. het ons hier 'n klomp vee gekry wat ek help tel het op Heib; daar was so tussen die 30,000 en 40,000 stuk gewees, en u sou verbaas gewees het om die veld daar te sien." Ahlers, F. Evidence. 17th September, 1935. KSW 4 vol.33 p1981.

30. Mag. Warmbad to NC. SWAA - A 158/26 vol. 1

31. AR. LoN. 1923 p17.

32. Mag. Warm to NC. 13th August, 1923. SWAA - A158/26 vol.1

33. Monthly Report. Bondels Reserve. 30th September, 1924. SWAA A 158/26 vol.1.

34. 'General Statement of State of Ownership of Land as at 1st April, 1913', Imperial Survey Administration. Windhuk. Director of Surveys. Annex. N. in Schneider (Senior Officer, Lands Board) 'Memorandum on The Administration of Crown Land Within the Late Protectorate of German South West Africa' 21st March, 1922. LANG 35 - 68.

35. SWAP to Mag. Gibeon. 5th July, 1922. SWAA - A 396/8

36. Mil. Mag. Gibeon to Sec. Prot. 11th November, 1918. SWAA - A 158/6

37. Sec. Prot. to Mil. Mag. Gibeon 31st December, 1918. SWAA - A 158/6 vol. 1.

38. Mil. Mag. Gibeon to Sec. Prot. 15th January, 1919. SWAA - A 158/6 vol. 1.

39. Mag. Mar. to CNC 17th February, 1939 LMG 3/1/28 - 2/1/2/6

40. Mr Smit who leased the neighbouring farm of Kranzplats in 1918 had only 21 cattle. Mil. Mag. Gibeon to Sec. Prot. 15th January, 1919. SWAA - A 158/6 vol. 1.

41. Mil. Mag. Gibeon to Sec. Prot. 13th October, 1919. SWAA - A 158/6 vol.1

42. Mag. Gibeon to Sec. SWA 30th April, 1923. SWAA - A 158/6 vol. 1.

43. Isaak Witbooi et al. to Admin. Undated. 1923? SWAA 1122 - A158/6 vol.1

44. The new reserve consisted of Freistadt and the old adjoining farm of Falkenhorst. Two portions of Falkenhorst had been made available for lease as separate farms (Kranzplats and Schwarzdorn) and these were both included in the new reserve.

45. The total number of small stock on the reserve in 1926 was 6,159 and the average flock size of the remaining stockowners just sixty-nine. Native Reserve. Grazing Fee Register. (1924-1926) LMG 5/4/2

46. Sec SWA to Mag. Bet. 12th December, 1922 SWAA - A460/3

47. Mag. Bet. to NC 25th September, 1924. SWAA - A 158/5

48. 'Berseba Hottentot Reserve and Tribal Affairs'. NC to Sec. SWA. 30th November, 1921. SWAA - A 217.

49. 'Berseba Hottentot Reserve and Tribal Affairs'. NC to Sec. SWA. 30th November, 1921. SWAA - A 217.

50. 'Endorsement made by Assistant Secretary on Annual Report on Native Affairs by Magistrate, Keetmanshoop.' 12th May, 1933. SWAA 1430 - A 217/10 vol. 2.

51. Mag. Keetmanshoop to NC. 11th August, 1926. SWAA 1429 A217/10 vol.1

52. Minutes. Permanent Mandates Commission. 14th Session. 9th Meeting. quoted in Windhoek Advertiser. 16th June, 1929.

53. Memo. 'Resolusie ...' 12th May, 1941. SWAA A217/1 vol.3.

54. WO Tses & Berseba to NC. Keetmanshoop. 27th October, 1937. SWAA A 217/1 vol. 3

55. AR. Warmbad. 1917. ADM 106 - 3370/2

56. Mil. Mag. Warmbad to Sec. Prot. 19th February, 1918. ADM 157 - W41.

57. Mag. Bethanie to NC. 12th November, 1926. SWAA A 158/5.

58. 'Uitschot', 'Welgelegen' and 'Plankieskop' Farms. Attorney-Gen to Admin. 29th November, 1923. SWAA - A388/1 vol. 3

59. Report of the Commission appointed to enquire into the Rebellion of the Bondelswarts. p8. para 28. Cape Town. UG 16 - '23. 1923

60. Herbst (Secretary for South West Africa, 1917-1923) to SWA Commission p2683. KSW 5.

61. "... as the land has been taken by Europeans their stock has decreased greatly in numbers, and owing to being confined to restricted areas they are seldom in good enough condition to yield a sufficient supply of milk for their owners sustenance throughout the year." NC to Sec. SWA 31st October, 1929. SWAA 1155 - A 158/26/1

62. Zaris had actually been sold to AJ and W. Liebenberg. Daberas Pforte had been sold to two prospective white farmers acting in partnership, but had been returned when they had been unable to locate an adequate source of water on the farm. Klein Daberas had been leased to three white farmers with 1,300 small stock and 32 large stock. Mag. Keetmanshoop to NC. 11th December, 1928. SWAA 1429 - A 217/10 vol.1. 1928 Farm Directory p 457.'Tses Native Reserve'. NC to Sec.

SWA. 26th October, 1928. SWAA 1429 - A 217/10 vol. 1.

63. Mag. Keetmanshoop to Administrator. 14th December, 1928. SWAA 1429 A217/10 vol. 1

64. 'Tses Native Reserve'. NC to Sec. SWA. 26th October, 1928. SWAA 1429 - A 217/10 vol. 1.

65. 'Tses. Arrears. As December, 1928' SWAA 1430 - A 217/10 vol.2.

66. AR. Bethanie. 1924. LAR (sic) 9 - 3/7.

67. Mag. Bet. to NC 25th September, 1924. SWAA - A 158/5. & SWAP Bet. to Mag. Bet. 12th May, 1923. SWAA - A 460/3.

68. Sec. SWA to Mag. Bethanie. 12th December, 1922. SWAA - A460/3.

69. Letter dated 26th May, 1926 quoted in Bethanie ARG 9 - 15/3/21.

70. Mag. Keetmanshoop. to Sec. SWA. 24th June, 1922. LKE 3/1/21 - 2/1/20/3.

71. The 21 farms were listed as: - 1. Nomes. 2. Tses. 3. xara-gye /gaus. 4. /Aub.!gaos. 5. ! Nau-dausab. 6. "Khom-//narib. 7. ! Noros. 8. /Jnub. 9. Zamgur'-/gam. 10. !Hus. 11. IOrtsis. 12. IIKhorobes. 13. Tomerob. 14. IIKhan-IIKhanti. 15. IIHao-!ati. 16. IAe-Inus. 17. !Hu-IIhuis. 18. ! Geirob. 19. Ao-Ikhams. 20. Khoi-IIKhox !nab. 21. I Anoxati. Abschrift. 16th December, 1913. LKE 3/1/21 - 2/1/20/3

72. Investigation of complaint by David Christiaan Izak held at Keetmanshoop. 6th June, 1922. LKE 3/1/21 - 2/1/20/3

73. Investigation of complaint by David Christiaan Izak held at Keetmanshoop. 6th June, 1922. LKE 3/1/21 - 2/1/20/3.

74. Investigation of complaint by David Christiaan Izak held at Keetmanshoop. 6th June, 1922. LKE 3/1/21 - 2/1/20/3

75. Berseba Hottentot Reserve and Tribal Affairs. 30th November, 1921. NC to Sec SWA. SWAA A217

76. Mag. Keetmanshoop to Sec. 24th June, 1922. SWA. LKE 3/1/21

77. Mag. Keetmanshoop to Sec. 24th June, 1922. SWA. LKE 3/1/21

78. Ernest Routh. Statement. 20th October, 1919. SWAA - A 217/1.

79. Memo. 'Vide Secretary's Minute dated 24th March, 1922'. SWAA - A 217/1.

80. It was reported that a windmill built and used by Mr Rabinowitz of Naruchas had stood on Bondels Reserve for over 25 years, whilst Mr Oberholzer of

Swarthoek had chased black stockowners away in his motor car from land which it materialised was within the official boundaries of the reserve. AR. Super. Bondels. 1947. LKW 3/4/2 - 2/16/3.

81. The example was Paradies Farm. NC. Windhoek to Mag. Keetmanshoop. 13th September, 1928. LKE 3/1/22-2/9/6.

82. The farmers concerned were named as Blaauw, Piet le Grange and Mans Kennedy. Mag. Mar to Admin. 19th September, 1950. LMG 3/3/3 - N2/13/2/40 vol.1

83. Minutes. Annual Meeting. Krantzplatz. 29th November, 1948. SWAA - A 158/98 vol 1.

84. NA Dept. to NC. 14th December, 1915. ADM 46 - 599.

85. 'Native Affairs Occurrence Book' Warmbad. 28th December, 1917. LKW 5/1/4

86. Executive Council Meeting Minutes. 14th July, 1926. SWAA 2/5.

87. ARNA. Warm. 1927 LKW 3/1/3 - 3/5

88. Mag. Warm to Sec SWA 19th March, 1928. SWAA 1968 - A 413/2

89. 'Grazing in Bondels Reserve'. 11th October, 1927. SWAA 1968 - A 413/2. ARNA, Warmbad. 1927. LKW 3/1/3 - 3/5

90. Mag. Warm to Sec SWA 19th March, 1928. SWAA 1968 - A 413/2

91. AR NA. Warmbad. 1927. LKW 3/1/3 - 3/5

92. 'Bondelswarts Tribe Starving'. Star. 26th October, 1929. SWAA - A158/26. The allegations made in this article were vigorously denied by the administration, but defended by the reporter as accurate. See subsequent article 'The Bondel's Reserve', The Star. contained in file SWAA 1155 - A 158/26/1

93. "Daar het suspieie bestaan dat sekere van die Bondels Voormanne geld ontvang van trekkers vir oorstaning en weiding op die Reservaat." SWAP, Kalkfontein South to SWAP, 5th May, 1930. Windhoek. SWAA - A 158/26 vol.3

94. Mag. Warm to NC. 4th November, 1929. SWAA 1155 - A158/26/1

95. Mag. Warmbad to CNC. 15th February, 1940. SWAA A460/17.

96. Quarterly Report. WO Bondels. 31st March, 1947. LKW 3/4/1 - 2/15/6

97. Quarterly Report. WO Bondels. 31st March, 1947. LKW 3/4/1 - 2/15/6

98. 'Vergadering gehou deur Mnr T. Edwards Naturelle Kommissaris te Berseba op 31 Augustus 1928'. SWAA A460/8

99. Super. Berseba to Mag. Keetmanshoop. 25th June, 1929. LKE 3/1/22 - 2/9/9

100. Monthly Report - Super. Berseba to Mag. Keetmanshoop. 30th June, 1929. LKE 3/1/23-2/10/4

101. Mag. Warm to Sec SWA. 8th August, 1926. SWAA A158/26 vol. 1

102. Statement of Mag. Warmbad to SWA Commission. Mag. Warmbad to Sec. SWA. 16th September, 1935. SWAA - A158/26 vol. 5

103. Mag. Warmbad to CNC. 18th January, 1943. LKW 3/4/2 - 2/16/3.

104. Mag. Warmbad to CNC. 22nd August, 1941. SWAA - A 158/26 vol. 5.

105. NAAR. 1929. SWAA - A 73/10.

106. 'Tses Native Reserve' NC Edwards to Sec SWA. 26th October, 1928. SWAA 1429 A 217/10 vol.1

107. Minutes of Reserve Board. 10th October, 1931. LMG 3/1/27 2/1/2/6.

108. Old Eduard Isaac owned 166 large stock and flocks of 1,284 small stock and owed £33. 6/- 10d. The names of 653 stockowners in Berseba were provided in a list giving the position regarding the payment of grazing fees in the reserve as of 1st April, 1935, 637 of these were also on the list of debtors from 1931. 'Arrears 31st August, 1931 Berseba'. SWAA 1433 - A 217/16. 'Arrears as of 1st April, 1935'. SWAA 1435 - A 217/22.

109. Sec. SWA to Admin. 7th February, 1934. SWAA A 158.26 vol.4

110. Report dated 28th March, 1933 quoted in Memo. 'Tses Native Reserve' to Assist. Sec. SWA. SWAA 1430 - A 217/10. vol. 2.

111. 'Stockowners in Bondels Reserve'. Mag. Warmbad to Sec. SWA. 28th May, 1934. SWAA - A 158/26. vol. 4.

112. Mr F. Ahlers. Evidence to the SWA Commission. 17th September, 1935. p1983. KSW 4 vol. 33.

113. Mag. Warmbad to Sec. SWA. 28th May, 1934. SWAA - A 158/26. vol. 4.

114. Act CNC to Mag. Keetmanshoop. 18th June, 1935. SWAA - A 158/5.

115. Monthly Report. Super. Tses to Mag. Keetmanshoop. 28th February, 1935. SWAA 1430 - A 217/10 vol. 2.

116. "Verskillende naturelle het hulle al aan blanke plaas eienaars gaan verhuur om sonder betaling te werk mits hulle net hul vee dan sodoende kan aan die lewe hou." Report dated 28th February, 1933 quoted in Memo. 'Tses Native Reserve' to Assist. Sec. SWA. SWAA 1430 - A 217/10. vol. 2.

117. 75 obtained work again for the Railway, although a clear sign of the economic depression was the fact that their wages had dropped to just 10d per day, 35 were still at Vioolsdrift working on the Irrigation Project in September, 1935. Aspeling. Evidence to SWA Commission. 16th September, 1935. KSW 4 - Vol. 32. See also: Mag. Warm to Sec. SWA SWAA - A 158/26 vol. 4.

118. Gaap Pieter, the stockowner, had a flock of two or three hundred small stock, fifty cattle and ten horses. Mag. Gibeon to NC. 1929. LMG 3/1/27 - 2/1/2

119. Mag. Mariental to Sec SWA 8th March, 1934. LMG 3/1/27 - 2/1/2/6

120. J. Neumann, Farm Sommerau to Sec. SWA. 26th June, 1933. LKE 3/1/51 2/6/10

121. Reports dated 28th March and 30th May, 1933 quoted in Memo. 'Tses Native Reserve' to Assist. Sec. SWA. SWAA 1430 - A 217/10. vol. 2.

122. 'Tses Native Reserve - Outstanding fees' SWAA 1430 - A 217/10 vol. 2 Super. Tses to Mag. Keetmanshoop. 6th September, 1934. LKE 3/1/51 - 2/6/10.

123. Mag. Rehoboth to Mag. Keetmanshoop. 28th June, 1934. LKE 3/1/51 - 2/6/10.

124. Mag. Rehoboth to Mag. Keetmanshoop. 28th June, 1934. LKE 3/1/51 - 2/6/10. & 'Tses. Arrears. As December, 1928' SWAA 1430 - A 217/10 vol.2.

125. 'Deputation of Witbooi Hottentots from Gibeon Native Reserve' 28th August, 1934. Minutes SWAA - 158/6 vol.2

126. 'Arrears' 31st August, 1930. SWAA A 217/16. Appendix to Inquiry Re: Diedrich Goliath. 1st November, 1935. SWAA A460/8.

127. ARNA. 1929 Keetmanshoop. LKE 3/1/42 -17/11/3 and NAAR. 1934. LKE 3/1/45 - 2/13.

128. Mag. Warmbad to Sec. SWA. 12th December, 1934. SWAA - A 158/26 vol. 4.

129. Mag. Warmbad to Sec. SWA. 12th December, 1934. SWAA - A 158/26 vol. 4.

130. 'Historiese Oorsig van die Bondelswarts' ARG 8 - 15/3/2 p26.

131. 'Historiese Oorsig van die Bondelswarts' ARG 8 - 15/3/2 p26

132. WO Bondels to NC. 12th June, 1939.SWAA - A158/26 vol.5

133. Mag. Warm to CNC 27th June, 1939. SWAA - A158/26 vol.5

134. Minutes. Annual Meeting. Krantzplatz. 4th December, 1938. LMG 3/1/28 - 2/1/2/6.

135. 'Oorsig oor die klein en grootveegetale ... in die Kranzplatz Reserwe in die maand Juni 1939' LMG 3/1/28 - 2/1/2/6.

136. Zacharias Katjerungu raised the issue. Minutes. Annual Meeting Gibeon. 4th December, 1936. SWAA - A 158/98 vol. 1

137. Mag. Mariental. to CNC 17th February, 1939 LMG 3/1/28 - 2/1/2/6 The local JP argued that "... the maximum number of stock which the Reserve can carry in good and bad years is 5,500 small stock and 300 large stock. This is taking into account farm Groot Swartkop [Schwarzkuppe], which the natives are allowed to use: with the addition of Groot Swartkop the area of the Reserve is 23,573 hectares" Special JP. Bethanie. to Mag. Keetmanshoop. 20th November, 1940. SWAA - A 158/5/1

138. Special JP. Bethanie to Mag. Keetmanshoop. 21st June, 1940. SWAA - A 158/5/1

139. SWAP. Bethanie. to Mag. Keetmanshoop. 12th March, 1938.

140. Special JP. Bethanie to NC. Keetmanshoop. 17th July, 1940. SWAA - A 158/5

141. Bethanie. ARG 8 - 15/3/7

142. AR on SWA. 1941. SWAA 912 - A 73/221.

143. Mag. Bethanie to CNC. List attached to letter. 28th June, 1943. SWAA - A 158/5/1.

144. 'Stock owned by Natives ...' 31st August, 1946. SWAA S1/4/2. Quarterly Return. Special JP. Bet to Mag. Keetmanshoop. SWAA 1122 - A 158/5

145. Mag. Bethanie. to CNC. 2nd September, 1952. SWAA 1122 - A 158/5/2

146. Monthly Report. Welfare Officer. Tses. February, 1940. SWAA 1430 - A 217/10 vol. 2.

147. The Magistrate added the following annotation to the letter - "Welfare Officer informed to prosecute rich natives first who are in arrear with fees". WO Tses to NC. Keetmanshoop. 27th November, 1939. LKE 3/1/51 2/6/10

148. CNC to De Villiers, NC. 7th June, 1939.LKE 3/1/51 2/6/10 and Mag (same as NC) to CNC 9th June, 1939. LKE 3/1/51 2/6/10

149. AR LoN. 1939. p159. para 1008

150. "Ek het ook so 'n klein klagtetjie van die Polisie dat die mense nie hulle vee op die bestemde plekke hou vir die vee-tellings nie". Minutes. Quarterly Meeting. Tses 27th April, 1954. SWAA 1436 - A 217/25 vol.2. WO Tses to NC, Keetmanshoop. 15th October, 1953. SWAA 1436 - A 217/26

151. Permanent Mandate Commission. 14th Session. 9th Meeting. Windhoek Advertiser. 10th July, 1929.

152. SWAP. Bethanie to Mag. Keetmanshoop. 9th June, 1938. SWAA - A 158/5.

153. Notule van 'n Algemene Vergadering. 10th December, 1938. LKE 3/1/50 2/6/4.

154. WO Tses & Berseba to NC. Keetmanshoop. 12th January, 1945. SWAA A50/188/10

155. Minutes. Meeting of Tses & Berseba residents. 30th June, 1949. SWAA 1435 - A217/25

156. "Die inwoners is ontevrede oor die pryse wat ons vir die bokke by die vendusie gekry het... Waarom kan ons nie skape buite koop nie ?" Hans Jager. Minutes. Quarterly Meeting. Tses. 24th September, 1956. BAC 44 - HN 1/15/4/14.

157. Inspection Report. Krantsplatz. 1952. SWAA 1282 - A 158/189/6.

158. 'Vee-Vandisie gehou op Kranzplatz 5 April 1944' LMG 3/1/55 - 2/11/2/8

159. Mag. Warmbad to Senior Officer (Land Board) 14th August, 1934. LAN 11 vol. 3.

160. NAAR. Tses. 1937. WO Tses & Berseba to NC. Keetmanshoop. 1st January, 1938. LKE 3/1/50 - 2/6/5/1.

161. 'Discussion with Additional Native Commissioner. Mr J.H. Allen' 3rd December, 1948. KAP 1 - AC 6/1.

162. Minutes. Quarterly Meeting. Tses. 27th April, 1954. SWAA 1436 - A 217/25 vol. 2.

163. WO Tses to NC, Keetmanshoop. 15th October, 1953. SWAA 1436 - A 217/26

164. ARNA Warmbad 1942 LKW 3/4/2 - 2/16/3

165. ARNA. Warmbad. 1943. LKW 3/4/2 - 2/16/3

166. Annual Report. Super. Bondels. 1946. LKW 3/4/2 - 2/16/3

167. AR on SWA. 1941. Para 838. SWAA 912 - A 73/22.

168. NAAR. 1947. Mag. Keetmanshoop. 31st December, 1947. SWAA 477 - A 50/188/12.

169. ARNA Tses. 1947 SWAA A50/188/10

170. WO Bondels to NC. Karasburg. 11th March, 1948. LKW 3/4/1 - 2/15/11. Minutes Annual Meeting Bondels. 14th March, 1950 SWAA - A158/26 vol. 6. Minutes Annual Meeting. Bondels. 4th December, 1950. SWAA - A158/108.

171. ARNA Warmbad. 1953. 9th January, 1953. LKW 3/1/7 - 17/14/2

172. ARNA Karasburg. 1953. 26th January, 1954. KSW 3/1/7 - 17/14/2.

173. WO Bondels to NC. Karasburg. 7th November, 1954. SWAA 419 - A 50/31

174. "Telkens is daar egter naturelle wat van hule werk dros en.dan die Reservaat onwettig binne kom. Dit is uiters moeilik om hulle op te spoor aangesien die inwoners besonder lojaal teenoor diesulkes is." Monthly Report. April, 1956. 30th April, 1956. BAC 58 - HN 1/15/6/3 vol.1

175. "Hier is byna daagliks Boers wat met lee hande van die Reservaat weggaan omdat die inwoners eenvoudig te kieskeurig is. Dit is met 'n soort leedvermaak dat jong naturelle vir jou se dat hulle vee van hulle vaders oppas hoewel die vaders heeltemal in staat is om hulle vee self te behartig." Monthly Report. May, 1956. WO,Bondels to Mag. Karas. 30th May, 1956. BAC 58 - HN 1/15/6/3 vol.1

176. Minutes. Meeting of Tses & Berseba residents. 30th June, 1949. SWAA 1435 - A217/25

177. Minutes. Meeting of Tses & Berseba residents. 30th June, 1949. SWAA 1435 - A217/25

178. AR Tses. 1949. SWAA 478 A50/188/1949

179. Mag. Warm to CNC. 17th March, 1924. SWAA A460/17

180. Monthly Report. Super. Bondels Reserve. 30th September, 1924. SWAA - A158/26 vol.1

0181. List of Bondelzwarts contracted to the SA Railways. 29th August, 1924. SWAA A521/12.

182. 'C3 Tribe Doomed to Extinction'. The Cape Argus. 25th October, 1929. SWAA 1155 - A 158/26/1.

183. 'Native Labour: Warmbad District'. Mag. Warmbad to CNC 22nd June, 1938. Swaa A521/12.

184. ARNA. 1944. Berseba. 29th November, 1944. SWAA A50/188/10

185. Quarterly Return. WO Berseba. 31st March, 1945. SWAA 1433 - A 217/16 vol. 1

186. Mag. Bethanie. to CNC. 30th September, 1948. SWAA 1122 - A 158/5

187. NAAR 1948 Bethanie 6th January, 1949. SWAA 478 - A 50/188/1949

188. NAAR. Bethanie. 1949 24th March, 1950. SWAA 478 - A 50/188/1949

CHAPTER THREE: THE POLITICAL DYNAMICS OF THE RESERVES, 1915 - 1955.

INTRODUCTION - THE CLOAK AND DAGGER OF TRADITION.

"To the white horse the zebra said 'I am white too' and to the black horse 'I am really black'".[1]

The reserves of southern Namibia provided the arena for a range of political conflicts. The conflicts were an expression of the friction between different interest groups, within and without the reserves. The communities living in the reserves were in no way amorphous, but segmented along a number of fissures, which were used to mobilise politically distinct groups around issues of conflict.

Economic differentiation and aspiration provided the dynamo for disputes and actions, yet leaders could also utilise age, ethnicity, gender, religion and tradition as powerful tools for generating political support. Importance must be ascribed not only to the type of differences that mattered within a particular society, but also the chronology of when and why certain differences became politically significant. Political actions must be situated within the changing economic landscape charted in the last chapter.

The aim of this chapter is to analyse the political dynamics of the reserves in terms of the economic interest groups involved, the issues that concerned them and the means by which they mobilised support. Economic change might be compared to the waters pressing on a dam, but local structures and circumstances must be noted to understand why the dam yields in a particular place at a particular time. The chapter will be divided into three sections. The initial task will be to consider the toolbox available to those seeking to mobilise support. The second section will consider some of the issues that created conflict within the reserves and place these within the context of the economic interest groups involved. The final section will

consider two case studies in detail. The first will be the Bondelswarts Rising of 1922 and the second, the events surrounding the deposition of Diedrich Goliath as the Captain of the Berseba reserve in 1938.

Tradition might be described as the anachronistic re-creation of the past, but should not be dismissed as an innocent recreation. Tradition can be used to rationalise the maintenance of a certain social hierarchy, acting as a legitimising cloak for those in power. In the period under consideration the pre-colonial and German colonial past might be used to justify the continuance or revival of certain practices or to legitimise the hereditary descent of positions of leadership. Yet it is important that the cloak of tradition does not obscure the economic structure which it enveloped. The assumption of roles of leadership in southern Namibia remained strongly dependent upon the wealth of the office holders and their consequent ability to support those of their followers who were in need.

The legitimisation of 'traditional' structures of authority and nepotism might draw strength from the extensive literature that exists linking pre-colonial 'primary resistance' to subsequent anti-colonial nationalist struggles. The link is, however, problematic. Alexander has pointed out that leaders were often engaged in a process that might more accurately be described as 'primary collaboration', rather than resistance.[2] Foreign intrusion and colonial regimes provided not just a challenge, but also an opportunity.

Foreign involvement was a new factor within the equation that produced the balance of power within and between elites within 'traditional' power structures. Actions and reactions may be interpreted in terms of the relationships between a local elite and their followers, rather than simply symptoms of 'proto-nationalism'. The politics of the reserves within southern Namibia reflected external and internal tensions.

The colonial period severely disrupted the social and political structure of black communities. Black leaders sought to preserve those structures upon which their

own personal wealth and power were based. Colonial structures which preserved and fossilised the local power base of leaders were acceptable, yet could also place limits on the geographical and political extent of those powers. The advantages gained by official sanction of a leader's position had to be balanced against the cost.

Beinart found, in his work on Pondoland, that the consequence of colonisation was not the total destruction of the existing order in rural communities. In Pondoland:

> Pre-colonial forms of rank and authority ... were to some extent translated into a new context.[3]

In southern Namibia local elites were incorporated into the new reserve board structures. The dichotomy between resistance and collaboration therefore becomes more opaque, at times reflecting more a difference of strategy, than of aims.

The political influence of community leaders in southern Namibia was directly linked to their stock wealth. The economic crisis that they faced due to the application of the land settlement and reserve policies created a consequential crisis of authority and control for leaders deprived of their economic base. Leaders had an interest in emphasising a local dynastic 'tradition', whilst seeking to use their new relationship with the administration to preserve and extend their powers over the locality.

The translation of old elites into new administrators carried risks for the black leadership. The colonial administration expected that community leaders would use their influence to enforce colonial regulations or run the risk of losing official recognition and the subsequent financial support for their position. The political dilemma that this created for community leaders in South Africa was apparent:

> The blurred nature of the position meant that headmen manoeuvred between the narrow sphere of divided loyalties. Frequently success at avoiding the official censure of the local magistrate, who was empowered to appointed

(sic) and dismiss headmen, would only be achieved at the cost of offending the community.[4]

Whilst walking this political tightrope, leaders might invoke 'tradition' as a way of 'explaining' resistance to the demands of the colonial state, a means of seeking greater personal powers within the context of the state apparatus or as an ideological weapon to mobilise resistance to unpopular new policies. Tradition could be used as a dagger to disembowel rival administrative bodies.

The ability of reserves to serve as an effective political base upon which leaders could build their authority was flawed. The economic inadequacies of the reserves reduced their effectiveness as vessels of control (or strength as bases of opposition to the administration). Two points illustrate the way in which the economic context within which the reserves were set fostered divergent interest groups. In the first place, reserves were designed to serve as the domain of the elderly with the able-bodied youth departing to satiate the labour demands of the white community. The consequence was a distorted age distribution within the reserves. Politics would reflect differences between the political priorities of the, frequently absent, younger workers and the more elderly residents with pastoral responsibilities.

Secondly, the fact that women were not included in the pass laws until 1955 meant that young women were able to leave the reserves and evade the authority of the, typically, elderly male leadership. The attempts made by many women to move to urban areas or (especially in the 1920s) to live with their families on neighbouring farms placed them beyond the boundaries of effective control by their community leaders. The absence of women in the 'traditional' leadership or on the reserve boards should also not be taken as grounds for ignoring the political role of women within the reserves. Women in Berseba were, after all, allowed to vote in elections years before women in Britain ![5]

Leroy Vail has suggested that the threat posed to men by women acting independently played an important role in the formulation of twentieth century

ideologies of distinct ethnic identities:

> ... an emphasis on the need to control women and a stress on the protection of the integrity of the family came to be intrinsic to both ethnic ideologies and the actual institutional practices of indirect rule.[6]

The rise of ethnicity in southern Namibia was also clearly linked to the increase in economic competition and strain experienced by communities during a period of rapidly diminishing resources.

Ethnicity was a banner that was raised and evolved in reaction to (and to define) particular socio-economic threats. Ethnicity was one of the instruments used to mobilise support during particular disputes - to provide the 'smugness of belonging' and parameters of inclusion and exclusion which are central to politics. The next section of this chapter considers some of the issues of dispute within the reserves of southern Namibia over the period 1915 - 1955. A central theme of the section will be the means by which opponents and supporters of a particular position or activity were defined and activated.

THE STRUGGLE OF LEADERS FOR AUTHORITY AND AUTONOMY.

The German colonial moment in Namibia was brief, barely thirty years, and came comparatively late. Community leaders in southern Namibia at the time of the South African conquest were generally the sons of men who had acted as independent rulers. A significant number of these community leaders had been imprisoned or living in exile from their supporters since their defeat in the 1904-1907 War against Germany. It was inevitable that their return after a prolonged absence and following the military defeat of the German forces would raise expectations that local systems of authority could be revived and the imposed burden of colonial legislation removed.

The point can be illustrated with two examples. Joseph Fredricks the accepted

leader of the people in the region surrounding Bethanie ruled from 1868 to 1893. His eldest son, Paul, took over the leadership upon Joseph's death, but was one of many prisoners who died amongst the squalid conditions at the prisoner-of-war camp on Shark Island (off Luderitz) during the 1904-1907 War. Paul's brother, Edward, became the new leader, but was kept in internal exile as a prisoner in Damaraland for a decade. Edward Fredricks returned to the Bethanie area in December, 1915.[7]

Isaac Witbooi, the son of the famous guerilla leader, Hendrik Witbooi provides a further example of the clear German policy of removing rebellious leaders from their communities. Isaac was deported to the West African German colony in the Cameroons during the 1904-1907 War. Isaac was one of the few deportees who survived the experience, but upon his return he was not permitted to return to his people. Isaac was kept in northern Namibia, and eventually held at the German military station at Okanjanda (near present day Otjiwarongo), like Edward Fredricks only returning to his power base at Gibeon in 1915.[8] Jacobus Christian the hereditary leader of the Bondelswarts likewise remained in self-imposed exile in the Cape Province of South Africa for over a decade.

The intention of the returning leaders was clearly to re-establish their authority over their followers within their previous geographical sphere of influence. The cartographical limits to the authority granted to them by the administration (over particular reserves or government farms) did not limit their ambition to revive past powers. It was reported that Isaac Witbooi was even establishing courts on white farms which would refer cases to his central court at Gibeon.[9] The court specialised in cases of adultery and fornication with a normal sentence being reported as between ten and twenty lashes with a whip, and exceptionally up to fifty. However the application of blows was often avoided by the payment of an appropriate fine, payable in the form of goats, which were divided amongst the members of the court.[10]

The attempt to reconstitute the precolonial apparatus of authority was understandable

and replicated by other community leaders. However the reason that so much detail remains of Isaac Witbooi's efforts was that he was labelled an 'agitator', arrested (along with other court members) and charged with 'incitement to rebellion' in 1918.[11] Witbooi received an early and clear warning that the defeat of the Germans was not to be equated with the return of traditional black authority. Any attempt to revive and extend powers beyond the limits fixed by the administration would be treated as a threat.

The followers of Witbooi provided visible evidence of their awareness of the historical resonance of Witbooi's attempt to assert his independent authority. One nervous farmer noted that:

> As an outward sign of their attachment to Witbooi most of the men are suddenly wearing their old tribal badge: a white cloth around the hat ... There are very few inhabitants of Gibeon who did not observe that on the morning after the first charge was laid ... all those Natives who were not yet in gaol appeared with new white cloths around their hats; even those who wore caps had white bands around them. This impudent ovation for Witbooi is a marked example of the defiant insubordination of the Natives.[12]

The revival of the bandannas associated with the guerilla units of Hendrik Witbooi during the 1904-1907 War acted as a symbolic reminder of the community's previous strength.

The senior official responsible for 'Native Affairs' at the time recognised that the symbolism was not intended to announce a return to an armed struggle, but was rather:

> ... purely and simply an agitation to secure for themselves from us a measure of self government.[13]

Leaders sought the revival of their previous authority on the basis of historical

rights. Leaders in the Berseba and Bondels reserves could claim privileges inherited from the German period and agitated for their just application and interpretation. The popularity of the cause was also due to its association with memories of easier, less restricted access to land. The administration, however, remained hesitant about recognising pre-colonial titles and opposed any attempt to revive pre-colonial systems of self-government. The substitute that they offered was the creation of the reserve network with Headmen and the members of the reserve board acting as the officially recognised authority in each reserve and no national black forum. The only channel for black voices within the administration led to the senior white officials of the 'Native Affairs' Department.

The apparatus was attacked by black politicians as a distorted and diluted substitute for their earlier systems of government. The most common criticism made by members of the reserve boards was that they had been given positions, but not powers. A white official stationed in the reserve as a Superintendent or Welfare Officer in practice usurped many of the powers and rights that the headmen and board members felt should belong to them, such as the right to issue passes and decide how money in the reserve trust fund was spent. The consequence was that the struggle for authority within a reserve could became a highly personalised conflict.

The powers sought by reserve boards reflected the specific concerns of their constituency and their attempts to maintain a certain form of social order within the reserves. Meetings in the reserves called repeatedly for additional rights to intervene in cases involving adultery, immorality and drunkenness.[14] The gender specific nature of the pass laws led to concern amongst the administration and the male reserve leadership about the drift of women to urban areas. The concern led to the superficially paradoxical spectacle of reserve leaders in the 1920s and 1930s demanding the extension of the pass laws to cover women, whilst protesting about the rigour with which they were applied to men.[15] The elderly male leaders of each reserve sought the authority to resolve social problems that they perceived as resulting from the prolonged, repeated or total absence of young men and women

from the reserves and the supervision of their elders.

One concrete example of this type of conflict can be found in a lengthy dispute between Captain David Witbooi, based at Krantzplatz, and Mr. F. Gerdes, the Welfare Officer based in the reserve at the time of the Second World War. The dispute centred around the extent of the authority exercised by the Welfare Officer in relation to the local black leadership. Witbooi objected, for example, to Gerdes' arbitrary use of his authority when branding of stock was necessary within the reserve.[16] The traditional authority of black leaders could be seriously undermined by such demonstrations of white managerial dominance and lack of respect for senior figures within the reserve hierarchy.[17] In this case Witbooi's persistent lobbying of higher authorities finally achieved its goal when Gerdes' removal from the reserve was recommended by the 'Chief Native Commissioner' in 1945.[18]

Witbooi's success, however, was atypical. Mr Neser, 'Secretary for South West Africa' argued ,in 1946, that:

> "The Boardmen may or may not be (and very often are <u>not</u>) consulted by Welfare Officers. They have no real sense of control over their Trust Funds.[19]

The local authority granted to reserve boards and leaders was dwarfed by the shadow of the colonial state which seemed able at will to intervene in the domestic affairs of the reserves. The job descriptions of black leaders in the reserve sought to cast them as agents of the state and defuse their potency as representatives of the wishes of their communities.

The administration's most powerful tool for manipulating the hierarchy of the reserves was its ability to remove and appoint headmen and reserve board members. Elected members who failed to carry out their official duties effectively or became 'overmighty', could be removed from office. In 1939 one board member in the

Bondelswarts reserve reported that a headman, Adam Witbooi, had complained that:

> ... I always reported people to the Welfare Officer and that he never did.[20]

Witbooi's independent attitude was to be swiftly punished. In the following year, 1940, Witbooi was one of two Headmen dismissed by the local magistrate, who commented that:

> I think that by making the new appointments we will have manoeuvred ourselves into a strategic position of complete dominance.[21]

The Welfare Officer noted that one of the new men appointed was particularly suited '... by birth and upbringing for the position of Headman', presumably a reference to the fact that the man's father had been white.[22] The administration consistently sought to advance candidates that would support their policies.

In the early years of the administration the authorities hoped to make use of dynastic rivalries. Joel Kasetura (described as 'a son or son-in-law of Samuel Herero') supported the cattle branding law and enjoyed official support when he separated from the local leader in the Tses reserve, in 1925, who opposed it. The administration's failure to support an elected leader was justified because it served '...the object of 'divide et impera''.[23] The danger for the state was that the employment of preferred state candidates and treatment of community leaders as merely minor employees undermined the legitimacy of the authority upon which their job relied.

Lord Hailey reported the view of Hahn, the 'Native Commissioner' in Ovamboland that the payment of the reserve leadership:

> ... gravely impairs their position with the tribesmen and makes them officers of government.[24]

Yet in southern Namibia the difficulty the reserve leadership faced was their poverty relative to other black officials within the legislation. One could compare the wages of Gideon Matundu, a 'headman' at Tses reserve to those of Josua Morangua, the 'Messenger/Interpreter' for the reserve's white Supervisor. Matundu received an annual salary of £18, Morangua £60.[25] Reserve leaders who had been disarmed of traditional powers and allotted a junior rank within the state hierarchy were forced to seek a new basis on which to gain popular legitimacy and status for their position.

The necessary qualifications for a position of leadership accordingly shifted from those giving legitimacy in terms of genealogy to those stressing educational qualities suited to the new role of reserve leaders. The residents of the reserves in southern Namibia were aware after 1938 (and the deposition of Diedrich Goliath as Headman in Berseba and Joseph Frederick as Headman in Soromas) that the role permitted to reserve leaders was no longer that of the authority within a reserve, but rather that of a mediator with the authority of the colonial administration.[26]

The explanation given for the election of Markus Koraseb as a Headman in Krantzplatz reserve in 1949 owed nothing to tradition and all to the fact that he was literate and could speak 'die Witmense taal'(the white peoples' language).[27] Koraseb found his position difficult as he lacked the authorative powers, the traditional status or the pecuniary strength necessary to add prestige to his position. The result was that he constantly sought increases in his powers from the authorities.[28]

Reserve residents, however, sought leaders who would articulate their grievances, rather than enforce colonial legislation. Position without power meant that reserve leaders like Koraseb found it difficult to obtain the obedience of the residents who had elected them into office[29], but this was not the reason that they had been elected. Respect and loyalty would only come if the new educated leadership obtained concessions from the administration. The demolition of 'traditional' structures of authority had resulted in a reconstruction of the perceived role of

leaders in the reserve.

Around the time of the Second World War it had become clear that authority could no longer be dependent upon tradition and stock wealth. Restrictions on entry to the cramped reserves and the more reliable payment of cash wages to farm labourers meant that young peoples' aspirations to economic independence were no longer limited to the possibility of farming in a reserve. The prospects offered by the reserves were poor. The reserve leaders were faced with the possibilities of articulating the views and defending the interests of the minority of elderly stockowners and their families within the reserves or seeking to identify a broader constituency and a wider leadership role.

THE STRUGGLE TO MAXIMISE THE SIZE AND QUALITY OF THE RESERVES.

The establishment of the reserves and fixing of boundaries generated debate about the quality and legitimacy (when contrasted with memories of the size of the area previously utilised by the community for its pastoral activities) of designated boundaries. One of the primary incentives for black politicians during the period when the fixing of boundaries was being debated was to try and influence decisions about the size and location of reserves, yet official claims about the extent of consultation and negotiation were exaggerated. The exercise of delimitating reserves owed little to the wide ranging, constantly mutating pastoral domains of pre-colonial communities.

The pastoral communities of southern Namibia had considerable local knowledge about the watering points and grazing areas available in the region. The confinement or movement of communities to areas which they considered unsuitable in character or inadequate in size generated opposition. The Annual Report submitted to the League of Nations in 1925 carried the assurance that:

> The natives were consulted as to the areas to be set aside as reserves and

were also allowed to select the particular reserves they wished to live in.[30]

The reality, however was imposition, not negotiation.

Black stock owners opposed the move to Tses reserve in 1923 on the grounds that the reserve would have inadequate water and grazing to support all their animals.[31] A mounted commando of Hereros rode to Keetmanshoop in a demonstration of strength and to the alarm of the magistrate stayed for a week to protest.[32] The addition of Vaalgraas (AKA Witbooisende) to the reserve was a victory for the Hereros, but the victory was soured by the rounding up of black stockowners scattered over land to the east of the new Tses reserve and their resettlement within it.

The subsequent militancy of the community of 'Hereros' under the leadership of Gideon Matundu and 'Veldschoendragers' at Namutoni can be linked to their experience of forced removal. The community were spread over a wide area that had not been divided up into farms and stretched from Namutoni up to Gocharas. The community put up a protracted struggle against the administration's efforts to persuade them to move into the new reserve. Open hostility to other administrative measures coincided with renewed efforts by officials to persuade the community to move within the borders of their new cartographically defined reserve.[33] The community were finally ordered to move to the reserve in January, 1926 or face prosecution under the anti-squatting legislation.[34]

The forced move confirmed the community's worst fears and produced a dramatic reduction in the size of the community's herds and flocks, with stock numbers falling even before the severe drought at the end of the 1920s (a few hired grazing in Rehoboth district). The confinement of stock into a smaller area with inadequately developed water resources at the start of a protracted drought posed a serious threat to their stockwealth and hence their autonomy.

The experience was viewed by the leaders as a clear example of preferential

treatment being shown to white over black farmers. Isaac Tjazerwa, concluded in 1930:

> We are in great trouble, we have nothing to eat, as our stock has all died. The country is as bare as this yard. Where we used to be all the land now belongs to white people who have fenced it off. Some of the people who had a few head of stock went to their old place to live and the white people caught them.[35]

The desperate attempt by a few stock owners to reoccupy the land they had previously used was frustrated by the Land Settlement Policy which now marked them as trespassers.

The example of Tses can be compared with those of other reserves where the community retained rights to land that they had occupied during the German period. History was used as a witness when leaders tried to preserve traditional rights of access to water and grazing. The gradual enclosure of the reserves by white-owned farms meant that the definition of unfenced boundaries became concrete as new white owners impounded stock or claimed fees for the use of a water hole.

The residents of Berseba, for example, treated the farm 'Petisie' (also known as Besondermeid) as part of their reserve until it was sold to Mr. Koot Kotze in 1946 who notified them that they would no longer be able to make use of the water springs on his land.[36] Traditional use and occupation were no longer sufficient grounds upon which to assert land rights and claims that the farm was a part of the traditional Berseba territory fell on deaf ears.

Legal property rights to land had replaced traditional pastoral rights. Claims to land seemed to have a better prospect of success when they were based on the assertion of legal rights granted by the German colonial administration. The establishment of a reserve at Warmbad in 1953 followed an extensive lobbying campaign by the local community claiming that they had historic legal rights over the area. However

the continuing importance of a popular consciousness of a pastoral past in which communities had laid claim to wide tracts of land should not be underestimated. Legally such pastoral traditions may have counted for little, but politically they maintained a popular feeling that white settlers and the state apparatus that accompanied them had appropriated land which local communities had rights to.

Nama-speaking communities south of the border in the North-West Cape were classified as 'Coloured' and the switch would have bought significant legal and economic benefits, yet in southern Namibia the communities fought to retain their classification as 'Natives'.[37] Fritz /Gariseb, an old man recalled the feeling that the change could have more than merely semantic consequences. /Gariseb explained that:

> The whole idea was just segregation. Just because the Nama-speaking people are a bit light skinned they tried to include us as 'Coloureds'. But we were too forward in our argument for the Government. We argued that once we had lost the dignity of being 'Nama' we would also lose our traditional rights to land in this area - as at that time 'Coloureds' were seen as people who had no history or inheritance.[38]

A 'Nama' identity was asserted because it incorporated particular claims to land in southern Namibia. Oral history, through its reconstruction of the past, allowed communities to keep alive hopes for a future that would enable aspirant pastoralists to transcend the confines of the reserves.

THE STRUGGLE OVER ETHNIC IDENTITY.

The link between the politics of ethnicity and land rights has been a strong one in southern Namibia. When the resources available in the reserves proved inadequate

ethnicity was one key that could be turned by pastoralists seeking to exclude rivals. The state provided the legislative machinery from 1939 for the reconstitution of scattered black communities into broader ethnic groups.

The fact that Namibian historiography was dominated for many years by the work of Vedder means that an impression has been created of intense and innate 'inter-tribal' conflict dating from the pre-colonial period. Vedder depicted pre-colonial Namibian politics as a series of bloody conflicts between monolithic tribes with the victors enslaving their victims. Vedder's most widely published work, a history of pre-colonial Namibia in three sections, assembled the past in two of these under the headings 'Namaland Against Hereroland' and 'Hereroland Against Namaland'.[39] The distortions and inaccuracies in Vedder's texts have been exposed by the work of Lau and others[40], but provided the ideological foundation for a process that culminated in the construction of Bantustans such as 'Namaland' and 'Hereroland'.

The pre-colonial history of Namibia remains under-researched; however the most recent of the existing literature challenges Vedder's composition of the past on two fundamental points. The first is his Hobbesian discourse of perpetual violence and conflict between pre-colonial Namibian societies. The evidence suggests that there were wars and disputes, but also internal trade and co-operation.

The second dubious point is Vedder's assumption that 'tribal' identities were unchangeable and their elevation as the key determinant of pre-colonial Namibian history. Brigitte Lau argues that:

> ... conflicts in the pre-colonial period did not happen along 'ethnic' or 'cultural' lines but always cut across such differences.[41]

The communities of southern Namibia joined alliances that offered mutual benefits and waxed and waned according to their economic and military strength. If all was not exactly flux, political identities were constantly evolving with political expediency sometimes bridging apparent ethnic differences. The pastoral landscape

of southern Namibia in particular produced environmental constraints on economic and political organisation. The prevalence of small nomadic or semi-nomadic communities obstructed the emergence of a single 'tribal' unit with centralised structures of organisation and control.

The awareness of this pre-colonial pattern is important because of the continuity of these themes into the colonial period. In 1922 the South West African Police reported that Gideon Matundu, a Herero-speaking leader, was not to be trusted because of his political support for Nama-speaking communities in the region. Matundu was reported to have attended meetings convened to organise support for the 'Bondelswarts' in their opposition to the administration. Matundu also refused to give evidence when his neighbour 'Chief Jan Hendrik' of the 'Veldschoendragers' was taken to court with some of his supporters for refusing to pay his dog tax.[42] Common interests produced solidarity spanning officially categorised 'difference'.[43]

The establishment of reserves did not in itself produce the geographical separation of different communities. Indeed the legislation as presented in Government Notice No. 44 of 1924 explicitly stated that the reserves were to be open to all black people, regardless of 'tribe'. Staff from the 'Native Affairs' Department also made this point clear to residents at meetings in the reserves.[44] The following two decades saw some ethnic sifting of reserve populations, but this should not be interpreted as a sinister form of 'ethnic cleansing', based on ancient animosities. Incidents were not the product of ancient animosities, but rather motivated by pragmatic political and economic considerations that were generated by the constraints of the system.

Krantzplatz reserve can be used to illustrate this point. David Witbooi voiced his objections to the entry of ten 'Coloured' families in 1931:

> The Witboois are not friends of Bastards or Coloured people as we look upon them as being nearer White than Native.[45]

One might seek (and find) an historical reason for this hostility. David Witbooi had contributed to an oral history of the Witboois' which described the assistance given by the Rehoboth Bastards to the Germans in their war against the Witboois.[46] The families were from the Union, rather than Rehoboth, but one resident argued that the 'Gebiet Bastards' had originally come from the Union too![47]

The opposition should also be framed within the immediate economic context and three particular points considered. Firstly, the reserve was suffering from drought. Resources were tight and the residents impoverished. Secondly, a stream of complaints were being received from comparatively wealthy relatives trying to maintain their flocks in the Rehoboth Gebiet stating that:

> ... they are dissatisfied with the excessive grazing fees charged by the Rehoboth Bastards.[48]

The news intensified suspicions and encouraged a compound image of 'Coloureds/Basters' as wealthy and exploitative.

Finally, the prospective entrants were comparatively wealthy. On average each family possessed around 200 small stock and a number of large stock. A survey of the current residents in the reserve at the time showed that only three families possessed stock in comparable numbers. The entry of the families would have inserted a wealthy strata into the economic hierarchy of the reserve with the attendant political threat. The example is a minor one, but demonstrates the importance of seeking deeper economic and political currents beneath the surface of ethnic prejudice.

The reserve also provides a good example of the kinds of economic tensions that lay behind the early moves to remove ethnic groups from particular locations. The 'Herero people residing in Gibeon Reserve' complained in 1939 that:

> ... we are being pressed upon by the Nama people to vacate from here and

go to Aminuis.[49]

The authors pointed out that this apparent move towards ethnic segregation was contrary to their earlier impression of the administration's reserve policy, noting that:

> ... the Chief [Courtney-Clarke] has never told us that this reserve is the property of the Nama people or the Herero people.[50]

Zacharias, a spokesperson for the Herero-speaking community, pointed out that if property rights were to be linked to residency than he and several others had lived in the area for over thirty years[51]. The moral right of Zacharias to land was verbalised, but was not the central issue. The confrontation had been provoked by a basic economic ultimatum by the administration. The stockowners in the reserve had been accused of overstocking and given two choices. A group would have to leave the reserve with their stock or a quota would be imposed and wealthier owners forced to sell their surplus stock. The ultimatum left no space for an alliance of the wealthier stockowners, but encouraged political mobilisation on the grounds of ethnicity. The Herero-speakers were a sizeable minority within the reserve (31 percent of the population), yet constituted a disproportionate percentage of the stockowners (42 percent) and the majority (75 percent) of those comparatively independent stockowners who owned over 200 small stock. Indeed the average flock size for the Herero-speaking community within the reserve in 1930 was 204.[52]

Whilst Zacharias and a few others had lived in the Krantzplatz area for many years, the Herero-speaking population of the reserve had increased markedly during the 1930s. It seems very likely that these consisted of some of those relatively wealthy stock-owners who had been able to avoid the move to Tses and/or gain access to better grazing within the Rehoboth Gebiet.[53] The 'Herero' population of Rehoboth district in 1938 was only 7 percent of what it had been in 1926.[54] The high grazing fees within the Rehoboth district and the efforts of the administration to

eliminate 'Kaffir farming' meant that it was families that were used to independent pastoral farming that sought entry into reserves.

The efforts to remove the Herero stock owners from Krantzplatz had economic and political motives. The Herero were not targeted simply because of innate ethnic rivalry, but because they were associated with a particular wealthy strata of the society and represented an influx which was perceived as an economic and political threat due to their numbers and stock wealth. The local magistrate recognized that:

> ... the Hereros did not leave the Gibeon Reserve of their own free will but were ordered to do so at the request of the Witbooi Hottentots who wanted more grazing for themselves as well as their own kinsmen ... The Hereros were by no means willing to leave the Gibeon Reserve but they were ordered by me to quit.[55]

The Hereros complained that the reserve board's decision to seek their exclusion had been held at a meeting from which all the Herero representatives (who formed half the board's members) had been excluded.[56] The forced removals drastically reduced the number of stock in the reserve. The number of small stock fell from 15,677 in 1939 to 9,481 the following year. Ethnicity had become a political issue when the community experienced economic stress.

The reserves of southern Namibia were particularly diverse (more so than the predominantly 'Herero' reserves of central Namibia or 'Damara' reserve at Okambahe). The administration's own statistics for 1945 stated that less than half of the residents of Gibeon reserve were classified as Nama, even after the mass expulsion of the 'Herero'. On the other hand in Tses, which was perceived as a 'Herero' reserve, only 39 percent of the residents were actually classified as 'Hereros' ![57]

The position in Tses illustrates a further continuity in the history of ethnicity in southern Namibia and that is the fluidity of identity. The 'Damara,' the second

largest 'ethnic group' in the reserve, underwent a mass metamorphosis. The 'Damara' were consistently identified and counted as a separate group within the reserve, but by 1947 it was reported that they were now defining themselves as 'Herero'.[58] One might assume that this was a case of cultural assimilation. However the experience of another reserve suggests that such changes were not politically unconscious. The 'Damara' residents of the Bondels reserve demanded to be reclassified as 'Herero' in 1949. Yet the reserve was predominantly classified as 'Nama' so an assimilation theory would presume a switch to that identity. The rejection of the 'Damara' name was explained by a spokesman as being due to the low esteem that was associated with that name, claiming that during a visit to Okombahe he had been told that 'Damaras' were derogatively known as 'KlipKaffirs' (Stone Kaffirs).[59] The timing of the changes may also have been significant. The series of meetings to discuss the incorporation of Namibia into South Africa as a fifth province took place during 1946 and Herero leaders were prominent in voicing opposition to the possibility. In contrast Koraseb and those seeking a broader mandate to represent 'Damaras' in southern Namibia supported incorporation. The decision of the 'Damara' to identify themselves with the Herero may have carried a political message.[60]

The barriers of ethnicity were permeable and over time the size of a group bearing a particular ethnic tag would increase or fall according to the associated benefits or risks. The residents of Berseba argued in 1956 that the common identification they shared with the reserve was more important than external ethnic categories being applied by the state. Lukas Kamatu argued that many of the 'Herero' and 'Damara' families had lived in the reserve since their great-grandparents time and although there had been a second wave of 'Herero' entrants after the Second World War all the residents called themselves 'Bersebaners'.[61]

Berseba was clearly described officially as a 'Nama' reserve, but the residents could adopt a flexible attitude as to what this meant.[62] One 'Nama Headman' simply argued that:

"We are a Nama Reserve and those that are born here are Nama.[63]

The 'Chief Native Commissioner' was forced to argue that people could not change their 'tribal' identity and that those classified as 'Herero' would have to pay a Tribal Levy into the national Herero Trust Fund, not the local reserve fund for Berseba.[64] People were willing and able to forge common identities that transcended and amended ethnic divisions.

If the basis for political mobilisation is common interest than it was becoming apparent to some of the leaders in the reserves after the Second World War that there were important issues, that were not simply parochial, and that were being drawn on a wider canvas. In 1956 a leader from Gibeon reserve, H.S. Witbooi, argued that:

> ... Non-white people are just one nation ... We used to always meet together, until the Pass Laws came.[65]

The administration sought to control the efforts of leaders to form coalitions beyond the parochial borders of their reserves, by creating a unified linguistically defined 'Nama' tribe.

The series of national 'Tribal Meetings' sponsored by the administration throughout the 1950s struggled to build a sense of ethnic identity that could supplant both more localised identities and the threat of broader racial unity. Yet the meetings were widely spaced and the failure of the administration to reply to questions raised was strongly criticised by participants.[66] Joshua Kamberipa from Tses was the first delegate from a reserve in southern Namibia to attend a 'Tribal Meeting' (held for 'Herero' community leaders in 1949). Kamberipa's contribution to the meeting was to demand to know why the representatives of the other communities within his reserve had not also been invited.[67] One of the central demands made at the first 'Nama Tribal Meeting' in 1950 was that people should receive voting rights and be able to participate in a national, rather than simply reserve or tribal, assembly.[68]

The administration attempted to resurrect a 'Nama' tribe from an empty coffin. Distance and diversity meant that such a unit did not, and had never, existed. Political issues were perceived on one of two levels, of local or national significance. The ethnic machinery offered by the administration did not seem the most appropriate forum in which to deal with either. In southern Namibia, ethnicity, when it occurred, was a negative response to economic pressures, rather than a positive vehicle for political organisation and change.

THE EVASION OF REGULATIONS.

Opposition to the demands placed upon reserve residents by the state must be defined according to the platform from which it was launched as it exposed differences between economic interest groups. The relative lack of dramatic demonstrations and protests in rural areas and reserves in southern Africa has led to a considerable deficiency in the historiography analysing the nature of local resistance to external imposition. One might argue the antagonism of the poorer strata of rural communities to specific legislation was demonstrated by avoidance, rather than confrontation. The strategy of avoidance was seen to carry less risk and direct confrontation with the state only occurred when wealthier leaders and the poorer majority formed a coalition of interest.

One example of rural resistance to external imposition that has been documented is the opposition to the dipping and branding of stock in the Transkei, South Africa in the period 1908-1916. The case provides a useful comparative example of the disparate reaction of different sections of the community. The opposition to dipping was seen to reflect broader concerns amongst the elite about the loss of authority and autonomy. Yet dipping was also seen by many as an unnecessary and suspicious illustration of external interference.

The cost of dipping and the large number of stock deaths that it caused was particularly resented by the poorer members of the community. If animals were not

dipped they could only be sold at low prices in the market, if at all. However stock owners who owned only a limited number of animals placed a greater priority on consumption, rather than production and marketing. The poorer members of the community sought to avoid, rather than directly resist dipping, a strategy that put them into direct conflict with leaders who were held responsible by the police for ensuring that dipping was carried out efficiently and comprehensively.[69]

The articulation of protest by leaders from the reserves could, conversely, reflect the opposition of wealthier members of the reserve to measures that were of direct concern to them. The political campaign launched in the 1930s by the Herero leadership in the reserves of central Namibia to replace grazing fees with a Poll Tax provides one example. Werner suggests that the proposals would have benefitted only the wealthier minority.[70] Calculations demonstrate that any stockowner with less than 13 cattle would have been poorer under the Poll Tax. An analysis of stock owners in Epukiro reserve in 1933 reveals that 58 percent of stockowners owned 15 or less cattle.[71]

The Native Stock Brands Proclamation (No. 15 of 1923) was a measure that generated considerable opposition. The legislation was seen to be discriminatory and the motivation for it viewed with suspicion. Izaak Witbooi felt that the legislation exposed the hypocrisy of the earlier promises of equal treatment and justice that had been provided by the new administration:

> The law says all are equal. White shall not laugh and the black man cry, all shall be happy.[72]

Yet the branding laws clearly discriminated on the grounds of colour. Witbooi presented his case succinctly:

> The white peopel (sic) buy their irons with their money and we also buy our irons with our money; why then are the irons given to the white people and our irons retained ?[73]

Wealthier black stockowners who had purchased their own individual branding irons were forced to hand them in. Witbooi argued that if the administration was worried that privately owned branding irons might be used to brand and conceal stolen stock than the white stockowners should be treated with as much suspicion as black. Witbooi saw the legislation as symbolic of the administration's lack of trust in black people.

The confiscation of the cattle branding irons owned by the wealthier black stock owners and their transfer to officials of the administration could easily be interpreted as the first stage of a second stock confiscation. The Hereros at Tses were particularly alarmed by the prospect. The elected leaders in the reserve (Gideon Matundu and Jan Appolis) argued that they were being asked to mark their cattle with 'a Government brand' and failed to produce any animals to be branded by the Superintendent as ordered on 24th July, 1924.[74]

The local magistrate visited the reserve to 'lecture' the residents and persuade them to see the error of their ways. A troop of 85 men armed with knob kerries and sticks marching four abreast listened to his speech, but again refused to allow their stock to be branded. The magistrate noted the particular hostility shown by women to himself and Gideon Matundu who urged obedience to the law.[75]

The administration acted to arrest those they identified as ringleaders of the boycott. Johannes Baha and five others were accused of having toured the reserve encouraging residents not to brand their animals.[76] Baha and his co-accused were drawn from the wealthier group within the reserve, with three probably being amongst the wealthiest 10 percent of stockowners at Tses.[77] However the issue was not just one that concerned the relatively wealthy, indeed it is possible that some of the accused were selected for arrest partly because they were 'men of standing' whose punishment would make a more significant impact. The measure was interpreted as an attempt to frustrate the accumulation of stock by black pastoralists and as part of a more general strategy to dispossess them of land and stock.

The arrest of the six men could be seen as a challenge to the economic aspirations of the whole community and provoked an impressive demonstration of popular support:

> A number of ringleaders were charged before the magistrate and convicted, but were forcibly rescued from the police by a large mob of natives before they could be lodged in gaol. After some negotiations between the authorities and the natives, in the course of which the latter adopted a very determined and defiant attitude, taking up the position that as they were all opposed to the provisions of the branding law they were all equally guilty with the prisoners, 97 men and 78 women trooped into the gaol. There they remained for three days, and it was only after they had been addressed by the Native Commissioner, who had gone down from Windhoek for the purpose, that they saw the error of their ways and undertook to carry out the provisions of the law.[78]

Measures that seemed to signal a repetition of the German policy of dispossession evoked strong feelings and resistance. Ironically the sentences were later squashed when the Review Judge held that people could not be compelled to brand their stock against their will.[79] Gideon Matundu, realised the strength of popular feeling, and in 1925, renewed his opposition to cattle branding and the administration's efforts to have all the cattle in the reserve inoculated against anthrax.[80]

The magistrate addressed the residents for a second time. However this time the address was timed to coincide with an impressive bombing display by South African airplanes.[81] The spectacle served as a reminder of the devastating use that had been made of bombing raids against those resisting the administration's policy a few years earlier in the Bondelswarts reserve. The bombing might be seen as a literal application of the philosophy that actions speak louder than words.

The show of military strength came just 20 days after the arrest and forced disbandment of the rebellious 'New Raad' in Rehoboth and might be seen to mark

a turning point in the strategy of opposition from that of confrontation to that of evasion. Matundu explained to the Superintendent at Tses the way in which people were trying to avoid unpopular legislation later in the year:

> If I tell them anything they do not like, they pretend not to understand.[82]

Residents also proved unco-operative with official attempts to monitor and control the accumulation of stock and wealth within the reserves.

Officials were highly sceptical that the widespread failure of residents to pay grazing fees during the late 1920s and early 1930s (described in greater detail in Chapter 2) was just due to poverty. The argument that non-payment was a political, and not just an economic, decision was backed by evidence that some of those who paid the least towards their grazing fees were also the wealthiest stock owners in the reserve. Yet the debtors justified their actions with the argument that they refused to sell off their animals at unreasonable prices in order to pay grazing fees.

Grazing fees were perceived less as a stick designed to beat pastoralists out of the reserve and into the labour market, and more as a hurdle preventing black stockowners from becoming prosperous commercial farmers. The simplest technique of tax evasion, given the rarity of official visits to the reserve, was to avoid any meetings at which stock were counted or more subtly to only present a portion of the stock to be counted. In 1928 the Native Reserves Commission waited for over a week for residents at Tses who had been sent to get their cattle for counting, but none returned and the Commission were forced to give up.[83]

The tactic was not restricted purely to Tses, nor was it limited to a particular historical moment. Police ordered the residents of Gibeon reserve to prepare their stock for branding a week before they visited the reserve in 1931, yet found no animals waiting for them when they arrived.[84] The reliability of figures was doubted by officials even in the those reserves that seemed comparatively small and accessible. As late as 1953 the magistrate at Bethanie trying to count large stock

in nearby Soromas reserve had to confess that it was 'very difficult to say' what the true figure was.[85] The difficulties of calculating the total stock figures for a reserve were compounded when it came to obtaining figures for individual stockowners because stock was constantly entering and leaving the reserves or being redistributed amongst relations.[86]

The wealthier members of the reserve were able to evade the payment of grazing fees by distributing their stock. The dispersion of stock might help them avoid the higher tax categories on stock or surpass the limits on stock ownership set by the state. It could also have beneficial social and political effects, providing subsistence products to the poor and supporters for the rich. The 1928 Commission commented cynically that despite the legislative barriers to stock accumulation, any one black:

> ... stock-owner has however so many brothers, nephes (sic), sons and cousins (all stock-owners) that he always remains on the safe side[87]

Statistical evidence of the degree to which evasion was practised over time is of course problematic since 'successful evasion' was, by definition, not recorded. One might, however, logically surmise that there was a direct correlation between the dwindling scope available for evasion and the increasingly dense level of land occupation by white settlers and improving capability of the police force.

One illustration of the way in which stock were distributed and disguised would be the case of Isaac Tjazerwa and Gideon Matundu, two wealthy stockowners in Tses reserve. Matundu had registered 11 cows, 52 sheep and 116 goats in 1930. Six young men (including one of Tjazerwa's sons and two of Matundu's 'herdboys') had also been issued with passes to go and work on a local farm. It transpired that only four worked for the farmer, the other two herded an unspecified number of stock on the farm belonging to Matundu and Tjazerwa.[88] The 'grazing for labour' deal enabled the two men to disperse their animals, thus increasing their chances of surviving the drought and avoiding the payment of grazing fees.

The poorer members of the reserve communities sought to avoid a different range of impositions. The most obvious example of this difference can be found in the efforts of the reserve leadership to recruit the poorer members of the community to work without pay on improvements to the reserve, supposedly for the communal benefit of the residents. The magistrate at Keetmanshoop noted, in 1932, that the 'aristocracy' in Berseba reserve would not consider doing any manual labour themselves, but would encourage it to be done by '... members of the tribe of less standing'[89] Yet many of the development projects which were introduced were of primary benefit to the wealthier community leaders with large flocks or were considered inappropriate schemes imposed upon the community by the white officials responsible for the reserve.

The realistic fear of the poorer reserve residents was that even if they provided the labour to build a dam or a borehole in a communal reserve, it did not necessarily mean that they could be assured that their stock would have free access to it. Peters' work on Botswana demonstrates the way in which wealthier black stockowners were able to control access to water and hence grazing.[90] Administrative structures were used to channel development projects into areas where they would directly benefit the wealthier stockowners represented within those structures. Further research is required to establish the extent to which this pattern was duplicated in neighbouring Namibia, however there is clear evidence that wealthier stockowners did attempt to enforce exclusive rights of access to particular watering points or grazing areas.[91]

Opposition to the reserve work schemes took two forms. The workers neglected to carry out the work assigned to them, or refused to do the job unless they were paid for their labour.[92] The wealthier and poorer stockowners of the reserves had diverging agendas of evasion. The primary concern of stockowners aspiring to become economically independent stock farmers was the evasion of measures designed to limit their accumulation of stock and to control the access of other stockowners to the limited resources of the reserve. The poorer majority sought the best possible conditions of employment and to retain a sufficient economic base

within the reserve to allow them some discretion over the choice of employment. The dynamics of these differing and sometimes conflicting objectives led to a growing sense (especially from the end of the 1930s) that reserve structures were impotent or disinterested in addressing the problems of the majority of the residents.

THE STRUGGLE FOR A VOICE: THE AME AND THE UN.

The experiences of the 1920s and 1930s left residents of the reserves of southern Namibia feeling marginalised and unenthusiastic about the mechanisms available for articulating complaints. A significant change took place after 1945 with new channels being identified through which demands might be voiced and obtained. The emphasis on attempts to retain traditional powers by a dynastic elite was submerged or replaced by efforts to obtain new rights. The focus of struggle shifted from structures of authority within the reserve to wider platforms.

The awareness of powerful external forces that might be asked for assistance was not a new one. Garveyism had been popular in southern Namibia during the 1920s with the circulation of stories telling of planes flown by black Americans coming to the assistance of the communities.[93] However it was in 1946 that the question of international involvement was bought to the fore within the reserves. The South African government ordered a 'referendum' that would enable them to 'inform' the newly launched United Nations whether the black population of Namibia supported their plans to incorporate Namibia within South Africa as a Fifth Province.

A series of meetings were held in the reserves at which the board and those residents present were asked whether they supported incorporation or not. The way in which the views of the black population were measured has been subjected to considerable criticism. In southern Namibia four out of every five black people lived outside the reserves within the 'Police Zone' in 1945. Yet it was only in the reserves that consultative meetings took place.[94] The statistic in favour or against in each reserve was taken as the total population of the reserve (ie. including men,

women and children) thus ignoring the likelihood of internal disagreement within a reserve.

The meetings held in the five reserves in southern Namibia led to the rejection of incorporation by three - Berseba, Tses and Soromas - and its acceptance in two - Bondels and Krantzplatz. The bizarre accounting technique of the administration meant that the figures produced suggested a 77 percent vote against incorporation in southern Namibia. The weight of the large block votes given to the leaders of communities beyond the 'Police Zone' meant that these votes did not prevent the South Africans obtaining the favourable vote that they sought. The hostility of the region's reserves to South Africa at a time when the region was severely affected by drought and communities were seeking drought aid required some sort of official explanation.

The justification given by the responsible officials was that the communities had been influenced by external agitators. The official line was to blame the Germans. It was reported that in the largest reserve in the region, Berseba:

> ... it seems that for years before the war and also during the early months of it, the inhabitants of this reserve were subjected to intensive pro-German propaganda by certain missionaries and farmers in the vicinity... Not a singly Berseba native volunteered for military service and they were adamant in their refusal to contribute a penny to war funds.[95]

The Welfare Officer at Tses gave a similar diagnosis of the negative vote in that reserve:

> They have apparently been fed on propaganda far beyond their limited understanding and the matter has gone so far that the Herero is discontented and consider that they are (sic) unfairly treated and have made requests that outside influence be used to bring pressure on the Administration.[96]

The argument was that the reserves had rejected incorporation because they had been persuaded that a return to German rule would be preferable.

The evidence, however, suggests that the leaders of the reserves were clear that they wanted the country to be administered by the United Nations, and were critical of the means by which the administration engineered a vote rejecting the proposal. Lukas Frederick of Berseba reserve, for instance, stated:

> "We think a lot about incorporation. We Namas look to one thing. We want five fathers of the United Nations... We want to be under the United Nations. We do not want to have to choose any other path. Namaland which begins at Ovamboland is full of natives. It is bad to ask every nation separately for their consent. It would be a good thing if all the leaders of all the natives came together at one place to give their decision on this matter.[97]

The 'referendum' gave the reserve leadership a unique opportunity to register their displeasure with South African rule on the international stage, but the vote also reflected local circumstances. The residents of Soromas resented the stock limitation measures imposed in their reserve from 1941, whilst Diederik Goliath a community leader from Berseba reserve was dying following his internal exile to Hoachanas reserve.

Evidence exists that the administration suggested that continued approaches to the United Nations might put promised drought aid at risk. The residents at Krantzplatz reserve were told:

> Now a couple of your leaders sent a petition against the Administration to the UNO last year, through the pastor Michael Scott, and the Administration would be within its rights to allow them no help, but the Administration is forgiving ... (my translation).[98]

Economic assistance was linked to political loyalty. The concern of Koraseb and the 'Damara' leadership of the reserve to distance themselves from Witbooi's actions confirms that there were elements of the leadership which sought to co-operate with, rather than challenge the administration.[99] The challengers now sought legal justification from international, rather than traditional, law. The political divisions within the reserves that emerged during the debate over incorporation became more visible during the establishment of the American Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church in southern Namibia. Missionary activity in southern Namibia was treated with some scorn by the police throughout the 1920s and 1930s. Mission farms were seen as hostels for the idle, whilst church schools provided blacks with dangerously inflated aspirations. The opinions of the officer in charge of the Gibeon police district in his annual report for 1932 were typical:

> The discipline of the natives are not too satisfactory, especially amongst the Church Going community, as it would appear once they belong to the church they equalise themselves with the Europeans[100]

The criticism of the Rhenish Mission Society (RMS) from the colonial establishment could be juxtaposed with equally strong criticism from some of the black members of their congregations.

Frustrations mounted at the lack of progress by black clergy within the RMS hierarchy and the limited educational opportunities provided to black children. Reforms were promised, but change slow. The internment of German missionaries during World War Two led to increased responsibility for black clergy and raised expectations. In September and October, 1945 'Die Burger' published articles detailing the proposed transfer of the churches in southern Namibia to the Nederlandse Gereformeerde Kerk (NGK).[101] The lack of consultation with black members of the RMS and fears about the implications of the take over by the NGK with its powerful South African base led many of the more influential black members of the RMS church to review their loyalty and convene a crucial meeting.

The meeting took place early in 1946 amidst the ferment of the gatherings about the proposed incorporation of Namibia within South Africa. It is surely no coincidence, given the chronological context, that the proposed incorporation of the RMS churches within the NGK was viewed with such suspicion. The meeting involved influential clergy such as Petrus Jod from the Maltahohe district and Markus Witbooi from Gibeon and, given the correlation between churches and schools, reflected the opinions of a new stratum of educated professionals. The meeting rejected the proposed merger vigorously:

> Once and for all we will not remain in the NGK or any other denomination remaining under white leadership, and if we are to be handed over, we will turn it down. It has happened behind our backs that we are sold like live slaughter stock.[102]

The failure to consult black clergy over the proposal was seen as symptomatic of the more pervasive racism found within the church hierarchy. The meeting stated:

> ... we feel strongly that several of our missionaries treat the congregations under which they work with the same contempt that we always experience from whites ... We have spent the first, more or less, one hundred years under the spiritual guidance of the RMS, and yet according to the newspaper reports today we are labelled as incompetent, feeble and to top it all heathens. The question is 'How long will it stay like this ?' When will we become competent, strong and Christian ? (my translation).[103]

The meeting sought an alternative denomination that would treat black clergy with more respect and provide an independent platform to raise issues of concern.

The first AME Bishop was appointed in South Africa in 1898 and it had continued to operate without being suppressed by the state. The first AME church in southern Namibia, established in Luderitz in 1930, had also caused little concern.[104] Yet the fact that it had been started by black Americans and led by black clergy meant

that it offered a positive alternative image to the RMS. A mass meeting of black RMS schoolteachers a few months after the Gibeon meeting agreed unanimously to join the AME.[105] The speed with which the church now spread alarmed the authorities.

At Tses two-thirds of the congregation had left the RMS church to join the former schoolmaster Zacheus Thomas by 1947, whilst Berseba reserve had an AME congregation of over 400 and it was reported to be influential throughout Karasburg district[106]. Officials feared a diabolic political motive lay behind the expansion. The Acting Director of Education wondered why one Protestant church should wish to supplant another and:

> ... whether Religion is not but a cloak to cover up something sinister.[107]

A policeman was ordered to note the contents of sermons delivered by an AME preacher. The local Justice of the Peace read the notes and made the classic colonial complaint that '... the natives are getting restless'.[108] The group that was becoming 'restless' were identified as "... the younger non-Europeans". The new black mission-educated leadership challenged the existing authorities and the ideology of white supremacy, for instance both Simon Boois, the Headman at Soromas, and the JP complained that they were no longer treated with respect.[109] Local officials feared that the church was simply a mask for the 'communist tendency'.[110]

The transfer of congregational loyalties led to several disputes over church property built by congregations that now spurned the RMS, yet over which the RMS claimed property rights.[111] The position of the AME rebels who held positions as teachers in RMS schools was also difficult with reports that they were being discriminated against.[112] The AME leadership's background ensured that education was a major concern, namely the difficulties facing black children seeking an education above Standard Three.[113]

AME leaders demanded control of schools in reserves and locations where the majority of the congregation had switched allegiance and the opportunity to study up to Standard Six. The prospect filled the magistrate at Keetmanshoop with alarm as:

> If Non-europeans all have a Std. 6 education we will have no labourers on the farms or in the towns.[114]

The campaign to gain increased funding for AME schools in particular and black education in general led the AME leaders to organise the first school boycotts in Namibia.

Statistics at the Department of Education show that between December, 1948 and 15th February, 1949 the attendance at schools in Keetmanshoop and Maltahohe fell to just 31 percent and 16 percent of their former levels.[115] The attendance at other schools fell less dramatically, but the decline was sustained and the boycott spread through the rural areas. A boycott of the RMS school at Gainachas in Berseba reserve was only launched in 1952, but quickly proved effective.[116] The magistrate believed that it had been engineered by '... the agitator Joseph Kahuika (a strong adherent of the AME Church)', who was also believed to be responsible for a letter demanding that Namibia be placed in the hands of the United Nations.[117] Petrus Jod was reported to be travelling around the region in an AME car spreading 'subversive propaganda' amongst farmworkers, as were a number of women (unrestrained by pass laws). The 'Suidwes-Afrikaanse Landbou-Unie', the white farmers union complained that the black preacher spread communist dogma and created difficulties with farm workers and there were fears that they would join the action.[118]

The rise of the AME church in southern Namibia offered an educational channel for black aspirations. The boycotts forced the administration to reconsider its educational programme and may have contributed to its decision to take over control of the old RMS schools, whilst continuing to frustrate the efforts of the AME

schools to expand. The Superintendent of the Gibeon reserve argued that theology was of only secondary importance to the AME church:

> Gradually it has become obvious that the AME Bond does not want a church in the sense of the bible, but that it is busy playing the game of politics under the cloak of religion and corrupting non-whites with the bible.[119]

The remarks followed the tabling of a set of demands by AME leaders meeting at Gibeon (See Table 8).

TABLE 8: A SUMMARY OF THE THIRTEEN DEMANDS MADE AT A MEETING OF AME LEADERS AT GIBEON, 28TH AUGUST,1948.[120]

1. The right to vote.
2. The right to participate in the distribution and sale of land inside and outside the reserves.
3. The right to buy land.
4. Better provision for secondary and higher education.
5. The abolition of the pass laws.
6. Action to increase low wage levels.
7. The right to enter and be represented in Parliament.
8. Better treatment and service in the magistrate's office.
9. Better sanitary conditions in town locations.
10. Better Hospitals for blacks.
11. Information about the powers and authority Captains and Raad members have in the reserves and locations.
12. Alcohol licences should be given to locals and not just outsiders.
13. Stronger laws should be introduced against drunkenness, especially concerning purchases from white people.

The question of church allegiance within the reserves became the subject of heated disputes that far exceeded the theological importance of denominational preferences:

> Those that stay in the Rhenish Mission Bond are branded as 'White Foot', while labelled as traitors by some AME leaders.[121]

The AME church provided an opportunity for educated community leaders who had not been co-opted into the dministrative structure to develop an independent political agenda. The oppositional and populist nature of the AME church provided an alternative framework for political mobilisation. One example can be cited from Gibeon reserve. The defection of the headman, David Witbooi, to the AME church led a group to announce that they would no longer recognise him as their leader.[122] The group, which mainly consisted of moderately wealthy, RMS, 'Damara' may have been nervous at the confrontational nature of the AME programme, but also eager to challenge the aged headman for the leadership of the reserve and take advantage of the administration's suspicions of the AME.

The group succeeded in having Markus Koraseb appointed as the representative of the 'RMS' congregation in Gibeon reserve[123]. Koraseb then sought permission to form an Association ('Vereniging van S.W.A. Inboorlinge') covering all of southern Namibia with himself as leader. The implication was that this would balance the AME network which was seen to centre around David and Markus Witbooi and Petrus Jod.[124] The denominational split was one that mirrored and duplicated political differences, providing another 'signifier' by which political loyalties could be distinguished.

The growth of the AME church in and beyond the reserves was politically significant in three ways. It provided an alternative platform for the expression of concerns by the small educated professional elite whose aspirations were more urban and educationally orientated (eg. there was no demand for the return of traditional

land in Table 8). The AME church also provided an opportunity to meet and organise independent of official reserve structures. Finally the spread of the AME church generated conflict that encouraged the reorientation of identities to transcend reserve boundaries.

CASE STUDY: THE BONDELSWARTS RISING OF 1922.

The events surrounding the 'Bondelswarts Rising of 1922' and its apparent causes have been well covered in the existing literature, but two important elements have been neglected - the internal politics of the rising and the significance of white land settlement. The broad economic threat posed by rapid land alienation in the Bondelswarts area was a major strain on their economy.

The political pedigree of the Bondelswarts leadership is one that a nationalist historian might find an ambiguous mixture of 'collaboration' and 'resistance'. In 1879 the Bondelswarts Captain, Willem Christian, helped secure the northern border of the Cape Colony '... by taking the rebels in flank and rear'. The magistrate of the neighbouring Cape district was confident that:

> So long as the present Chief and his premier are alive I do not think we shall lose the proper influence we have in this territory.[125]

The Bondelswarts, however, are best remembered for their resistance to both the German and the South African attempts to colonise their country.

The defeat of the Bondelswarts by the Germans during the 1904-1906 War had four important historical repercussions. The defeat resulted in disarmament; Captain Johannes Christian surrendered in January, 1904 and was forced to hand in 289 rifles[126]. Secondly, a large proportion of the Bondelswarts community (around 600) crossed into the north-west Cape to avoid capture. The exiles worked mainly in the copper mines and fishing industry at Port Nolloth, but also on the local

farms[127]. The work experience provided them with expectations regarding pay and conditions that would not be matched when they returned to southern Namibia.

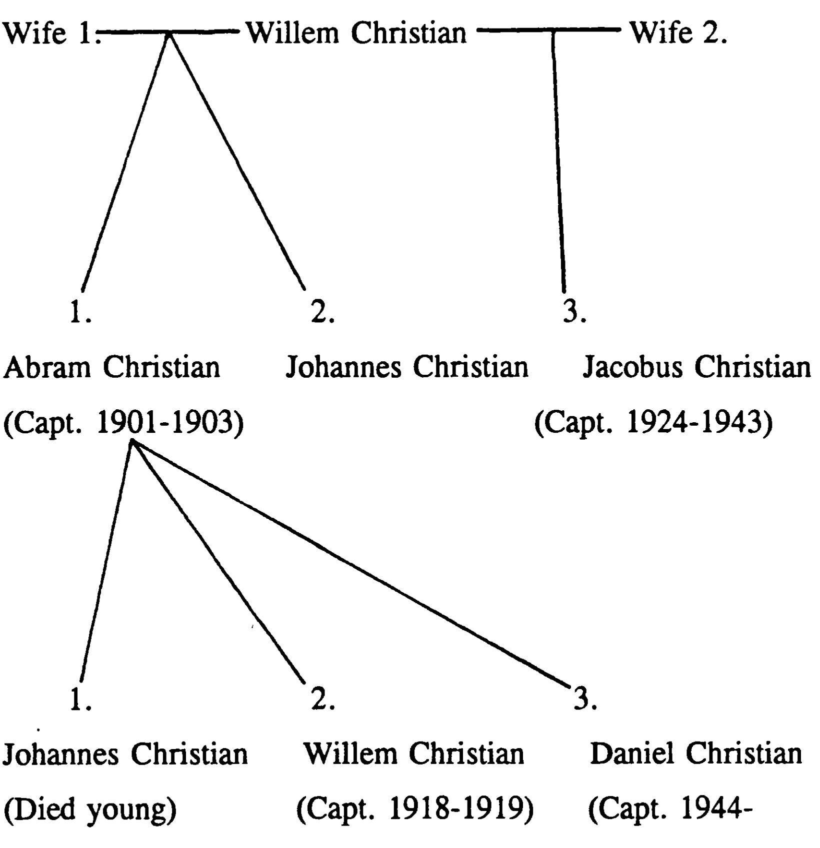
The third significant point was that two key Bondelswarts leaders were amongst the exiles. Jacobus Christian had been the Captain of the Bondelswarts up to 1904 and Abraham Morris a guerilla leader during the war against the Germans. The absence of Jacobus meant that when Johannes died the administration was able to try and impose its own alternative candidates, alleging that the absent leader was only a collateral relative and not the legitimate successor (See Figure 2).[128] The military administration appointed Abram Kaffir as 'Headman' in 1915 who, failing to obtain sufficient popular legitimacy, was replaced by Willem Christian, a young man, from the ruling family in 1918.

Reserve residents who wanted a more militant leadership sought the return of Jacobus Christian, the brother of the dead Captain and exiled military veteran. The large Bondelswarts community that had lived in the Cape for a decade or more gave Jacobus Christian an additional constituency of supporters who started to filter back after 1915. Within weeks of the German surrender the community were requesting the return of Jacobus Christian and Abraham Morris. The local 'Native Affairs' official supported the suggestion as it would be 'under our control'.[129] Yet Willem also had his own supporters in the reserve, creating the basis for rival groups.[130]

Finally, the terms of the Treaty of Submission that had been signed in 1906 (by Johannes and Jacobus Christian and Abram Kaffir) provided the Bondelswarts with particular legal rights. It granted the community free and exclusive access to five distinct localities. The agreement also involved the transfer of 300 sheep to the Captain as his 'sole property' (1,500 goats were shared out amongst the rest of the community).[131] The Captainship was abolished with authority being invested in a German official. Community members with less than 125 goats or 10 cattle were forced to work by the Germans, a fact that may also partly explain the large migration south of the border.[132] Conversely the introduction of exemption

FIGURE 2: THE GENEALOGY OF THE BONDELSWART LEADERSHIP.[133]

* (Captains as recognised by the administration).



certificates in 1915 for those with just 50 goats or 5 cattle must have also encouraged the return of exiles hoping to revive their fortunes as independent pastoralists. Jacobus Christian and Morris were not allowed to return as the administration feared that this would:

> ... lead to disturbances and friction with the present hereditary Chief of the tribe.[134]

Yet it was clear that there was a significant section of the residents in the reserve who linked their campaign for the return of Jacobus Christian with more tangible and immediate demands. The leader of this group was a man called Abram Pienaar (aka. Adam Christian).

Abram Pienaar was critical of the failure of the appointed leadership to take up important community issues. Pienaar demanded that the community should receive compensation for the heavy stock losses that they had suffered during the Union campaign against the Germans.[135] Pienaar also agitated against the prospect of the community having to pay for grazing and water, rather than being charged 10s. 'tax' (for exemption certificates) and against the compulsory recruitment of 'all able-bodied men'. The military magistrate dismissed the whole exercise as part of Pienaar's political campaign to be elected as the Bondelswarts leader.[136]

Pienaar's campaign was linked to demands that Jacobus Christian should be allowed to return and criticism of the Government appointed Headman, Abram Kaffir. The fact that it was officially admitted that '... a great many people are dissatisfied with him', suggests that Pienaar's opposition had deeper roots than simple disappointment at not obtaining an official post.[137] Pienaar himself claimed a popular mandate for his actions, claiming:

> All the people here wanted Jacobus to come back to Warmbad and be Captain.[138]

The official response was to appoint Pienaar as an Additional Native Affairs Constable, receiving a salary of £1 10s. per month and being stationed, as the military magistrate put it, '... where I can keep an eye on him'.[139] Abram Kaffir complained to the military magistrate as early as August, 1915 that 'Adam was a stirrer up of muddy water and always making trouble'. Kaffir gave further evidence of Pienaar's political agenda:

> About August last Adam asked me when the English in their liberality were going to let them (Bondelswarts) have their country back again.[140]

The land issue and the problem of white squatters in the reserve was of major immediate importance. Yet the position of Abram Kaffir and a delegation (including Hendrik Schneeuwe and Willem Christian) that visited the Secretary for the Protectorate in 1917 was not that grazing should be reserved for the expansion of their stock, but that grazing fees paid by white stockowners should be given to the reserve foremen, rather than the government.[141] The demand highlighted a difference between those who were appointed to official positions and saw this as a means of advancing and defending their own economic fortunes and the majority who opposed administrative legislation on a far broader basis and had their own local popular leadership.[142]

Pienaar as the foreman at Driehoek (since September, 1915) represented those people who had suffered most from externally imposed overstocking, having had to share their grazing with large numbers of the loot stock seized from the Germans during the Union campaign.[143] The minutes of a meeting held in December, 1917 recorded that:

> Some people have complained about Dreihoek being used by Govt. for loot stock. There is larger number of stock there + (sic) they finish off the grazing.[144]

The fact that 'the English' had arbitrarily filled the reserve with stock for over two

years suggested that they would show little respect for Bondelswarts land rights and provided a clear provocation for a historically referenced appeal to leaders associated with resistance and the assertion of Bondelswarts' rights.

The campaign for the return of Jacobus Christian to revive and take up the traditional post of captain was symbolic of the community's wish to regain their independence and land rights. Timotheus Beukes explained that:

> The Bondelswartz tribe wanted their own land ...The object of the tribe was to free themselves from the laws of the whiteman.[145]

The attempts of the administration to appoint leaders seems to have been counterproductive. Willem Christian was appointed 'Headman' in 1918 and from the administration's view accepted because of his hereditary claim upon the captainship, however it emerged that in the same year the community held a secret meeting and unanimously elected the exiled Jacobus Christian as captain.[146]

Willem Christian's death from influenza in 1919 reopened the debate over the leadership. The Bondelswarts petitioned for the return of Jacobus Christian, allegedly to block the election of Klein Willem Christian (aged 22) who was seen as heavily under the influence of Timotheus Beukes, the foreman in the neighbouring town of Warmbad. The administration's tactic was to 'enlist the services' of Abram Kaffer to convene a meeting '... of old men and foremen' which resulted in the appointment of Hendrik Schneeuwe as the new Headman.[147]

Schneeuwe was seen as a safe appointment by the local military magistrate as he had formerly been the 'Native Constable' in Warmbad.[148] Maj. Herbst, the highest 'Native Affairs' official was more sceptical of the benefits of the appointment, arguing that:

> ... the Administration's man drew the money and the other man wielded the influence.[149]

Jacobus Christian returned to Namibia in August 1919 and Hendrik Schneeuwe was deposed by the Bondelswarts as their leader following a meeting in March the following year. Schneeuwe was accused of corruption, but the local police and officials felt that it reflected '... a Tribal desire for more active leadership' in general, and the fruits of work done by Jacobus Christian and Timotheus Beukes to mobilise opposition to Schneeuwe who '... if he does not side with the majority, gives the game away'.[150]

The administration made one final attempt to block the appointment of Jacobus Christiaan as Captain following the removal of Schneeuwe in 1920. The claim was that Christiaan could not hold office as he was still under a two year suspended sentence for illegally entering the country in 1919. Instead Timotheus Beukes was appointed as the new 'Chief' although one senior official later wrote that Beukes had:

> ... struck me as having no desire nor particular ability for the position apart from the fact of his being a Bastard and regarded as an alien whose Hottentot wife had even left him. (my emphasis).[151]

Alienation from the local community was seen as an asset, perhaps because it was imagined that it would make the new 'Chief' more dependent upon local officials for support. Beuke's power base was '... a few adherents residing at Warmbad', but these were seen as separate from those in the reserve and '... more enlightened by reason of residence close to the authorities and official support'.[152] Beukes was aware of the weakness of his power base and once Jacobus Christian's suspended sentence expired he tendered his resignation.[153] The administration kept him in post, but locally he was perceived as the Under-captain to Jacobus Christian and it was this, more than his official position that gave weight to his authority. Hoernlé, an anthropologist who spoke to Morris and others in 1913 noted that it was unconventional for the Captain to address his people personally, but that the 'Under-captain' and 'Magistrate' played key roles as his spokesmen.[154] The residents of the reserve wanted leaders who would challenge the administration and raise their

grievances. Two other candidates had stronger hereditary claims to the Captainship, yet Jacobus Christian was favoured because of his historical credentials, more than his genealogical ones.

Jacobus Christian's position was itself far from secure if he failed to stand by his supporters. When his brother, Nicolaas Christian left Heib around October, 1921 and travelled to the mountains to avoid the new dog tax it was seen as an gesture of defiance.[155] However, Jacobus Christian reported those who attempted to join Nicolaas Christian to the police.[156] One CID officer reported that, consequently:

> ... there is a movement on foot among the members of the Bondelswart Tribe, to depose their present Chief (Jacobus Christian) and elect this Nicolas Christian (sic) in his stead, on the grounds that they consider him to be an 'Old Woman' who is afraid to go against the Administration.[157]

Ernest Kaffir argued that the Bondelswarts actually listened far more to Adam Pienaar, Abraham Morris and Timotheus Beukes than they did to Jacobus Christian.[158] Beukes described the authority of Jacobus Christian in 1922 as '...merely nominal', whilst Adam Pienaar went so far as to label him a 'Government sympathiser'.[159]

The reasons given in testimony for the conflict clearly demonstrated the frustrations of pastoral farmers trying to recover and prosper in a hostile economic environment. Timotheus Beukes articulated the community's concerns at a series of meetings. The administration were accused of the 'taking away of our land', giving it to whites, failing to restore land seized by the Germans and evicting those 'squatting' on farms that the residents considered to be their grazing land.[160] The meeting also condemned the prohibitive increase in dog tax, which threatened their ability to supplement their diet and income by hunting. Complaints were raised about the low prices offered for the resident's slaughter stock, which made it difficult to pay for the compulsory purchase of branding irons.[161]

The meetings picked up the 'Pienaar agenda'; Timotheus Beukes used a meeting at Garuchas to denounce the fact that:

> ...we were not compensated in German & English war. The whiteman got compensation but the black man does not get any compensation.[162]

The Bondelswarts were faced with the fact that the prospect of restored prosperity had been replaced with the reality of destitution. Economic pressures, accelerated by the rapid influx of white pastoralists into Bondelswarts territory, provided the motivation for open conflict whilst the attempted arrest of Morris on his return merely served as a catalyst.

The short sharp skirmishes that constituted 'the Bondelswarts Rising' left Abram Morris and Adam Pienaar amongst the dead. The posts of Headmen were abolished with the policy being that '...only carefully selected foremen be appointed'.[163] Jacobus Christian spent just two years in prison before emerging and taking up the recreated post of Headman, an appointment that showed the administration's confidence that he posed no threat.[164] Timotheus Beukes turned King's evidence at the trial of Jacobus Christian and was unable to return to the reserve, being seen as a traitor. Ironically he became a prison warden in Keetmanshoop. The desperate struggle of the residents to fight for the possibility of economic recovery had been defeated and over the next twenty years the inhabitants were ground into poverty, with the younger generation aspiring to follow Beukes into urban employment. By 1943 the reserve was described as '... virtually an old age home', and its occupants as 'carrying themselves like an army that had been defeated'.[165] The heroes of the past had returned, but had been unable to rekindle the pastoral prosperity of the past.

CASE STUDY: BERSEBA RESERVE AND THE RISE AND FALL OF DIEDRICH GOLIATH, 1933-1938.

The Berseba community, like the Bondelswarts, claimed special privileges dating back to the German colonial period. The Berseba Captain, Diedrich Goliath had confirmed a 'defensive alliance' first signed with the Germans in 1885. The obligations placed on the colonial power were clearly spelled out:

> ... I expect from the white people that they will respect the laws, customs and uses of my country and that they will also pay the taxes which may be imposed in my favour by agreement between the German Government and myself.[166]

The size of the reserve meant that it was far more credible as a self-regulating society than some of its smaller counterparts, but the colonialists were involved in a continuous struggle to limit the powers of the Berseba Captain, a struggle which reached its climax during the Captainship of Diedrich Goliath. The task was facilitated by a domestic political power struggle within the reserve.

The economic basis of the dispute between the Isaacs and the Goliaths in Berseba was outlined in the previous chapter. The seizure of farms (previously given to the Isaacs) enabled Johannes Goliath, the Captain, to pay outstanding bills. However the deal also gave material substance to a political bond between the two groups. The fact that David Isaacs (sic) had trekked to join the 'Witboois' in 1896 was seen as a betrayal of that relationship. Johannes Goliath claimed that it meant David Isaacs '... became a Witbooi', and forfeited his right to retain the farms given to him.[167] The fact that Johannes Goliath remained the captain at Berseba until his death in 1925 meant that the details of this transaction remained a sensitive political issue.

In 1922 a senior police officer carrying out an inspection of Berseba reserve claimed that the 'enmity' between the two groups was such that '... Goliath is not quite safe

amongst his own people'.[168] The officer even referred to the two groups as rival parties. The split provides clear evidence that the image of reserves as uniform political units is a false one. Yet whilst the original dispute may have had historical roots, the parties quickly adapted new political motivations in response to change. The officer noted that:

> ... Goliath is loyal to the Government, but the Isaac's are agitators and are dissatisfied. It is rumoured that a meeting was held in the Berseba reserve at the time of the Bondelswart Rebellion and that the Isaac's and the younger people decided to help the Bondelswarts. It was only through the influence of Goliath and some of his followers that they were prevented.[169]

The parties had become a ruling party 'loyal' to the administration and a more radical opposition.

The police resources available to the administration to cover the vast area of the Berseba reserve were sparse, but they uncovered evidence of the internal apparatus of control and administration established by Johannes Goliath. As early as 1917 it was clear that Goliath had established his own system of police patrols to ensure law and order within his territory.[170] A network of beacons was also established which could be lit to spread a warning of any approaching state police patrols.[171] The reserve police would take suspects to be tried by an elected black magistrate and the rest of the 'raad' (council).[172] In 1927 the magistrate appointed 37 foremen to supervise work carried out during the locust campaign.[173] The captain was also issuing passes for residents who were leaving to search for work.[174]

The application of this local authority was allowed to continue during the period of Johannes Goliath and his successor Andries Goliath. However by 1933 the frustrations of senior administrative officers with the special privilidges enjoyed by the Berseba residents was becoming apparent. The Assistant Secretary scrawled his criticisms of the Berseba system on an Annual Report:

> So long as it is treated as the private property of the tribe we cannot enforce any discipline so essential to progress. Communally-owned native land is an anachronism with the progress of civilization.[175]

The retention of strong local powers was perceived as 'a problem'; progress would require tighter control by the central state.

The death of Andries and election of Diedrich Goliath in 1933 [See Table 9] was accompanied by the appointment of a new Superintendent in the reserve. Mr Fuller had been a sergeant in the South West African Police for the previous thirteen and a half years.[176] The time seemed ripe for the introduction of a more vigorous system of control and management within the reserve. However, Diedrich had a very clear conception of the use that could be made of traditional rights to fight current issues.

TABLE 9: THE CAPTAINS OF BERSEBA.[177]

Paul Goliath	c.1850 to 15.04.1869
Jakobus Isaak	24.05.1871 to 12.12.1892
Diedrik Goliath	05.07.1894 to 01.07.1895
Johannes Christian Goliath	07.11.1895 to 05.11.1925
Andries Goliath	24.12.1925 to 30.03.1933
Diedrich Ruben Goliath	03.07.1933 to 30.09.1938

The application of grazing fees in the reserve had been strongly resisted with the residents only being persuaded to agree to pay them on a voluntary basis from August, 1928. Andries Goliath had accepted the fees reluctantly and shown little enthusiasm for encouraging residents to pay them. Diedrich Goliath demonstrated

that he would go further and challenge the whole assumption that fees should be paid. The Superintendent explained:

> I have endeavoured to collect grazing fees from those who I know can afford it but have been unsuccessful owing to him informing the people that they must not pay anything without first receiving his instructions to do so. The Kapitein is holding a meeting with his people to decide whether they should pay grazing fees or not.[178]

The Captain argued that there were sound economic reasons for the delay. The agreement to pay grazing fees had come just before the heavy drought hit the region. The collapse of stock prices during the period given the poor quality of the animals meant that the grazing fees could not be paid. The refusal to pay was widespread within Berseba, by 31st August, 1935 576 stockowners were in arrears with their payments, and the administration was forced to write off £2,155. 7s 4d in arrears.[179] The measure failed to stir the enthusiasm of the residents to pay.

In the period 1st July, 1935 to 30th April, 1936 only 4 percent of the grazing fees due were paid.[180] Diedrich Goliath argued that many of the animals were still young and the market remained depressed with their goats only fetching 4s. to 5s. per head. However an enquiry concluded that Diedrich had actively encouraged non-payment of grazing fees as:

> ...he supported them in their attitude of indifference towards their obligations.[181]

Goliath's actions could alternatively be interpreted as fulfilling his obligations to the community to assist them rebuild flocks that had been decimated by the drought.

When given a platform Goliath clearly articulated the position that the low level of wages paid by white farmers and the uneconomic stock prices obtainable in the markets made it unreasonable for the administration to expect his community to

meet their grazing fee obligations.[182] The fact that the arrears due on many of the residents flocks was money due on animals that had subsequently died during the drought made the administration's efforts to extract payment seem particularly unjust.

The powers assumed by Diedrich Goliath included the continued operation of a system of local justice. One thief had stolen 31 sheep. The Captain imposed a fine of 63 sheep on the broad principle that if anyone was found guilty of stock theft '... he must pay double'.[183] The law included an element of flexibility that would take account of the circumstances of the accused and if they were poor, fines could be reduced to a 'one for one' basis. The court would take a share to cover the costs of the case (in the example given this share amounted to 12 sheep).

The appropriation of a portion of the fine to cover court costs formed the basis for a number of accusations of corruption against Diedrich Goliath. Accusations in a similar vein included a claim that he had retained dog tax refunds and claims that he was accepting recruitment fees from local farmers in exchange for ensuring that their farms were never short of labour.[184] The accusations were primarily levelled at Diedrich Goliath by the Isaacs party who felt that they were being persecuted in a simple ruse to embezzle their stock.

The months of December, 1936 and January, 1937 alone saw 23 cases being tried. The majority of the accused it was alleged came from the Isaacs party. The sentences in 14 of these cases involved fines[185]. The Captain seems to have used his powers to target the internal opposition to his rule, for instance he fined one leader of the Izaak party, £30 for 'working against the Chief'.[186] Goliath sought to use his position to defend and build the independence of his community, but also to strengthen his own position. Popular actions in defence of his community were undermined by the alienation of an important section of the Berseba residents.

Whilst the Captain was to be criticised for his autocratic manner and intolerance of criticism, it might be argued he used 'traditional' powers to radicalise a community

that had previously been passive and loyal to the administration. Goliath scandalised the reserve Superintendent by treating him as an equal, so when spoken to as 'Goliath', he replied using the Superintendents surname, 'Fuller', rather than the expected respectful title 'Sir'.[187] The 'insult' was seen as symptomatic of Goliath's lack of respect for the administration.

The administration's interpretation was that Goliath was assuming powers above his station as part of his lust to achieve absolute power within Berseba. The Welfare Officer responsible for the reserve was a major advocate of this theory arguing that Goliath's:

> ... ambition was, and still is, to set up a dictatorship with sovereign rights over the Berseba Hottentot Territory and its residents to the exclusion of the Administration, and to eject the Isaaks and Damaras from Berseba.[188]

Yet whilst intolerant of opposition, Goliath often expressed opinions that identified the difficulties faced by the poorer members of his community and took action that would assist them.

One might conjecture that the Isaacs party represented those wealthier members of the community who felt excluded from their accustomed position of authority by Goliath's populist actions. The party certainly included some of the wealthiest men in the reserve amongst its leadership (Isaak Izaak was acknowledged by officials as 'a big man' and 'Ou' [Old ?] Eduard Isaac was the richest stockowner in the reserve).[189] Goliath on his part dismissed the 'Raad' of elders who traditionally advised the Captain and replaced them with his own appointments.[190]

The issue of passes by the Captain was seen by white officials as a dangerous abuse of power, yet Goliath pointed out that the Superintendent was stationed 34 miles away from Berseba. The journey to obtain a pass from him could take five to six hours on a horse, and the majority of the residents did not own horses.[191] The majority therefore faced a journey of two days or more, duplicated upon their

return, to obtain a pass.[192] If the pass was needed to leave the reserve to seek stray stock the prospects of retrieving it alive would diminish with each passing day.

The poorer members of a reserve were compelled in some reserves to carry out work without wages on development projects within the reserve, but in Berseba it was reported that Goliath:

> ... supported them in their attitude that they would only work if paid for their labour.[193]

Finally when the reserve storekeeper, Mr Matz, refused to extend credit to residents it was Goliath who organised a boycott of the store and for goods to be purchased from an alternative store in the neighbouring Maltahohe district.[194]

The populist garments with which Goliath can be clothed may, however, prove ill fitting. Goliath also represented a segment of the elite that sought to use an interpretation of tradition to retain exclusive access to the mechanisms of power available to them. 'Ou' Eduard Isaac was reported to have become so angry about his exclusion from the decision-making process that, by 1938, he was openly talking of war against the Goliath party.[195] The war proved unnecessary, as within a week Goliath had narrowly lost a vote of confidence in a reserve meeting (116 to 133).[196] Goliath's deportation from the reserve was recommended to prevent him becoming involved in political organisation against a new leadership and as a salutary lesson to the residents of Tses reserve whose leaders were also '... inclined to defy the authority of the Government'.[197] Goliath was forced to pack up his belongings and move with his family to the small Hoachanas reserve to the north in the Rehoboth district, arriving there on 23rd November, 1938.[198]

CONCLUSION.

The chapter has used specific examples to reveal the manner in which political struggles within the reserves were fragmented in a manner which confounds the later composite 'tribal' images associated with the reserves. The colonial state sought to hijack the traditional hierarchy within the reserves and conscript traditional leaders as junior officials in the administration. The perspective of the residents of the reserves was different: They looked to tradition to support their campaign to restore previous freedoms and rights, and to provide leaders for these campaigns.

Reserve leaders who failed to represent popular grievances lost legitimacy and authority within the reserves. The period up to World War Two saw the defeat of the efforts of the more active traditional leaders, such as Jacobus Christian and Diedrich Goliath, to restore and defend their traditional authority, land rights and communities. After World War Two the emphasis switched towards the election of reserve leaders who had the qualifications to operate most effectively within the administrative system.

The political struggle, meanwhile, moved onto broader fronts and to less parochial arenas. The transformation reflected the economic defeat of the autonomous black pastoral option in southern Namibia and the increasing transfer of economic ambition to urban aspirations in recognition of the severe limitations of the reserves. The reserves were gradually to become political backwaters in which black leaders sought to retain exclusive access to the dwindling resources available.

NOTES - CHAPTER THREE.

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2. Alexander, N. "Responses to German Rule in Namibia or the Enigma of the Khowesin" in Namibia Review Publications. No.1 June,1983. p11.

3. Beinart, W. The Political Economy of Pondoland, 1860-1930. CUP. Cambridge. 1982. p107

4. Evans, I. "The Native Affairs Department and the Reserves in the 1940s and 1950s" in Cohen, R., Muthien, Y. & Zegeye, A. Repression and Resistance: Insider Accounts of Apartheid. Hans Zell. London p22.

5. Super. Berseba to Mag. Keetmanshoop. 25th November, 1925. LKE 3/1/22 - 2/9. Women over the age of 30 were allowed to vote in Britain from 1918 and the franchise was extended to include women aged between 21 and 30 ten years later Kingdom, J. Government & Politics in Britain. Polity Press. Cambridge. 1991. p167

6. Vail, L. 'Introduction' in The Creation of Tribalism in Southern Africa. James Currey. London. 1989. p15.

7. Ass. Mil. Mag. Bethany to Sec. Prot. 19th February, 1916. ADM 47 - 601/4

8. Lohr to Col. de Jager, Windhoek. 28th July, 1918. SWAA 1851 - A 396/8

9. A full list of the names of the members of Isaac Witbooi's Court can be found in Schrader to O/C Police, Gibeon. 30th June, 1918. SWAA 1851 - A 396/8

10. Mil. Mag. Gibeon to Sec. Prot. 18th July, 1918. SWAA 1851 - A 396/8

11. Schrader to O/C Police, Gibeon. 30th June, 1918. SWAA 1851 - A 396/8

12. Lohr to Col. de Jager, Windhoek. 28th July, 1918. SWAA 1851 - A 396/8.

13. Sec. Prot. to Admin. 18th October, 1918. SWAA 1851 - A 396/8

14. See for example the complaints of Cornelius Fredericks of Soromas Reserve in 1925, that were still being echoed by Edward Isaak at the first 'Nama Tribal Gathering' in 1951. Mag. Bethanie to NC, Windhoek. 6th October, 1925. SWAA 1122 - A158/5. vol. 5. and 'Vergadering van die Namastem-leiers', Keetmanshoop. 23rd November, 1951. SWAA 491 - A 50/238. vol.1.

15. See for example, Minutes. Meeting Tses Reserve. 27th November, 1935. LKE 3/1/50 - 2/6/4

16. David Witbooi to CNC. 7th (month undecipherable), 1939. LMG 3/3/2 - N1/15/6.

17. See for example the complaints made by community leaders (Johannes Binga, Rheinard Mujoro, Zacharias Bewa, Nikanor Kauru and others) in the Tses Reserve about the verbal abuse and lack of respect that they received from Mnr. Burger, the Welfare Officer for the reserve. 'Ondersoek insake klagtes teen J.H. Burger...' 17th September, 1953. BAC 36 - HN 1/15/2] and of Andries Keyster that Mr Gerdes 'calls us names' Minutes of Meeting between 'Deputation of Witbooi Hottentots..' and CNC. 28th August, 1934. LMG 3/1/32 - 3/2/2/7

18. CNC to Mag. Mariental. 27th October, 1945. SWAA 1123 - A 158/6 vol. 2.

19. 'Talks with Mr. Neser' 4th September, 1946. Hailey, Lord - Assorted Papers used for 'A Survey of Native Affairs in South West Africa'.

20. Minutes, Raad Meeting of the Bondels Reserve. 21st January, 1939. LKW 3/4/1 - 2/15/6.

21. WO Bondels Reserve to NC. Warmbad. 30th January, 1940 SWAA 2083 - A 460/17 and Mag. Warmbad to CNC, semi-official, 2nd February, 1940. SWAA 2083 - A 460/17.

22. WO. Bondels Reserve to NC. Warmbad. 30th January, 1940. SWAA 2083 - A 460/17.

23. Sadly for the architects of this scheme Joel shortly afterwards moved to Bechuanaland and died (14th March, 1927). Super. Tses to Mag. Keetmanshoop. 24th July, 1927. LKE 3/1/42 - 17/11/2.

24. Hailey, Lord 'Talks with Native Commissioner - Hahn'. Assorted Papers used for 'A Survey of Native Affairs in South West Africa' 1946.

25. Mag. Keetmanshoop to Sec. SWA. 19th February, 1929. SWAA 2080 - A 460/1. The annual salary of the 'Headman' in Soromas Reserve in the same year was £12, in contrast to the wages of black policemen based in District who received salaries ranging from £60 to £70 per annum. [Mag. Bethanie to Sec. SWA. 26th February, 1929. SWAA 2080 - A 460/1]

26. D.R. Goliath was dismissed on 31st September, 1938, following the dismissal of Joseph Frederick on 1st August in the same year. Mag. Keetmanshoop. Undated Memo. (c.1939) LKE 3/1/50 - 2/6/4

27. Frans Gariseb et alia. to Mag. Mariental. 14th February, 1949. SWAA 1123 - A 158/6 vol. 3

28. See for example his demands in 'Notule van Vergadering ... Krantzplatz' 4th July, 1951. SWAA 1123 - A 158/6 vol.3

29. Mr Balt, the Welfare Officer, had the opinion that Koraseb had gained '... no respect from people in Reserve who don't do what he says'. 'Enquiry in terms of Section 27 of Govt. Notice No 60 of 1930 into the allegations against the Headman Markus Koraseb - Kranzplatz Reserve'. 5th April, 1951. SWAA 2080 - A 460/4

30. AR. LoN. 1925 UG. 26 - '26 p.109

31. Mag. Keetmanshoop to Sec. SWA. 2nd February, 1922. SWAA 1851 - A 396/10 vol.1

32. Mag. Keetmanshoop to Sec. SWA. 10th February, 1922. SWAA 1851 - A 396/10 vol.1

33. Super. Tses to Mag. Keetmanshoop. 1st August, 1924. SWAA 1120 - A 158/2.

34. NAAR. Keetmanshoop. 1925. Mag. Keetmanshoop. 7th January, 1926. LKE 3/1/42 - 17/11.

35. 'Notes of interview at Government Buildings with Hereros from Tses Reserve, Keetmanshoop' 28th March, 1930. SWAA 1430 - A217/10 vol. 2.

36. Minutes. Quarterly Meeting. Berseba. 8th June, 1953. LKE 3/2/2 - N1/15/4/1 vol. 2

37. Minutes of third meeting of Nama leaders ...at Mariental. 25th March, 1955. SWAA 491 - A 50/238 vol.2

38. Fritz /Gariseb. (Born. 15th September, 1925). Interviewed at Maltahohe, 19th February, 1991.

39. Vedder, H. South West Africa in Early Times. Frank Cass & Co. London. 1938.

40. See for example Lau, B. "'Thank God the Germans Came': Vedder and Namibian Historiography" in Gottschalk, K. & Saunders, C. Africa Seminar: Collected Papers Vol.2. p 24-53. Centre for Southern African Studies, UCT. 1981.

41. Lau, B. The Emergence of Kommando Politics in Namaland, Southern Namibia, 1800-1870. MA. UCT. 1982. p4.

42. Inspecting Officer SWAP, Keetmanshoop to Divisional Inspector SWAP, Windhoek. 30th October, 1922. SWAA 1851 - A 396/10 vol.1

43. It is interesting to note (as an example of the political balancing act being played by community leaders) that although Matundu refused to testify against Hendriks, Hendriks had actually been arrested by two Herero-speaking men provided by Matundu to assist the police. Mag. Keetmanshoop to Sec. SWA. SWAA 1851 - A396/10 vol.1

44. For example Mr Ninow, NC. at Gibeon told the residents of the Krantzplatz Reserve that it was "... not intended for the use of the Witboois alone. It is open to Natives of all tribes. Minutes - Gibeon Native Reserve Board. LMG 3/1/32 - 3/2/2/7.

45. Minutes - Gibeon Native Reserve Board. 1st April, 1931. LMG 3/1/32 - 3/2/2/7.

46. 'Information elicited from Headman Isaak Witbooi and his leading men in regard to the history of his tribe'. 23rd June, 1925. LMG 3/1/22 - 2/6/24.

47. Christof Lambert in Minutes - Gibeon Native Reserve Board. 1st April, 1931. LMG 3/1/32 - 3/2/2/7.

48. Minutes of Reserve Board, Krantzplatz. 2nd June, 1930. LMG 3/1/27 - 2/1/2/6.

49. The Krantzplatz reserve was renamed the Gibeon reserve after it was expanded and proclaimed in 1924, although local officials often still used the former name in correspondence. Letter to CNC from 'Herero people residing in Gibeon Reserve' 10th June, 1939. LMG 3/1/28 - 2/1/2/6

50. Letter to CNC from 'Herero people residing in Gibeon Reserve' 10th June, 1939. LMG 3/1/28 - 2/1/2/6

51. Minutes. Quarterly Meeting. Krantzplatz Reserve. 28th June, 1939. LMG 3128 - 2/1/2/6

52. 'Oorsig oor die klein-en grootveegetale van die verskillende naturelle ...' NC, Keetmanshoop to Admin. 1st August, 1939. LMG 3/1/28 - 2/1/2/6 and AR LoN. 1939. p223.

53. Pearson argues that the heavy stock losses suffered by the Rehoboth Basters during the 1914-1915 campaign and the inadequacy of the land provided for Herero stock-owners created conditions that were particularly appropriate for lease agreements between Basters and Herero. Pearson, P. "The Rehoboth Rebellion" in Bonner, P. Working Papers in Southern African Studies. Vol. 2. Ravan Press. Johannesburg. 1981. p39-40.

54. AR LoN. 1925. p13, AR LoN. 1926 p28 and AR LoN. 1938 p108.

55. Mag. Otjiwarongo to CNC. 28th January, 1941. LMG 3/1/55 - 2/11/2/8

56. Minutes. Quarterly Meeting. Krantzplatz Reserve. 28th June, 1939. LMG 3128 - 2/1/2/6

57. 'Population Statistics: Native Reserves inside Police Zone' 1945 SWAA A73/26 vol.3

58. Mag. Keetmanshoop to CNC. Windhoek. 25th August, 1947. SWAA 1427 - A 217/3/2.

59. AR. WO. 6th December, 1949. Bondels Reserve. 1949 SWAA - A158/26 vol.6

60. It was reported that 'Damara' leaders who attended meetings held at Gibeon and Mariental had asserted that they "... do not associate themselves with anything done by Rev. Michael Scott and the Hereros in the United Nations General Assembly meetings." Mag. Mariental to CNC, Windhoek. 18th December, 1951. LMG 3/3/1 - N1/5/2

61. Lukas Kamatu - "Ons Hereros en Damaras in Berseba is al van ons oupa grootjies hier. Later het weer Hereros ingekom en ons word nou almal Bersebaners genoem." Minutes. Annual Meeting. Berseba. 23rd May, 1956. BAC 42 - HN 1/15/4/7

62. See table of 'Native Reserves' in SWA Handbook, 1960. p6.

63. Edward Isaak, Headman - "Die Hereros is twee groepe, die ouoer en die wat later gekom het. Ons is 'n Nama Reserwe en die wat hier gebore is, is Namas". Minutes. Annual Meeting. Berseba. 23rd May, 1956. BAC 42 - HN 1/15/4/7

64. Minutes. Annual Meeting. Berseba. 23rd May, 1956. BAC 42 - HN 1/15/4/7

65. H.S. Witbooi - "... ons Nie-blanke bevolking is maar net een volk. Ons maak geen verskil tussen ons nie. Ons het almal bymekaar gekoml totdat die Paswet ingekom het" [WO Tses to NC, Mariental. 15th August, 1956. BAC 38 - HN 1/15/2/8]

66. See for example H.S. Witbooi's comments in 'Minutes. Meeting Kranzplatz. 25th October, 1958. BAC 41 - HN 1/15/4/2 and the complaints made by Abraham Thomas et. al. that none of the points that they had raised in 'Nama Tribal Meetings' from 1951 to 1959 had been satisfactorily answered [Abraham Thomas et. al. to Super, Keetmanshoop Location. 11th October, 1961. BAC 50 HN 1/15/5/3 vol. 4]. Also the complaints reported from Tses Reserve [Super. Tses to Mag. Keetmanshoop. 7th October, 1961 [BAC 50 - HN 1/15/5/3 vol. 4]

67. Cited in Emmett, A. *The Rise of African Nationalism in South West Africa/Namibia, 1915-1966.* Ph.D University of the Witwatersrand. 1987. p402.

68. "Terwyl die Regering nie die toestaan van die stemreg vir die Unie-parlement in vooruitsig kan stel nie, is sy beleid nogtans daarop gemik om inboorlinge die grootste mate van seggenskap moontlik in hulle eie gebiede te laat ontwikkel namate hulle die bevoegdheid daartoe openbaar." Minute Sec.SWA to Admin. 5th December, 1952 and copy of Minute Sec. to PM, Pretoria to Sec. SWA dated 26.09.1952 SWAA A 50/238. vol.1

69. For South African evidence see Bundy, C. "We don't want your rain, we won't dip: Popular Opposition, Collaboration and Social Control in the Anti-Dipping

Movement, 1908-16". Ch. 6 in Beinart, W. & Bundy, C. Hidden Struggles in Rural South Africa: Politics & Popular Movements in the Trankei & Eastern Cape. James Currey. London. 1987. p191-221.

70. Werner, W. *An Economic and Social History of the Herero of Namibia, 1915-1946.* Ph.D Thesis. UCT. 1989 p291.

71. Statistics taken from Table 5.6 'Cattle Distribution in Epukiro, 1933-1950' in Werner, W. *An Economic and Social History of the Herero of Namibia, 1915-1946.* Ph.D Thesis. UCT. 1989 p344.

72. Letter from Izaak Witbooi et alia. (n.d. 1923 ?) SWAA 1122 - A 158/6.

73. Letter from Izaak Witbooi et alia. (n.d. 1923 ?) SWAA 1122 - A 158/6.

74. 'Gideon and Jan Apollis refused to allow their cattle to be branded, they repeatedly stated they were afraid of this new branding iron and said it is a Government brand'. Super. Tses to Mag. Keetmanshoop. 24th July, 1924. SWAA 1440 - A 219/9

75. Mag. Keetmanshoop to NC, Windhoek. SWAA 1440 - A 219/9

76. See the evidence of Superintendent Van Der Merwe in Rex vs. Johannes Baha et. al. LKE 1/1/6 - 225/24.

77. See the stock levels given for the accused in Rex vs Johannes Baha et. al LKE 1/1/6 - 225/24 in comparison with those provided for stockowners in the reserve in 1928. SWAA 1430 - A 217/10 vol 2.

78. AR LoN. 1924 p20.

79. AR 1924. Mag. Keetmanshoop to Sec. 7th January, 1925. SWA. LKE 3/1/21 - 17/17

80. Super. Tses to Mag. Keetmanshoop. 24th July, 1927. LKE 3/1/42 - 17/11/2

81. Mag. Keetmanshoop to NC. Windhoek. 25th April, 1925. SWAA 1440 - A 219/2

82. Super. Tses to Mag. Keetmanshoop. 12th December, 1925. SWAA 1426 - A 217/1 vol. 2

83. South West Africa. Report of the Native Reserves Commission. LA 2 - '28. p1/2

84. SWAP, Gibeon to Mag. Gibeon. 18th September, 1931. LMG 3/1/27 - 2/1/29

85. Mag. Bethanie to CNC. 12th February, 1953. SWAA 1216 - A 158/189/11.

86. WO Tses to Mag. Keetmanshoop. 30th April, 1954.SWAA 1436 - A 217/25 vol. 2

87. South West Africa. Report of the Native Reserves Commission. LA 2 - '28. p1/2

88. Super. Tses to Mag. Keetmanshoop. 13th May, 1930. SWAA 1430 - A 217/10 vol. 2

89. ARNA. Mag. Keetmanshoop to CNC. 17th December, 1932. p2. LKW 3/1/45 - 2/13.

90. See for example Peters, P. "Struggles over water, struggles over meaning: Cattle, water and the State in Botswana" Africa. Vol. 54. (3). 1984. p29-49.

91. Johannes Tsamarib, for example, was reported to be attempting to exclude others from the areas of grazing used by his stock in the Vaalgras region of the Tses Reserve. Quarterly Meeting. Tses. 22nd April, 1948. SWAA 1436 A 217/25 vol. 1

92. See for example the case of the attempt to blast a new well in Soromas Reserve. Monthly Report, November, 1938. SWAP, Bethanie. 15th December, 1938. SWAA - A158/5

93. For more detailed examples see Pirio, G.A. The role of Garveyism in the making of the Southern African working classes and Namibian nationalism. University of California. 1982.

94. NC.Ovamboland to Sec. SWA. 27th February, 1946. NAO 48-47/1/1.

95. NC, Keetmanshoop to Sec. SWA. 2nd February, 1946. LKE 3/4/1

96. WO. Tses to Mag/NC. Keetmanshoop. 7th December, 1948. SWAA 478 - A 50/188/1949

97. Mag. Keetmanshoop to CNC, Windhoek. 15th August, 1949. LKE 3/2/1 - N1/10/3

98. 'Nou 'n paar van julle leiers het 'n petisie teen die Administrasie verlede jaar aan die V.V.O deur die predikant Michael Scott gestuur en die Administrasie sou binne die perk van sy regs wees om geen hulp aan julle toe-te-staan maar die Administrasie vergewe en as julle 'n lys van die mense wat geen of slegs maar 'n paar bokke nou het aan die Magistraat stuur sal ons sien wat gedoen kan word'. Minutes 'Vergadering gehou ...' 17th March, 1948. SWAA 1123 - A 158/6 vol. 3. p3

99. Mag. Keetmanshoop to CNC. Windhoek. 25th August, 1947. SWAA 1427 - A 217/3/2.

100. ARNA. 1932. SWAP. Gibeon to Mag. Mariental. 3rd January, 1933. LMG 3/1/29 - 2/5/2.

101. See 'Die Burger' 7th September, 1945 and 31st October, 1945. NC. Keetmanshoop to Sec. SWA. 12th January, 1946. LKE 3/4/1

102. 'Een vir allemal wil ons nie van die N.G.K. of enige ander onder blanke leiding staande kerkgenootskap gelei word, en ons wys dit van die hand, as ons oorhandig sal word. het dit tog agter ons rug gebeur, dat ons soos lewende slagvee verkoop word'. 'Protokoll oor die in die Evangeliatevergadering vasgestelde punte' and letter from 'Evangelists en Onderwyserbond Namaland. 12th January, 1946. Accessions A 23

103. '... by verskillende van ons sendelinge voel ons sterk, dat die gemeentlede onder wie hulle werk met dieselfde minagting behandel word, wat ons altyd deur die blankes ondervind ... Ons is teen eerste min of meer honderd jare onder die geestelike baarbeiding van die RSC., en volgens koerantberigte word ons vandag bestempel as onbekwaam, swak en bonop heidenen, die vra is dus: Hoelank sal dit dan so bly ? Wanneer sal ons dan bekwaam sterk en kristene word' ? 'Protokoll oor die in die Evangeliatevergadering vasgestelde punte' and letter from 'Evangelists en Onderwyserbond Namaland'. 12th January, 1946. Accessions A 23

104. Station Commander, SAP. Luderitz to Mag. Luderitz. 30th January, 1949. SWAA 2227 - A 489/25

105. The meeting was reportedly held on 3rd July, 1946. Mayer, RMS Gibeon to Mag. Mariental. 17th September, 1947. LMG 3/3/2 - N 2/3/2

106. ARNA. Tses. 1947. SWAA 475 - A 50/188/10. NAAR. Mag. Keetmanshoop to CNC, Windhoek. 31st December, 1947. SWAA 477 - A 50/188/12. NA AR Karasburg. 1948. SWAA 478 - A 50/188/1949

107. Act. Director of Eduction to Sec. SWA. 1st September, 1947 SWAA 2227 - A489/25

108. Deputy Commissioner, SAP. to CNC, Windhoek. 16th January, 1947. SWAA - A489/25

109. Special JP to CNC. 6th February, 1947. SWAA 2227 - A 489/25

110. See NAAR. Mag. Keetmanshoop to CNC, Windhoek. 31st December, 1947. SWAA 477 - A 50/188/12 and Deputy Commissioner, SAP. to CNC, Windhoek. 16th January, 1947. SWAA - A489/25.

111. SWAPO <u>To Be Born A Nation</u>. Zed Press. London. 1981. p168-169.

112. Dr. Gow. Super. AME Church to CNC, Windhoek. 8th July, 1947. SWAA - A 489/25

113. Adjunkkommissaris, SAP to Sec. SWA. 25th February, 1949. SWAA 2227 - A 489/25

114. Mag. Keetmanshoop to CNC, Windhoek. 20th December, 1948. SWAA 2227 - A489/25

115. Onderwysdepartment to Sec. SWA. 10th March, 1949. A161 - 5

116. Minutes of Monthly Board Meeting. 18th February, 1953. SWAA 1426 - A 217/1 vol. 4

117. Mag. Keetmanshoop to CNC, Windhoek. 8th December, 1952. SWAA 1426 - A217/1 vol. 4

118. Super. Gibeon to NC. Mariental. LMG 3/3/1 - N/1/5/2 Sec. SWALU to Sec. SWA. 2nd December, 1948. SWAA 227 - A489/25

119. Super. Gibeon to NC. Mariental. 14th November, 1948. LMG 3/3/1 - N/1/5/2

120. Super. Gibeon to NC. Mariental. LMG 3/3/1 - N/1/5/2

121. 'Gaandeweg het dit duidelik geword dat die AME-verband nie 'n kerk wil he in die sin van die bybel nie, maar dat dit onder die dekmantel van godsdiens besig is om 'n politieke spel te speel en met die bybel die nie-blankes te verlei'. 'Die wat in die Rynse Sendingverband gebly het is met 'Witvoet' gebrandmerk terwyl hulle deur sommige AME-lede as verraaiers bestempel word' Super. Gibeon to NC. Mariental. 14th November, 1948. LMG 3/3/1 - N/1/5/2.

122. Minutes 'Vergadering gehou ... te Windhoek van die Hoofman en Raadslede van die Krantzplaatz Reserve en die Addisionele Naturellekommissaris' 17th March, 1948. SWAA 1123 - A 158/6 vol. 3

123. 'Frans Gariseb et al. to Mag. Mariental. 14th February, 1949. SWAA 1123 - A 158/6 vol.3.

124. ARNA. 30th December 1951. Mag. Mariental. SWAA 478 - A50/188/1951

125. Mag. Namaqualand to Under-Secretary for Native Affairs. 28th December, 1883. Accessions 312. Box 19 - 73

126. Report of the Commission appointed to enquire into the Rebellion of the Bondelswarts. 1923. p2.

127. Lewis The Bondelswarts Rebellion of 1922. MA. Rhodes University, Grahamstown. 1977. p17

128. 'Enquiry into certain alleged complaints ... ' 11th March, 1920. ADM 105 - 3353

129. O/C NA. Dept. Keetmanshoop to NC. Windhoek. 22nd September, 1915. ADM 46 - 599

130. Minutes of meeting 'deputation of Bondelswarts waited upon the Secretary for the Protectorate' 30th January, 1917.ADM 105 - 3353

131. 'Treaty of Submission ...' 23rd December, 1906. ADM 85 - 2163/2

132. Lewis. p20. Cites Frederick van Reenen Coetzee an informant who served in the German Police.

133. The women as all too often in official histories remain anonymous. It is unfortunate since knowledge of their maiden names might have helped explain some of the divisions of loyalty within the reserve over subsequent years and establish the degree to which kinship played a significant role. WO. Bondels Reserve to NC. Karasburg. 4th December, 1944. LKW 3/4/1 - 2/15/3. Super. Bondels Reserve to Mag. Karasburg. 7th March, 1953. The genealogy is a matter of some dispute, see for example the family tree used by Lewis and derived from a report by Det. Christiansen. 29th July, 1917. ADM 46 - 599/2. Lewis, G. *The Bondelswarts Rebellion of 1922.* MA. Rhodes University. 1977. p.247

134. Sec. Prot. to NC. Windhoek. 5th January, 1916. ADM 46 - 599

135. Mil. Mag. Warmbad to Sec. Prot. Windhoek. 6th March, 1916. ADM 46 - 599

136. Mil. Mag. Warmbad to Sec. Prot. Windhoek. 20th December, 1916. ADM 106 - 3353 and Admin to Sec. Defence. Pretoria. 16th January, 1917. ADM 105 - 3353

137. O/C NA. Dept. Keetmanshoop to NC. Windhoek. 22nd September, 1915. ADM 46 - 599.

138. Rex vs. Adam Christian alias Adam Pienaar et al. 15th February, 1917. LKW 1/1/1 - 2/17

139.Mil. Mag. Warmbad to Sec. Prot. Windhoek. 20th December, 1916. ADM 106 - 3353.

140. Minutes of meeting 'deputation of Bondelswarts waited upon the Secretary for the Protectorate' 30th January, 1917. ADM 105 - 3353

141. Minutes of meeting 'deputation of Bondelswarts waited upon the Secretary for the Protectorate' 30th January, 1917. ADM 105 - 3353

142. For example Jan Hendriks and Gert Zwartbooi, two of the men that prevented the arrest of Abraham Morris were recognised by the Bondelswarts, but not the Administration, as Headmen. Van Niekerk, SWAP to SWAP, Warmbad. A 388/1 vol. 5.

143. Rex vs. Adam Christian alias Adam Pienaar et al. 15th February, 1917. LKW 1/1/1 - 2/17.

144. Minutes. Meeting of Bondelswarts. 28th December, 1917. LKW 5/1/4 - 'Native Affairs Occurrence Book'

145. Rex "=||Jacobus Christian. 27th October, 1922. LKW 1/1/4 - 31/22

146. Rex vs Jacobus Christian. 27th October, 1922. LKW 1/1/4 - 31/22

147. Mil. Mag. Warmbad to Sec. Prot. 1st May, 1919 ADM 105 - 3353

148. Mil. Mag. Warmbad to Sec. Prot. 11.01.1918. ADM 46. file 599/2.

149. NAC Report. Minutes of Evidence. p14. Cited in Lewis. p164.

150. SWAP & Act. Mag. Warmbad to Dist. Comm. SWAP Keetmanshoop. 12th March, 1920. ADM 105 - 3353

151. Maj. Manning to Sec. SWA. 'Bondelswarts Hottentots: Reported Unrest and Resistance Dog Tax'. 26th May, 1921.Reproduced in Report of the Administrator on the Bondelswarts Rising, 1922. p9

152. Maj. Manning to Sec. SWA. 'Bondelswarts Hottentots: Reported Unrest and Resistance Dog Tax'. 26th May, 1921.Reproduced in Report of the Administrator on the Bondelswarts Rising, 1922. p9

153. Beukes offered his resignation on 5th October, 1920. Report=|| 8XAttorney-General. A 388/1 vol. 3

154. Hoernlé, A. Trails in the Thirstland: The Anthropological Field Diaries of Winifred Hoernlé. (Edited by Carstens, P., Klinghardt, G. & West, M.) Centre for African Studies. Cape Town. 1983. p84.

155. Super. Bondels Reserve to Mag. Warmbad. 18th December, 1921. LKW 3/1/2 - 2/18/1921

156. Mag. Warmbad to Super. Bondels. Reserve. 12th December, 1921. LKW 3/1/2 - 2/18/1921

157. Pietersen, CID to O/C CID, Windhoek 4th May, 1922. A 388/1 vol. 4

158. Rex vs Jacobus Christian. 27th October, 1922. LKW 1/1/4 - 31/22

159. Statement by Timotheus Beukes. 17th June, 1922.A388/1. vol. 3. Jacobus Christian to Mag. Warmbad (Fleck) NAC Report. Minutes of Evidence. 27th July, 1922. p381. Quoted in Lewis. p216

160. The importance of the community memory and thirst for land rights was a repeated theme of the evidence in Court Cases after the Rising. See for example

the following - "The chief reason of the present trouble is we wanted all the land again the same as we had same before the German Government came." [Statement David Klaas. 17th June, 1922. ADM 145 C305]

161. Rex vs. Jacobus Christian. 27th October, 1922. LKW 1/1/4 - 31/22.

162. Rex vs. Jacobus Christian. 27th October, 1922. LKW 1/1/4 - 31/22.

163. 'Report into Bondelswarts Rebellion - Crown Prosecutor. 25th June, 1922.ADM 105 - 3353

164. Jacobus Christian took the post from 1st June, 1924. Admin. to Christian 21st May, 1924. SWAA - A460/17.

165. AR NA Warmbad. 1942. 18th January, 1943. LKW 3/4/2 - 2/16/3

166. 'Translation of pages 34-37 of German File WIIc 4 vol. 1'. 7th July, 1894 SWAA 1426 - A217/1 vol.3

167. The comment reveals much about the fluidity of identity at this time. 'Investigation of Complaint by David Christian Izak held at Keetmanshoop' 6th June, 1922. LKE 3/1/21 - 2/1/20/3

168. Inspecting Officer SWAP, Keetmanshoop to Divisional Inspector SWAP, Windhoek. 30th October, 1922. SWAA 1851 - A 396/10 vol.1

169. Inspecting Officer SWAP, Keetmanshoop to Divisional Inspector SWAP, Windhoek. 30th October, 1922. SWAA 1851 - A 396/10 vol.1

170. See the evidence of a patrol of '4 Hottentots under the command of Traugoed Isaac' met on 24.11.1917 in Berseba. 1917.LKE 1/1/3 260/17

171. Mag. Keetmanshoop to Sec. SWA. 18th April, 1922. SWAA 1851 - A 396/8.

172. For example in 1923 Elias Kaptein (son of Manasse, Kaptein in Keetmanshoop) was summoned before the Raad at Berseba for stealing two cattle. He was fined by Timotheus Izaak, the 'Magistrate,' and told to pay two cattle plus a £1 fine to be paid within a week. Leekop (?) Zes had no cattle and confessed that he had been present when the six cattle were killed so received lashes. 1923. LKE 1/1/5 - 130/23

173. AR Keetmanshoop. 1927. LKE 1/1/7 - 50/27

174. Super. Berseba to Mag. Keetmanshoop. LKE 3/1/23 - 2/10;/4

175. 'Typescript of endorsement made by Assistant Secretary on Annual Report on Native Affairs by Magistrate, Keetmanshoop' 2nd May, 1933. SWAA 1430 - A 217/10 vol. 2

176. Evidence to SWA Commission. 11.09.1935. KSW 3 vol. 30 p1821-1830

177. The initial date is approximately that upon which the rights of the Paul Goliath's people to dwell in the Berseba area were recognised by Oasib of Hoachanas. Letter by D.R. Goliath. 7th July, 1938. SWAA 2081 - A 460/8. Mag. Keetmanshoop to CNC, Windhoek. π—p12[illegible] LKE 2/7/11. Evidence to SWA Commission. 11.09.1935. KSW 3 vol. 30 p1821-1830.

178. Super. Berseba Reserve to Mag. Keetmanshoop. 23rd July, 1935. SWAA 2081 - 460/8

179. See the list of residents in arrears 'As at 31st April, 1935' SWAA 1435 - A 217/22.

180. £8 14/- of the £203. 19/- due. Mag. Keetmanshoop to Sec. SWA. 21st May,1936 SWAA 1434 - A 217/16/1

181. 'Enquiry held by Me. David Meintjes, Magistrate ... into allegations of misconduct on the part of Diedrich Ruben Goliath ...' 1st November, 1935. p23. SWAA 2081 - A 460/8

182. Evidence of Diedrich Goliath to SWA Commission. 11th September, 1935. KSW 3 - vol. 30. p1837-1855

183. 'Enquiry held by Me. David Meintjes, Magistrate ... into allegations of misconduct on the part of Diedrich Ruben Goliath ...' 1st November, 1935. p10 and p21. SWAA 2081 - A 460/8

184. NC, Keetmanshoop to CNC, Windhoek. SWAA 2081 - A 460/8

185. Eduard Isaak et al. to Mag. Keetmanshoop. 19th November, 1936. SWAA 2081 - A 460/8

186. Super. Tses & Berseba to Mag. Keetmanshoop. 12th February, 1937. SWAA 2081 - A460/8. Eduard Izaak was one of the richest stockowners in the reserve and prior to their confiscation in payment of the fine was one of few men to own horses. Appendices to Inquiry Re: Diedrich Goliath. 'Stock owners...' 1st November, 1935. SWAA 2081 - A 460/8

187. 'Enquiry held by Me. David Meintjes, Magistrate ... into allegations of misconduct on the part of Diedrich Ruben Goliath ...' 1st November, 1935. p10 and p21. SWAA 2081 - A 460/8

188. WO. Tses and Berseba to NC, Keetmanshoop. 2nd January, 1938. LKE 3/1/51 - 2/7/5/1

189. Super. Berseba to Mag. Keetmanshoop. 19th November, 1936. LKE 3/2/1 - N1/1/4. In 1930 Ou Eduard Isaac owned 166 cattle and 1,284 small stock 'Arrears 31st August, 1930' SWAA 1433 - A 217/16. One further interesting dimension to the internal political dynamics of the Berseba Reserve was the 'German connection'. Isaac Isaacs had been one of the black Non-Commissioned Officers in charge of a

force of 150 black troops from Berseba armed by the Germans to garrison Kalkfontein South, Aus and guard the railway track to Kolmanskop during the Union invasion. Following the German defeat 71 German Mausers were reportedly sold cheaply in Berseba. Inspecting Officer SWAP, Keetmanshoop to Divisional Inspector SWAP, Windhoek. 30th October, 1922. SWAA 1851 - A 396/10 vol.1 Fears that Germans were 'poisoning the minds' of a section of the Berseba community were revived during World War Two when suspicion fell on a neighbouring German farmer who '... refused to commence his Xmas celebration on his farm, because Hitler's photograph was not hung on the Christmas tree'. WO. Tses & Berseba to NC. Keetmanshoop. 5th August, 1942. LKE 3/1/51 - 2/7/11. Old Eduard Izaak protested strongly against the administration's plans to hold a recruitment meeting in the reserve and when one was attempted it had to be abruptly terminated because '... if Captain Wood had continued talking the meeting would have broken up in disorder'. WO. Tses & Berseba to NC. Keetmanshoop. LKE 3/1/51 - 2/7/1

190. WO. Tses and Berseba to NC. Keetmanshoop. 2nd January, 1938. LKE 3/1/51 - 2/7/5/1

191. 'Enquiry held by Me. David Meintjes, Magistrate ... into allegations of misconduct on the part of Diedrich Ruben Goliath ...' 1st November, 1935. p10 and p21. SWAA 2081 - A 460/8

192. Evidence of Diedrich Goliath to SWA Commission. 11th September, 1935. KSW 3 - vol. 30. p1837-1855

193. 'Enquiry held by Me. David Meintjes, Magistrate ... into allegations of misconduct on the part of Diedrich Ruben Goliath ...' 1st November, 1935. SWAA 2081 - A 460/8

194. Extract. Monthly Report. Super. Berseba for August, 1934. LKE 3/2/1 - N1/1/4

195. Capt. D.R. Goliath to Mag. Keetmanshoop. 3rd August, 1938. SWAA - A460/8

196. 'Minutes of Tribal Meeting held by the Chief Native Commissioner at Berseba.' 8th August, 1938. SWAA 1426 - A217/1 vol.3

197. NC, Keetmanshoop to CNC, Windhoek 20th August, 1938.SWAA 2081-A460/8

198. Report No. 662. SWAP. Hofmeyr. 4th February, 1939. SWAA 455 - A50/79

CHAPTER FOUR: THE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF THE WHITE FARMING COMMUNITY IN SOUTHERN NAMIBIA. 1915-1955.

INTRODUCTION

The history of the white commercial farming community in southern Namibia in the period 1915-1955 can be broken into two phases. The chapter will focus on the first of these, a period of sustained crisis, lasting twenty years, from 1915 to 1935. The intervention of the state played a crucial role during this period in preventing many of the new white immigrants being driven from their farms by debt, drought and depression. The twenty years that followed saw the consolidation and further expansion of the white farming community in the region, supported by the karakul boom and the utilisation of contract labour on the farms. The opening section of this chapter will provide an overview of the pattern of change within southern Namibia and place it within the context of the comparative literature.

One of the neglected areas of Namibian history is the environmental impact of changing farming practices and policies. Lau and Reiner have recently assembled some material, but surprisingly ignore the role of small stock, and work from the premise that only the 'German era' was 'beneficial to the development of the country's agricultural resources', focusing on the external direction of the economy by Germany and the Union.[1] One of the difficulties that emerges is that the archive material may provide better evidence about the official perception of change, than the real impact of changes. Yet whilst it is difficult to quantify environmental change historically, the attempt to empiricise changes in land use and farming practise invites complimentary studies that would examine further the environmental impact of these changes.

The pattern of land settlement in Namibia can be contrasted with that which evolved

in the Cape. In many parts of the Cape the initial tendency was for white 'settlers' to trek rather than settle. The trend was one that was actively encouraged by the land policy introduced by the Dutch. Low rents encouraged farming practices in which land was leased on a temporary basis. Once the grazing was exhausted the stock owner would simply hire a different area of land and move to fresh fields. The pattern of mobility amongst white pastoralists in the Cape was thus akin to that pursued by black pastoralists. However, the availability of land was an important prerequisite for this type of pastoral practice. The continuing influx of white settlers entering the colony and seeking land made reform necessary and the land settlement pattern began to change after 1813 with the development of a more sedentary white farming community.[2]

The chronology of land settlement in Namibia was different. Formal colonisation came comparatively late, with the establishment of a German colony in 1884. German rule and attempts to encourage settlers from Germany inhibited the flow of settlers which might otherwise have entered the territory from the Cape. Whilst large scale land appropriation took place following the 1904-1907 War there had been comparatively little land settlement, least of all in southern Namibia.

The defeat of the Germans in 1915 was followed by a period of uncertainty about the future form of administration of the territory. The large influx of white immigrants entering Namibia in this period were thus unable to gain security of tenure to land. The lifestyle of the new immigrants hiring grazing on short term leases was marked by mobility and consequently a disinclination to develop fixed assets on the land such as buildings and boreholes.

The willingness of immigrants to accept this inconvenient lifestyle reflected their hopes that they would eventually secure permanent tenure to a farm. The rate of immigration significantly increased after the Union secured a Class 'C' Mandate over Namibia in 1919 and introduced its Land Settlement Programme in 1920. The majority of the new settlers came from the Cape. The Carnegie Report of 1932 noted that the 'European' population of the border districts of the north-west Cape

(such as Calvinia, Clanwilliam, Kenhardt and Namaqualand) had risen constantly throughout the period 1911-1921, but then fallen over the next five years.[3] The Cape was also alleged to be the region of South Africa which had the most significant 'poor white' problem. In 1916-17 it was estimated that there were 54,051 whites living in poverty in the Cape. A range of different types of 'poor whites' were identified which included:

> ... persons of nomadic type, like the poor 'trek'-farmers of the Cape North-West, who still retain some pioneer forms of life.[4]

It was these poor farmers, abusively termed 'bokboers' (goat farmers), who formed a large proportion of the new arrivals in Namibia.

The claim has been made that there was no more open land available for new settlers in the Cape after the 1870s.[5] Once this position was reached the price of land was likely to become increasingly prohibitive for the poorer aspirant farmer. The ripples of movement that took these settlers to the periphery in search of access to land struck a barrier at the Orange River which marked the international border between the Union and German territory. The German colonial regime's policy was to reject applications from non-German settlers unless they possessed a substantial amount of capital. The defeat of the Germans in 1915 was a breach in the dam.[6]

The poverty of many of the new farmers meant that they were particularly vulnerable to the threat of competition from black pastoralists. The new immigrants would seek state intervention to destroy any prospect of black pastoral rivalry in the marketplace. The new immigrants were less likely to be able to afford private investment in the development of the infrastructure of their farms, buying high quality stock or investing in new technology. The new farmers were therefore anxious to obtain cheap labour in order to compete with established farmers in Namibia and South Africa. The white farms provided the interface upon which a struggle took place between two potentially viable farming communities. The struggles of the black pastoralist for mobility and access (or as Keegan writes of

South Africa '...struggles for primitive accumulation and against dispossession') were entwined with the struggle of white settlers to make their farms commercially viable on foundations laid by a state-led infusion of development capital.[7]

The rapidity and naivety of the initial settlement programme also bore an environmental cost. The attempt to maximise the number of settlers gaining access to land meant that the farms allocated tended to be smaller than was economically and environmentally desirable. The shortage of private capital meant that there was little money available to provide fencing or sink the necessary additional boreholes. The lack of these led to a tendency for the overconcentration of stock on farms. The Drought Commission of 1919 provided evidence that farms in South Africa with an inadequate number of waterholes had also suffered the most conspicuous environmental damage as animals trampled out the grazing around those that remained.[8]

The rapid division and alienation of land into a patchwork of privately owned farms meant that areas that had traditionally been available as reserve grazing in times of drought were no longer accessible when needed. Werner's verdict on the devastating impact of the drought of the early 1930s on central Namibia is damning:

> The severity of the drought ... was as much a result of the Union's ill-considered land settlement policies as of insufficient rainfall.[9]

The damage created by forms of farm management that fuelled land erosion was not unknown to contemporaries; indeed the, often highly visible, damage was the cause of great concern.

The Report of the Drought Commission of 1919 had warned that the continuation of contemporary farming practices could lead to only one 'logical outcome'. This would be "...'The Great South African Desert' uninhabitable by Man".[10] The Commission's opinion of commercial white farmers in South Africa was cutting:

> ... they start farming with the set purpose of wringing out the life blood of the farm in order to make a quick profit[11]

The Land Settlement Programme in Namibia which gave settlers access to loans to buy stock, and the large influx of farmers with stock from the Cape produced a rapid escalation in stock numbers in southern Namibia in the 1920s. The increase placed a heavy strain on the existing resources and a similar threat to the environment. The problems created by the overstocking of land became particularly apparent during periods of extensive drought. The relentless drought that struck Namibia in the early 1930s gripped South Africa with equal venom. The number of woolled sheep in South Africa was reduced by a quarter (13 million) during the period 1931-1934.[12] The Carnegie Commission's Report of 1932 made a direct link between these heavy losses and the environmental negligence of farmers:

> Not drought so much as man's reckless use of the veld, causing erosion, a quicker run-off of rain water, and a lowering of the water level, brought about this decreased power of resistance of the land against drought.[13]

The concern led to measures in both South Africa and Namibia that sought to encourage commercial farmers to seek enhanced profits through the pursuit of quality, rather than quantity, in their flocks and herds.

The extent to which farms in southern Namibia were 'overstocked' was estimated with reference to some calculation of the 'carrying capacity' of the land. The 'carrying capacity' can be defined as the:

> ... average acreage of pasture land which is capable of maintaining an animal for an indefinite period without deterioration of the pasture.[14]

The concept is a loaded one that is problematic for two reasons. The first is that it contains an assumption of sustainability and predictability that is inappropriate in the dryland environment of southern Namibia. Contemporary development workers

still disagree by factors of four or five over the stocking rate of a given rangeland.[15] Secondly the concept assumes a 'Eurocentric' concern with the commercial exploitation of the land. The difficulty of using it as the basis for comparisons between black and white stockowners is that it contains no concept of the value of stock in terms of social relationships or the flexibility of boundaries. The evidence suggests that the survival of white farmers flocks also depended less on the 'carrying capacity' of their farms, than the mobility of their flocks.

The prevalence of small stock farming in southern Namibia during the period under study is one of the principle features giving homogeneity to the region. It would be useful to draw comparisons with similar districts in South Africa over the same period. The problem, as Beinart recently pointed out is that:

> The history of the sheep farming districts in the 20th century, has still to be written.[16]

The sheep industry within South Africa was dominated by the market for wool. In 1913 there were 28 million woolled sheep in a total small stock population of 47 million. A decline in numbers during the war years was followed by expansion from 1921, reaching a peak in 1931. In that year the number of woolled sheep stood at 45 million in a small stock population of 60 million. Beinart suggests that the expansion did not relate directly to the prices available, as wool prices fell between the wars. However links with the development of the pastoral economy in southern Namibia can be made. The failure to market merino sheep successfully from southern Namibia must be linked to the expansion of numbers in South Africa and their closer proximity to the major markets. The pattern of small stock expansion in southern Namibia was also markedly different to that in South Africa. Small stock numbers in southern Namibia continued to increase throughout the 1930s. The difference conforms to the staggered nature of land settlement in Namibia.

The problem facing the commercial farming sector in Namibia, as in other white

settler colonies, was that it was not founded purely on commercial grounds. The land policies were settlement policies in which incentives were provided to encourage white immigration. A generous system of loans and advances attracted and bolstered new settler farms in southern Namibia during the 1920s. State support for commercial farmers in Namibia and South Africa was such that several writers have doubted whether the sector could have survived without it. De Kiewiet commented in 1940 that:

> South Africa is not an agricultural country ... Without subsidy and under conditions of free competition much of the land would not be economically cultivated, and many of the agricultural and pastoral products could make no headway against the products of New Zealand, Canada, the Argentine, or the United States.[17]

The internal political debates of the period however, focused, not on the viability of the commercial farming sector as a whole, but rather on complaints about the competence of its poorer members. The Van Eck Commission of 1941 commented that in South Africa the governments policy:

> ... often merely keeps inefficient farmers on the land and perpetuates or even accentuates unhealthy farming practices.[18]

The view was echoed in the Legislative Assembly in Namibia where it was complained that:

> ... the state was subsidising a large section of the community at the expense of the remainder of the population.[19]

This debate reflected a conflict of interest within the farming community itself between the wealthier farmers and their poor neighbours. Keegan, writing of the Orange Free State at the beginning of the twentieth century, noticed a clear correspondence between the size of a farm and the position of the farmer regarding

'squatting'. Large farms attracted a permanent labour supply by offering grazing rights. In a competitive labour market farmers without surplus land lost out. It was therefore these same farmers who sought measures that would lead to an 'equitable distribution' of labour.[20]

The district Farmers' Associations could provide stages upon which the debate over labour policy could be fought. Keegan recorded the clear conflict between rich and poor farmers within the Upper Klip Rivers Association.[21] These Associations were generally controlled by the most powerful and, by definition, wealthiest farmers in the area. After the mid-1930s and the expulsion of most workers' stock, wealthier farmers began to see that wage differentials between farms could be used to secure a stable labour force, whilst poorer farmers still offered grazing or stock as payment in kind. The division in South Africa was thus one in which:

> The larger farmers, who controlled the provincial and national agricultural unions, were more willing to accept progressive state initiatives against sharecroppers and tenancy agreements.[22]

Yet all farmers retained a common interest in uniting to protect their supply of labour in the face of rival interests.

The capitalisation of white farms, exclusion of black-owned stock and impoverishment of the reserves created a clear economic gap between the commercial white farmer and the majority of prospective black stock farmers. The period after 1935 might be seen as the 'period of transition in capitalist agriculture' in southern Namibia.[23] The shift in the economic fortunes of white farmers and the levels of surplus capital available within individual farming units had significant consequences. The most important of these were the form of labour relations and the level of political and economic power exercised by the farming community at an individual and group level.

The political objective of both Germany and South Africa was to secure their

possession of Namibia in an uncertain international environment. The mechanism for achieving this goal was to be white settlement. Once white settlers had become established on the ecologically fragile farms of southern Namibia they formed a powerful lobbying group within a sparse white community and sought to ensure that they retained their privileged access to state provision. Schmokel has dismissed the image of the successful commercial white farmer in Namibia as a 'myth', arguing that they were:

> ...perhaps the most extreme case of an economically unviable, politically dependent settler agricultural system ... [and] ... an essentially parasitical phenomenon.[24]

The validity of this verdict of the white farming community will be tested with reference to southern Namibia.

THE PATTERN OF GERMAN LAND DISTRIBUTION.

The system of land tenure that had been established by the German colonial authorities attempted to prevent land speculation or the accumulation of vast areas of land in the hands of a few wealthy farmers by limiting farms to 20,000 hectares in size. Each farm that was given out had to be personally developed or at least managed by a 'European'. The provision was made that the conditions placed upon purchasers could be amended by the German Colonial Office, but few farmers seemed prepared to go through the bureaucratic process necessary to achieve revisions to the terms of their purchase. The rules lacked flexibility - the most visible symptom of this being the concern with geometrical symmetry. Farms were to be rectangular, regardless of the natural boundaries or prevalence of water sources. However, as long as there was little fencing and large areas of open land, the constraints proved more cartographic than real. Many of the rectangular German farms were mapped neatly in the middle of a large area of unproclaimed land.[25]

The distribution of land was primarily intended to consolidate the territory as a German settler colony. German citizens were charged roughly half the price of others wishing to buy farms.[26] The constant black resistance to German rule and the high cost of transporting expeditionary forces from Germany meant that preferential conditions for farm purchases were offered to those liable to military service. Farms of up to 5,000 ha. were made available to this special category of German settler for just 30 pfenning (about 3 1/2d) per hectare. Many of the German soldiers who travelled to Namibia to fight in the 1904-1907 war took the opportunity to obtain land.

The purchase price of a farm provided under the land settlement scheme for Germans was divided into instalments. On the day of purchase an initial payment of 1/15th of the purchase price had to be made, but no further payments were required over the following five years. The idea being that this time would be used to construct farm buildings, open up water supplies, build up sheep flocks and cattle herds and generally develop the farm into a profitable commercial enterprise. Applicants for farms (as opposed to 'closer settlements') were expected to possess at least 20,000 marks (£1,000) capital of their own.[27] Settlers were provided with cash advances of up to 6,000 marks (£300) to help meet the cost of improvements. After the five years grace had expired the remainder of the purchase price was to be paid off in fourteen annual instalments. Purchasers who did not qualify for the special offer were still entitled to the five years grace after making an initial downpayment. However, the period of time allowed for the payments was considerably shorter, resulting in higher rates. Farmers produced 1/10th of the total purchase price on the day of purchase. The other nine instalments had to be paid annually following the expiry of the five year development period. A few prospective farmers who lacked the necessary capital to purchase farms under either scheme were permitted to obtain a lease agreement, either on a short (up to 5 years) or a long-term basis (up to 18 years).

The generosity of the terms of purchase offered by the German government meant that nine out of every ten farms occupied by white stockowners were held under a

purchase agreement. Statistics show that as of 1st April, 1914 1,331 farms were in private possession, whilst only 118 were held on lease agreements.[28] In the 20 years up to 1907 only 480 farms had been sold, but in 1907 alone a further 202 farms were sold, whilst in the six year period from 1907 to 1913 851 farms were sold. The statistics give clear evidence that the rise in the number of land settlers had been directly promoted by the demobilisation of troops shipped in to fight in the 1903-1907 War.[29] Yet many of the purchases were speculative and it was estimated that as late as 1915, there were only 'about 600 settlers' actually living on the land (a statistic which suggests the fragility of rural control over the black population).[30]

The extent to which land appropriated by the German government remained unoccupied can be shown by an examination of the statistics for land ownership in April, 1913. Maltahohe district was calculated to be 2,480,000 hectares in size, of which 1,937,000 was classified as government land suitable for farm use. Yet only 60 farms covering an area of 917,000 hectares had been sold.[31] The amount of land not occupied by white settlers was supplemented in Warmbad and Keetmanshoop districts by the surviving 'reserves'. At the time of the South African invasion the majority of government land remained vacant.

The raw statistics illustrate the scale of land alienation during the German occupation, but also the brevity of the period of white residence on many of the farms prior to World War One. The facts show that much of the occupied land had been alienated for little more than a decade. Settlers lacked deep historical roots to legitimise their occupation of land and alienation remained a recent memory to black residents when South African troops crossed the border in 1915.

FARMERS WITHOUT FARMS: WHITE LAND USE, 1915-1918.

The new military administration was sceptical of the agricultural ability of many of the German farmers:

> A large part of the community consists of ex-soldiers who, after their periods of Colonial service had expired, took their discharges here and received farms on easy terms. They lacked experience of Colonial farming conditions and knowledge of the natives.[32]

The new administration felt that the wave of immigrants that they anticipated from the Cape would have the experience necessary to be successful farmers in Namibia and bring prosperity to the country.
The white farming sector in Namibia was thrown into considerable disarray by the brief struggle following the South African invasion. As the German forces retreated north farms were abandoned or left under the supervision of women and children who found the black work force deserting on mass. Enlisted German farmers found themselves interned at the prison camp at Aus or operating many miles away from their farms. The disruption of normal farming activity was absolute. The early Union occupation of the south and tendency for both sides to requisition stock to feed their soldiers meant that the south suffered more than any other region in Namibia. A small minority of German farmers were deported (only seven German farmers in Maltahohe district for example), and these did not leave until 1919.[33] The treatment of the German farmers confounded the expectations of the local black population who had anticipated that defeat would automatically entail dispossession.

A survey of Maltahohe district at the end of 1915, less than six months after the surrender of the German forces shows that there were a total of 50 farms with white inhabitants. The differences between them were considerable. Nomtsas covered an area of 380,396 acres and supported a family of eight whites and a black location of 118 inhabitants. The farm had been substantially developed and contained a dam and 26 wells to provide scattered sources of water for stock. None of the other farms in the district were as large or as well developed as Nomtsas. Sixteen of the farms were less than 60,000 acres in size. Poortjies (at 52,849 acres) one of these smaller farms, was more typical, with just a single well it supported a small population of 10 whites and 6 blacks.[34] The war created problems for these small

farms, but also for the more ambitious landowners who had been reliant upon a flow of capital from other commercial ventures in Germany.[35]

The hope was that the economic difficulties faced by the over-extended and disrupted farming sector could be solved by the arrival of a new wave of immigrants from the Union who could provide the necessary boost to the ailing agricultural sector. The farmers of Maltahohe were reported to be in a particularly poor condition in 1916 due to the combined impact of the war and a serious local drought.[36] The price of goods in the shops in Maltahohe had almost doubled since 1913. A sack of meal which could be bought before the war for 58 marks cost the equivalent of 95 marks by 1916, whilst a sack of flour had risen in price from 32 to 62 marks.[37] Yet the drought meant that farmers were unable to take full advantage of the higher prices being offered for stock.

The difficulty facing any new settlement programme was that farmers required a substantial amount of capital to develop a farm. A settler with sufficient stock would still have to find the necessary resources to develop permanent water sources. Such large scale investment was unlikely so long as the future of the territory remained uncertain. The sale of farms was suspended whilst the outcome of the war and the future of the former German colonies was undetermined. The Union's land policy was therefore to make land available to white stockowners, but without being able to guarantee ownership rights.

A system of monthly licences was established. Farms which had been surveyed and mapped but not sold were leased to farmers on monthly occupation licences, whilst unsurveyed areas of land could be used by obtaining a monthly grazing licence. A monthly license cost £1.10s 0 and gave the holder the right to graze up to 100 cattle and 500 small stock on the land. For higher numbers the owner had to pay 3d. per head for large stock and 2s.6d per 100 head for small stock per month.[38] The evidence suggests, however, that the military magistrates used a considerable degree of discretion in the charges made for grazing within their district.[39] The large number of immigrants from the Kenhardt and Upington districts of the Cape

demonstrated their conviction that the new territory offered an enhanced opportunity to gain access to land.[40]

The reports of good rains and good stock-raising prospects of the territory provided one of the main attractions to new settlers. The district of Warmbad which lapped the northern border of the Cape Province was described in glowing terms in the Administrator's Annual Report for 1916:

> Stock thrives and the natural increase therefrom is in some cases truly phenomenal. The District is one of the finest in the Protectorate for stock raising. Excellent rains have recently fallen ... Game is abundant, particularly 'Springbuk' (sic) which still exist in large herds it being no uncommon sight to see herds of 10,000 or more on a single farm.[41]

Hindsight might suggest that one of the primary reasons for the reported attractiveness of the district was the very fact that it was large and had a relatively low level of settlement.

Farmers trekked across the border with their stock in such numbers that by the time a census was taken in 1921 Warmbad district had the third largest white population in the entire country (after Windhoek and Keetmanshoop).[42] An indication of the periodisation of immigration can be found in an analysis of the length of residence of all the white stockowners in the district in 1919. The district contained 181 white stockowners by 1919 of whom the largest number had arrived within the last five years, following the German defeat (Figure 3). An analysis of the statistics for the issue of grazing licences to European stockowners in 1918 reveals that the southern districts constituted six of the seven most popular districts in the whole territory and contained nearly three-quarters of all aspirant white farmers receiving grazing licences during the year.[43] The military magistrate based at Warmbad judged that:

> Most of the farmers belong to the poorer class who have for many years struggled in vain to acquire wealth in the Union.[44]

The clear implication was that the immigrants lacked the necessary capital to acquire land in the Union, but hoped to benefit from a more generous land settlement programme in Namibia.

The farmers of southern Namibia were constantly forced to move their stock beyond the borders of their farms to find fresh water and grazing land for their stock. Bethany district received no rain at all from January to October, 1916. The Administrator reported that:

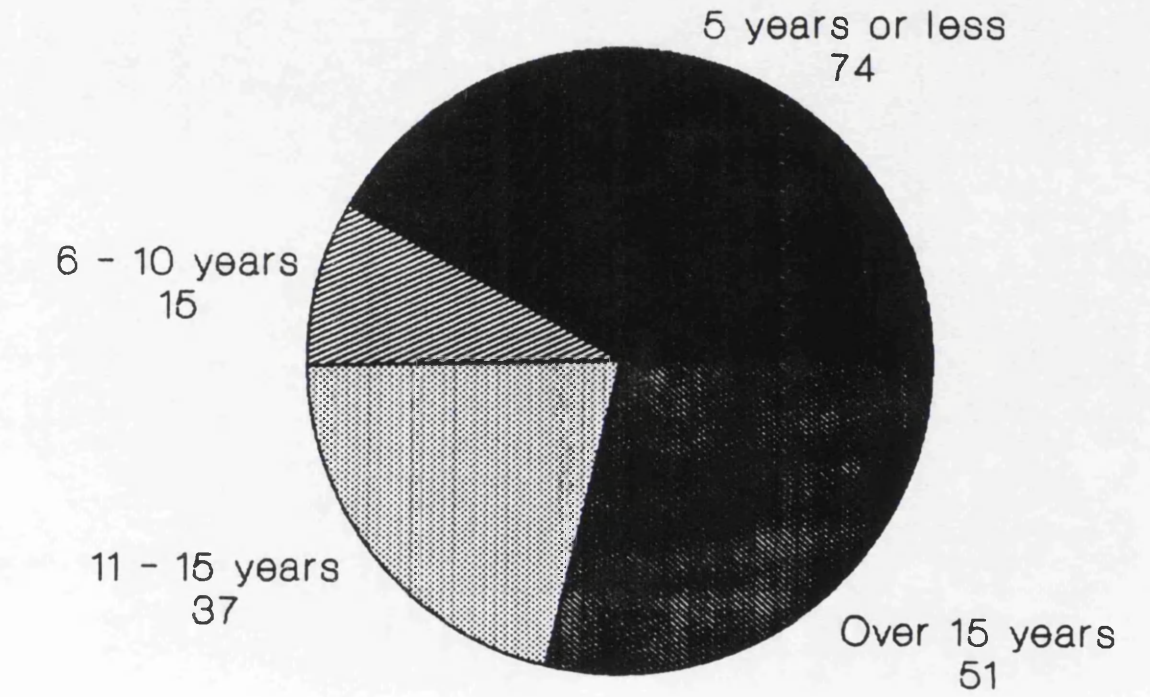
> ... as a consequence the pasture and water supply were so bad that farmers were compelled to be continually on the move with their stock in the search for grazing and water.[45]

Survival as a farmer necessitated movement. Farms had not developed sufficient water sources to maintain their stock during a dry year and the highly localised nature of precipitation in southern Namibia meant that farmers often had to move their stock to areas where it had rained, rather than wait for the rain to come to their farm. The granting of monthly grazing licences allowed white farmers the flexibility to move their flocks to a new farm once the resources available on another had been exhausted:

> A European may remove livestock from any farm to any other farm in the District without a pass ... A native is not allowed to remove any stock without a permit.[46]

Mobility was essential to the survival and prosperity of pastoral communities and the system provided European stockowners with a substantial advantage. When good rains fell in a particular part of the district white licensees were able to move their stock to a vacant area and then apply for a license to stay there. In contrast black stockowners had to apply to the magistrate for permission before moving their stock.

Fig. 3: LENGTH OF RESIDENCY (by 1919)
White stockowners in Warmbad District



The main concern of white farmers was not that black pastoralists might become black farmers and rivals, but that their black workforce would gain sufficient economic wealth under the new regime to be able to withdraw their labour. The petition presented to Lord Buxton by the Farmers Associations of Gibeon in 1919 expressed fears that were typical of the farming community:

> The stock owned by natives has increased to such an extent during the last few years that the greater percentage of natives do not work. In the near future the wealth of the native population will have become so great that if they are further allowed to keep stock it will be impossible to get labourers for the farms...[The 'Native']... having once more attained his former state of wealth and prosperity he will buy and get back his independence [my emphasis].[47]

Farmers sought the re-introduction of stock restrictions on black pastoralists:

> He should not be allowed to keep large stocks, only a certain numbers, about fifty head of small stock or about five head of cattle. He should be made to work on farms.[48]

The administration was not prepared to take such drastic action - indeed they viewed 50 small stock as the minimum number that were necessary to allow a black stockowner to be economically independent. To use this figure as a maximum would have been tantamount to officially denying the right of any black stockowner to be economically independent. Yet whilst refusing to impose such draconian stock limits the administration's land settlement and reserve policies restricted the access of black pastoralists to land.

LAND SETTLEMENT, 1919-1930.

The land settlement programme was activated immediately Namibia became a 'C' class mandate under Union control. The large scale dispersal of monthly grazing licences to Union immigrants had in many ways anticipated this announcement. The influx, combined with the military involvement of Union forces, strengthened South African claims over the territory. Hindsight, perhaps, blurs the many other contemporary possibilities such as a form of direct British rule like that operating in neighbouring Bechuanaland (Botswana). Large-scale settlement from the Cape bolstered Union claims for territorial expansion through the absorption of Namibia as a 'Fifth Province'. Settlement would also act as a political balance to the resident German population whose loyalty to the new administration was considered suspect.

The advertisement of farms awaited the approval of the Union as the mandatory power for Namibia on 17th December, 1920, but the establishment of the necessary apparatus had pre-empted this. Article 119 of the Treaty of Versailles signed on 28th June, 1919 had contained a renouncement by Germany of all its rights over its colonies and triggered the establishment of the Lands Board in Namibia in 1919.[49] Whilst monthly grazing or occupation licences had been granted by the local magistrates, the Lands Board was to provide a centralised system for the delimitation and distribution of farms to purchasers. The pattern of white settlement facing the newly constituted Board was complex.

The scattered patches of farming areas that were owned or leased by established white farmers were surrounded by large areas of land that were vacant or filled by a shifting group of black and white stockowners holding temporary grazing licences. The white farming community accordingly displayed a considerable degree of internal differentiation. An analysis of the 181 white stockowners living in Warmbad district in 1919 reveal that they possessed 142,503 small stock. Fifty-one of the white stockowners actually owned less than 300 small stock, whilst another fifty-one owned flocks of over 1,000 animals. The richest stockowner in the district, P. Le Riche, living on 'Stinkdoorn' not only owned flocks of 4,500

small stock, but also a herd of 600 cattle.[50]

The correlation between wealth and longevity of residence was not absolute, but it is noticeable that the six wealthiest white stockowners in the district had all lived there for over a decade.[51] The stockowners were scattered over just 58 farms, suggesting that on average there were more than three white stockowners on each farm. The duplication was partly due to the distinction made between stock owned by different members of the same family, such as father and son, but also because of the tendency for the poorer farmers to form partnerships to share the cost of grazing licences.

The Lands Board took over responsibility for the administration of lease and sales agreements that had been drawn up between farmers and the German Administration. White farmers in the territory were still making repayments on 522 farms that had been purchased during the German period. A further 119 were still held under German lease agreements.[52] The new administration was anxious to institute a scheme to enable the new immigrants from the Union to acquire more secure land rights. After the award of the mandate for 'South West Africa' to the Union the implementation of this scheme became possible.

Prospective settlers would apply for farms advertised in the Government Gazette and local press. The successful applicant would then receive a five-year lease. The first year would be granted rent free, the second and third at a rent of two percent the value of the farm and the fourth and fifth years at three and a half percent of the farm's value. At the end of the five years the leaseholder would be given the option of purchase, but this would only be granted if improvements that were the equivalent of, at least, a quarter of the value of the farm had been carried out. If the occupant had failed to carry out sufficient improvements the lease might be extended for a further five years. If the farmer(s) wished to buy the property they would be obliged to pay in six month instalments over a twenty year period and be subject to a four percent interest charge.[53] The development of the farming area was thus to be dependent upon the amount of private capital that the new settlers

would invest in their farms.

The Lands Board was responsible for the surveying and valuation of new farms, but its early efforts were to be criticised later. The value placed upon farms were inflated and bore little relation to the income that might be derived from the land given the many difficulties facing new farmers in the territory. The blame for this misjudgment was placed on the fact that no 'old farmers' with any lengthy experience of farming conditions in the territory were invited to join the Board. In fact:

> The first Land Board was composed entirely of farmers from the Union who knew little of local conditions.[54]

Values which might have been appropriate in the context of the Union were to prove excessive in the difficult years that lay ahead for the enthusiastic new settlers. Namibia had been grafted onto the Union bureaucracy which was unwilling to take the paradoxical action of co-opting the German farmers they had previously criticised so heavily.

The number of white stockowners who had entered the territory in the hope of gaining land was apparent as soon as the first new batch of surveyed farms were advertised for sale. The first year's sales were heavily concentrated in the south. Eighty of the 169 farms advertised in 1920 (the first year of the new settlement programme) were located in Keetmanshoop and Warmbad districts alone. The Lands Branch claimed that for every application they received for a farm in the north, they received fifty for a farm in the south.[55] The first batch of 76 farms was more than ten times oversubscribed with between 800 and 900 applications being received. The large number of farmers operating under temporary licences in the south must have been the main reason for the high level of interest. It was reported that some farms were shared by as many as sixteen white families.[56] Such families were often as poor as their black counterparts. J. Kotzee, for example, was living in March, 1920 on 'Neu-Onis' in Maltahohe with his wife and

seven children between the ages of one and ten. The only stock they possessed were 5 cows, 20 sheep and a flock of 175 goats.[57]

The Lands Branch significantly reduced the amount of capital that a settler needed to acquire a farm by half, from the £1000 demanded by the German administration, to £500. The level of subsidies was less than under the German regime, but the financial barrier that had to be hurdled to enter the scheme was substantially lowered. The difference reflected the fact that they were aimed at distinctly different target groups. The priority of the new settlement scheme was not to encourage private investment, but rather to facilitate land ownership for a particular group of poor white stockowners from the Cape. The stimulation of settlement by this group would also provide a useful intervention in the delicate internal power balance within the territory between the recently defeated Germans and settlers originating from the Union. The most prominent similarity between the two schemes was race: only applicants of 'European descent' were considered as lessees and applicants were warned that leases would be cancelled:

> ... in the event of lessee marrying or habitually co-habiting with native or coloured woman.[58]

The conditions of allotment for leases contained the provision that applicants should be prepared to personally occupy and develop a holding. The condition was a clear effort to avoid capitalist land speculation.

The financial hurdle to obtaining land was lowered even further over the next few years down to the 'nominal' figure of £250. Little detailed attention was given to the prospective farmers list of assets upon which the assessment was made. The Secretary for South West Africa admitted that:

> It was not too carefully scrutinised. As a rule, a settler would make up a statement that he possessed so much stock. When he fell short of the amount fixed, he just made it up by furniture and farming implements.[59]

The land settlement policy thus had a clear internal contradiction. The success of the farms was dependent upon initial private investment by the new settlers on a large scale. On the other hand the group provided with preferential access to the land lacked this capital. The implication was that the state would provide the necessary development capital.

The landless were given preference over those who already possessed a farm or were considered sufficiently wealthy to obtain land privately from others. The state was operating a political, rather than purely commercial agenda. Mr Ballot, an influential member of the whites-only Executive Assembly argued that:

> If the eventual cost to the state , in terms of capital lost, is £300,000 to £400,000, and in the result 1,000 families are settled on the land and making good - I question if the project would prove uneconomic for the state.[60]

The consequence was that many of the white farmers granted land were poor and dependent upon the support of the state to help them develop the land and build up their flocks. The Senior Officer at the Lands Branch, acknowledged that:

> ... the basis of land settlement is really an attempt to settle the poor white question.[61]

The new settlers found themselves faced by two immediate difficulties. The first was securing a reliable source of water on their new farms. The Lands Branch advertised and allotted 169 holdings in its first year of operation to 203 settlers, but owned only 9 drills which could be used to dig boreholes. Many of the new farms (of 10,000 hectares or more) only had one functioning borehole The problem was that unless farmers were able to locate disparate sources of water their stock would be restricted to within daily herding distance of the borehole and trample out the surrounding pasture.

The second major problem was finding a market for their stock. The small

population of the territory meant that the domestic demand was minimal, and the main markets were found in the Union. The markets could only be reached by the single railway line that stretched from central Namibia south to the border. The high cost of transport to the principal stock markets at Johannesburg and Maitland in the Union meant that low prices might leave an unfortunate farmer barely breaking even.[62] The long journey to the market proved expensive and reduced the quality of the animals. Oxen could lose as much as 200lb in weight during the train journey. The final burden was that goods sent to the Union were liable to an export tax. The tax in 1920 ranged from 20 shillings (£1) per head for slaughter cattle to 2s.6d per head for sheep.[63]

The disadvantages faced by settlers were compounded by the fact that many of the goods they required had to be imported along the same route. The magisterial town of Maltahohe contained stores that provided goods to farmers throughout the district, but as it was not served by the railway all the goods had to be hauled by cart from the railway station at Gibeon. The local magistrate estimated that this meant that prices in the stores were double those in towns sited along the railway line. A 1lb bag of 'Boer meal', for example, cost 7s. 2d, rather than 3s. 4d.[64]

The magistrate of the neighbouring district of Bethanie noted that whilst the major market for stock from the district was the Johannesburg Meat Exchange the cost of transporting the animals there was extinguishing any profits. Farmers complained that 'the Railways are throttling business'.[65] Farmers in Maltahohe protested that the lack of profitability in the export trade was aggravated by the price control mechanisms operated by 'Meat Rings' in the Union.[66] Yet the complaints must also be seen in the larger economic context of falling stock prices in the post-war period and the poor condition of stock following a drought.

The impact of the drought can be measured by looking at its impact in Maltahohe district - losses here were calculated as amounting to 19,811 sheep, 4,010 goats and 491 cattle during 1920.[67] The figures represented seven percent of the district's cattle, eighteen percent of its goats and forty-six percent of its sheep. The farming

industry was far from thriving in the first years of the mandate. The statistics also reveal the greater vulnerability of the sheep introduced by the settlers to drought and disease in comparison to goats, the small stock preferred by local black pastoralists. The new settler farmers found themselves joining a community which was struggling to compete, or even survive, economically.

The administration was forced to intervene in a number of ways to bail out the struggling farming community. The assessed value of farms was reduced by 25 percent and a remission of the rent due for the first period of lease agreements approved. A moratorium on debts had been declared at the outbreak of war and the Debts Settlement Proclamation of 1920 gave the administration the power to grant a further five year extension to the period before the second instalment of the payment of a farm became due. Proclamation No. 36 of 1923 enabled the capitalisation of arrears.[68] The measure was obviously designed to assist those who had settled on the land during the German period recover from the problems of the war and remain on the land.

Action was also taken to assist farmers gain profitable access to markets for their stock. An early initiative of the new administration was the construction of cold storage facilities at Walvis Bay to enable overseas exports of meat. The difficulties of competing in the overstocked Union markets were recognised and the export tax on stock was lifted from 1st July 1921. Efforts were also made to improve the quality of stock. A Sheep Division was set up by the administration and 28 inspectors waged a campaign against the most common disease preventing the export of sheep - scab. However the post-war depression was such that the expense could not be maintained and the functions of the sheep inspectors were transferred to the police from November, 1921.[69]

White farmers continued to claim that the measures, whilst necessary, were insufficient. Farmers were unable to compete economically with their rivals in the Union who were generally able to invest more capital in their properties and could serve local markets. By 1922 the magistrate at Maltahohe considered that the

majority of farmers in his district were on 'the verge of bankruptcy' and only able to survive because of the extended lines of credit granted them by banks and storekeepers.[70] One farmer from Gibeon district exported 250 hamels and 25 kapaters to the Union. Yet (despite the abolition of the export tax) he claimed that once the charges made by the railway, the auctioneer's commission and the costs of dipping and loading the sheep had been deducted he was actually left with a loss of £21. 11s. 3d.[71] Such experiences encouraged farmers to form or join Farmers' Associations and use these as vehicles to lobby the administration for more direct state intervention in support of the farming community.

Farmers Associations were sometimes used as marketing co-operatives, but still suffered losses and individual members were liable for the losses of their association, even if their own stock had not been involved in an unsuccessful deal. The formal marketing function was matched by the important informal functions that they provided - the control of prices on the local stock market. By 1934 there were at least nine different Farmers Associations operating in southern Namibia, generally operating on a district-wide basis (such as the 'Bethanie Boere Vereeniging').[72] The restrictions on the movement of black-owned stock and their exclusion from the Farmers Associations meant that black stockowners were only able to sell their produce through the mediation of local white farmers.

The operation of local networks of credit and support for white farmers were replicated at the national level by a generous array of loans and advances. The Land Settlement Act of 1920 provided for two types of advances. Section 17 advances covered 'permanent improvements' such as housing, dipping tanks and boreholes. The only limit placed on the size of these advances was that a settler could obtain no more than £400 towards the cost of their dwelling. Advances were added to the purchase price of a farm and therefore repayable over a period of twenty years.[73] The payment of advances of up to £750 to buy stock were also provided for under Section 44 of the Land Settlement Acts. Repayment of these advances could be made after five years in the case of large stock or eighteen months in the case of small stock with interest being charged at 4.5 percent.[74]

The repayment period related to the time period necessary before newly born stock could be profitably sold.

The scale of state advances amounted to £1,557,488 in 1920 alone. The magnitude of these advances can be conceived more easily if an individual example is provided. The leasee of 'Plattfontein' in Maltahohe district owned 13 sheep in 1923, but had 400 others which had been purchased with an advance and buildings with materials obtained from a further £200 advance provided by the authorities.[75] State support may also be analysed at a district level (see Table 10). The figures can be put in some sort of context by comparison with the amount invested in the development of the Gibeon reserve over the same period. Up to and including 1930 a total of £173 had been spent on the development of the reserve and this had all been taken from the fund accumulated by the payment of grazing fees.[76] The spending priority in the reserve had been the maintenance of effective dipping tanks for small stock, whilst white farmers were encouraged to increase the quality and quantity of their flocks.

The administration also recognised the importance of ensuring that£-|| 832farms granted under the land settlement programme had a reliable source of water. In 1922 the principle was adopted that no farm would be advertised unless a permanent water supply had been identified. Ironically the difficulty was that the boring machines used to drill for water themselves used large amounts of water whilst they were operating. The expense of paying a drilling team was thus increased by the need to build tracks to the drilling site and cart water as much as 10 kilometres.[77] The provision of sufficient watering points was crucial if farmers were to bring their stock through periods of drought. If a farm had an inadequate number of watering points stock would have to trek further and further afield in search of sparse grazing during a drought, but return to the same point to drink. If pasture was only found ten or fifteen kilometres from the water, weaker stock would not be able to withstand a twenty or thirty kilometre daily trek. The consequences of insufficient watering points could then be devastating. In 1922 some farmers lost over half their stock in less than two months.[78]

TABLE 10 - ADVANCES MADE TO SETTLERS IN GIBEON DISTRICT UNDER THE LAND SETTLEMENT ACT AS OF 3RD MARCH, 1931.

Boring and Dams.	£ 28,164
Windmills and Reservoirs.	£ 17,612
Houses and Camps.	£ 16,136
Dipping Tanks, Wells etc.	£ 1,342
Section 44: Stock and Equipment.	£ 35,825
TOTAL	£ 99,079

The drought that struck southern Namibia during 1922 and early 1923 was followed by floods and a 'plague of locusts'. The shortage of watering points and grazing meant that freedom of movement remained the key to stock survival. The Drought Investigation Commission noted that farmers who opposed fencing were generally those whose land adjoined:

> ... open land from which he naturally has no desire of being cut off.[79]

The drought was also serious in the Union with the result that those farmers who were able to keep their animals alive and relatively healthy by utilising the available land were able to obtain good prices for them at the markets.[80] Sheep farmers in the south were reported to be obtaining excellent prices for their animals, by the end of 1923 sheep were being sold at Maltahohe for between 10s and 16s 6d.[81] Whilst the wealthier farmers may have been able to take advantage of high market prices, over half the farmers in Maltahohe district remained heavily in debt to the local storekeepers and had been unable to retain the quality of their stock at the level necessary to market it in the Union. If the success of the farming community was to some extent dependent upon market forces over which it had little control, the success or failure of individual farms hinged to a large extent on decisions taken by individual farmers and the manner in which they utilised their capital.

A comparative analysis of the change in stock composition on the 56 farms of Maltahohe district in the period 1924-1925 reveals the extent to which farmers responded to changing market forces. The statistics for 1924 showed a substantial increase in the total and average size of both cattle herds and flocks of sheep and goats since 1917. Settlers had been able to use loans to acquire animals, even though the increase in the quantity of stock was probably not matched by an increase in quality. In 1917 the average number of large stock per farm had been 105, whilst the average number of small stock had stood at 873.[82] The size of both had increased by 1924 with the average number of large stock on each of the 56 farms rising to 153 and small stock to 1,482.

The German administration had advocated the introduction of merino sheep, and the first flocks to survive and prosper had been established at Nomtsas in Maltahohe district in 1897, but only two farms in the district retained flocks of these sheep by 1924 due to the disappointing prices that had been obtained for the wool (although one of these had around 10,000 merino sheep).[83] The administration continued to believe that the region's future prosperity would rest on its potential as a wool-producing region and, for several years, preferred to give cash advances for the purchase of merino sheep.[84] Three other farms experimented with karakul sheep

(which produced high quality furs obtained by the slaughter of karakul lambs soon after their birth), but karakul sheep represented just 5 percent of the small stock in the district in 1924.[85] The economic potential of karakul farming was, however, soon apparent. The pelts reached an average price of 12s in 1924, and by the following year this had risen to 15s (Figure 4).[86] The pelts were sold for the equivalent of a slaughter sheep, yet a karakul sheep was able to produce a number of lambs. The farmers responded rapidly to the new opportunity, by 1925 13 of the 56 farms had introduced flocks of karakul sheep and they made up 11 percent of the total small stock population.

The statistics suggest that the purchase of karakul sheep may have been sponsored through sales of cattle. The average number of cattle on each farm in 1925 dropped to 102 (lower than the average for 1917), whilst the average number of small stock rose once again to 1,647. The stock changes on individual farms confirm this pattern. Niederhagen Farm had disposed of its herd of 105 cattle, but had an increased number of small stock which included a new flock of 205 karakul sheep.[87] The obvious implication was that farmers were finding that the region was better suited to small stock than large stock farming and were selling their cattle in order to buy karakul or breeding stock. The innovative use of karakul sheep was restricted to the white farming community. The farms of Maltahohe contained 108 white stockowners and 138 black stockowners in 1925, but the black stockowners did not own a single karakul sheep between them.

One of the principal difference between black and white stockowners was the ease with which they could obtain access to land and the price that had to be paid for that land. The Official Gazette advertised a batch of farms for sale on 2nd November, 1925. The prices varied according to the valuation placed upon the farm, based primarily on its distance from towns and transport routes and the strength of its water supply. Whilst the figures varied, the terms of the purchases were identical. Zukois in Keetmanshoop district was a surveyed farm of 16,683 hectares and had been valued at £725. The buyer would have to pay nothing in the first year of purchase, £7.5s 2d per annum in the second and third years and £12.14s 1d in the

FIG. 4: AVERAGE PRICE FOR KARAKUL PELTS 1925-1955

Shillings

50
40
30
20
10
0

1925 1928 1931 1934 1937 1940 1943 1946 1949 1952 1955

Price per pelt

fourth and fifth years. The remaining money was to be paid in thirty annual instalments of £20.17s 8d.[88] The payments can be usefully contrasted with those made by contemporary black stockowners in nearby Gibeon reserve. In 1925 there were 74 black stockowners in the reserve.[89] The reserve was 39,190 hectares in size and the following year the residents paid £146 in grazing fees. One might argue that even if this money was provided solely by the stockowners (without any support from family members working outside the reserve) the payments worked out at under £2 per head, in contrast to the larger payments being paid by a single white farmer for Zukois.

The analysis looks somewhat different if one considers that access to a sufficient area of land was the key to successful pastoral farming in the dry climate of southern Namibia. Even in the years when the farmer buying Zukois was paying the full instalment of £20.17s 8d the calculations work out that this would have given him access to 3.3 hectares for each penny that he spent. In contrast black stockowners only gained access to 1.1 hectares for every penny that they contributed.

A further point that should be emphasised is that whilst Zukois was less than half the size of the Gibeon reserve it was bought by a single farmer who was able to utilise the entire area of the farm for the expansion of his livestock, without competition. Zukois was certainly larger than many farms and other farms were sometimes operated as partnerships. The amount of land available to white farm purchasers was substantial. In 1926 20 new farms were sold in deals involving 24 white farmers. The total hectarage of these farms was 207,753 ha, meaning that the total amount of land available on average to each farmer was 8,656 ha.[90]

In contrast, the amount of land available to each black stockowner in the reserve was just 530 hectares in a region where the minimum size for a viable farm was estimated to be 12,000 - 15,000 hectares. Wealthier black stockowners who tried to obtain licenses to graze their stock on vacant farms (a first step towards possible land ownership) found their licenses cancelled from 1926.[91] The frustrations faced

by black stockowners contrasted with the opportunities provided for white stockowners, however white farmers also faced difficulties in their efforts to become commercially competitive, as can be seen by the contemporary evidence collected by the Farm Industry Commission.

The Farm Industry Commission toured the country in 1926. It was a direct response to the considerable difficulties being reported by the white farming community and had a brief to enquire into the condition of the farming industry and the means by which the administration might provide further assistance. The Commission invited oral evidence, but also distributed a six page questionnaire to every white farmer in the country. Farmers in southern Namibia returned 99 completed forms and whilst these may well have excluded responses from pre-literate farmers, they do provide a fairly good 'indication' of the range of difficulties facing farmers at the time.[92]

J.C. Johannesson ran Klipdam, a farm of 12,808 hectares in Aroab district. The stock consisted of a herd of 207 cattle and oxen, and flocks of 1050 sheep and 150 goats. The fact that the farm was 105 miles from the nearest station on the railway line created marketing difficulties. The farm, for instance, produced 600lb of butter each year, but had to rely on the demand of the weak local domestic market for sales. Johannesson was largely dependent upon sales to local buyers, supplying, for instance, meat to a school hostel. Once every month or two Johannesson would travel by ox wagon to the railway to pick up supplies or to deliver some of the twenty to twenty-five oxen that he sold every year. Whilst the farm's income fluctuated, the financial demands remained constant. The case of Klipdam reveals the significance of labour costs in the farm budget. Johannesson estimated that it cost him £3.10s. to pay and feed a black worker on his farm each month, and claimed that he would be willing to pay up to £1.10s. (30 shillings) per month for a worker and provide free food. Johannesson calculated that his labour costs could be cut by 40 percent if he fenced his farm which would allow him to reduce his black work force from 5 to 3 workers.[93] The lure of loans for structural improvements to farmers like Johannesson is obvious.

The precarious financial condition of the farming industry can be illustrated by considering the income and expenditure of Klipdam. The main source of income listed was the sale of large stock which provided an annual income of £100-£125. The sales of 600lb of butter a year provided a further £45. However, the estimated cost of five black labourers was £210 per year, and in addition to this Johannesson would have had to find money for additional supplies and the annual payments towards the cost of the farm.

From Johannesson's figures at least 50 sheep per year would have to be sold just to cover the labour costs. The alternative was to negotiate a reduction in the cash payment made to local workers in exchange for the accommodation of some of their stock. The evidence suggests that this may have been the case with the workers keeping 30 donkeys, 4 cows and a flock of 136 goats on the farm.[94] The budgets of farmers like Johannesson were evidently extremely tight, and their problems carried implications for both the administration and black workers.

The Commission summarised the unanimous view of the farming community as to the dual cause of their crisis as:

> Solve our native question and give us means of reaching a market at reasonable cost.[95]

The narrow profit margins of the white farming community and low amounts of capital available to the new settlers meant that the development of farms and farm stock was largely dependent upon state support, whilst farmers were constantly seeking ways of cutting their labour costs. The Commission noted the large amount of money that had been advanced to settlers and farmers within the first six years of the mandate. The largest amount (£ 783,059) had been spent on land valuations. A further amount (£ 611,725) had been paid to settlers as advances by the Land Bank. Money had also been granted to farmers towards the cost of drilling for water on their farms (£ 200,851), purchases of stock (£ 153,311), to provide loans for the building of fences (£29,600) and for other miscellaneous improvements (£

102,271). The total amount of support that the administration had advanced to farmers by 31st March, 1926 added up to £ 1,880,817.[96]

The most blatant example of the preferential treatment provided to white settlers involved the case of the 'Angola Boers'. The small group of 291 'settlers' (defined as the heads of households) and their families were provided with a special scheme that left them in possession of 195 farms. Gibeon district was one of the those in which the Angolan immigrants were settled. The poverty of the immigrants was such that a high proportion (14 of the 35 farms given to the Angolan settlers in the district) were established as partnerships between two families, where one could support the other.[97] The former Secretary for South West Africa was able to express his concerns about the scheme after he had been transferred back to South Africa:

> A farm was promised to every Angola trekker - good, bad or indifferent, irrespective of his prospects of making a success, regardless of the fact that he might not be a farmer at all and was probably a mason, hunter, transport rider, or a person of no fixed occupation. Some of them were widows who had never farmed, who did not possess a sou, and who did not have children of an age to assist them in their farming operations.[98]

The widows and their families were generally placed into partnerships and cash payments made to the settlers to enable them to buy stock.

Settlers from the Union who had entered the territory and purchased land often found themselves shuffling a package of debts. Loans and advances had to be repaid to the Land Branch for the purchase of their farms, but also to the Land Bank and the Irrigation Department. Settlers were able to obtain a generous line of credit to receive advances from the administration to build fences, stock camps and kraals, reservoirs, dipping tanks and houses. But the administration had no effective machinery with which to supervise the work carried out by the farmers and much of the work was unlikely to bring a return on the investment made. The

construction of farm houses was the most obvious example of state investment in a non-productive project.

The desire to emphasise the difference between the white farmer and his black employees by raising the living standards of 'poor whites' seems to have informed a policy that required settlers to spend a substantial sum on the construction of a farm house that met agreed minimum standards:

> Settlers are compelled to incur heavy expenses in the building of dwelling houses under threat of cancellation of their leases.[99]

The encouragement of loans to build homes was typical of a policy that led to the over-extension of white farmers surfing on a wave of credit opportunities. The flaw was that such advances were doing little, if anything, to increase the productive capacity of the farm. Debts, rather than productivity rose. Poor semi-nomadic white farmers were given the opportunity not only to settle and obtain land, but to transform their lifestyle and farming operation. The early benefits of karakul farming were, however, restricted generally to wealthier farmers who could afford to take a risk. Yet the development of many farms was built on a credit bubble that was to be rudely burst by the depression and drought that gripped Namibia towards the end of the 1920s.

DROUGHT AND DEPRESSION.

The rapid escalation of stock numbers within a fragile ecosystem during the 1920s was risky. The difficulties of locating secure and permanent water sources meant that during periods of drought farmers were reliant upon being able to move to new areas. The more densely populated the region became the more difficult it was to locate vacant areas which could be utilised in times of need.

One of the most useful sources of information on the impact of the drought are the

statements presented by farmers to the Land Settlement Commission that toured southern Namibia in July and August, 1934. Much of the information in the following section is draw from the minutes of the Commission's hearings at which 187 farmers from the region gave verbal statements.

The impact of drought varied both regionally and at a local level. In the two years of 1926 and 1927 a severe drought in parts of the Union helped increase the price of stock being exported from Namibia. The severity of the drought actually led to an influx of trekkers from the Cape Province seeking pasture.[100] Yet whilst the rain was well distributed throughout the central and northern parts of Namibia, the south was gripped by a slow strangling drought that prevented them taking full advantage of the improved prices for stock.

In 1927 Keetmanshoop district had reportedly already been suffering from constant drought for the last three years.[101] The magistrate at Bethany noted that over the period 1927 - 1929 his district had received in total the rainfall it would normally expect to receive in just one year.[102] The magistrate at Warmbad concluded that the south was unsuitable for European farmers. The poverty of the farmers in Warmbad district was particularly apparent:

> Ninety per cent of the people are not as well off as a Bywoner in the Union. They live in fifth-rate brick houses and some in huts under conditions that would shame a respectable coloured man in the Cape.[103]

The magistrate considered the situation to be hopeless and suggested that European farms should be exchanged for land in the Transkei. The drought was longer and harder in southern Namibia than in any other part of the country.

The seasonal distribution of rain was also of significance. The pattern of rainfall usually meant that stock in Namibia was at its best during the months of September and October, when stock in the Union was in poor condition. It was one of the few ways in which stock from the territory were able to compete in the Union markets,

however the drought meant that by 1929 the stock tended to be of poorer quality than that of their competitors in the Union and unsaleable.[104]

The drought dashed the optimistic predictions of earlier officials. Trains bringing farmers and stock from the Union were banned from unloading south of Rehoboth in an attempt to protect the remaining natural resources. Magistrates reported drops in sales, despite rising prices because the quality of farmers stock had deteriorated due to the difficulties in finding sufficient food and water. The magistrate at Warmbad drew a pessimistic picture of the prospects for his district, pointing out that:

> Warmbad has not in years produced a single farmer of means.[105]

The state would be forced to intervene to prevent the farmers' flocks being totally wiped out by the drought. In 1929, five of the six districts of southern Namibia were officially declared 'drought-stricken'. The declaration triggered the establishment of special rail rates to allow stock to be railed cheaply to the Union to find grazing or for lucerne to be bought in to feed animals where the pasture had been virtually exhausted. The poor condition of stock had a decimating impact on the local economy. In 1928 farmers in Keetmanshoop had been able to export 20,612 small stock to the Union, but in the following year only 1,298 could be exported.[106] By the end of 1930 the magistrate of the sixth district in the South, Gibeon, was warning that:

> ... unless we get good rains within a month or two the majority of stock owners will be doomed to a state of poverty and starvation.[107]

The intensity of the drought was caused by the fact that the region experienced a series of consecutive years of poor rainfall. Farmers had mechanisms to allow them to cope with a poor rainy season. Sheep farmers could kill their lambs and save their ewes, for instance. However the strategy would only work if a poor season was followed by a normal one which allowed the ewes to recover. A three year

long drought would be particularly serious because it would not only damage the productive capacity of a flock, but also its reproductive capacity. Farmers who had capital could hire alternative grazing on Crown Land and travel by trek or train in search of grazing. However consistent drought created an intolerable strain on both the environment and the financial reserves of the farmer.

The magistrate at Gibeon reported that in 1930 over 15,000 small stock and 300 large stock trekked beyond the boundaries of the district in search of food and water.[108] In Maltahohe 14 farmers hired grazing on other farms at the rate of 4s. to 10s. for every 100 small stock per month, a considerable drain on their financial resources with few sales to replenish them.[109] The purchasers of some farms claimed that they were so dry that they spent more time off than on them. The purchaser of 'Wellenberg' claimed that for eight years (from 1925 onwards) he had not stayed on the farm, but had lived on neighbouring farms, as his was too arid.[110] Such farmers must have questioned the wisdom of their purchases as they ran out of capital and hope. Farmers who were still determined to save some of their stock went so far as seeking work as farm labourers on the more lushious farms in exchange for the right to bring their stock to graze on the farm. The charitable efforts of some farmers to help their colleagues was, however, reported to be resulting in overstocking and escalating consumption of the remaining veld. The lack of farm fencing and tendency of wild game to flock to areas which received rain aggravated the environmental crisis. Once all the survival options available to farmers had been exhausted the stock losses were sudden and, sometimes, absolute.[111]

The impact of the drought was most severe upon those farmers who had taken official advice to concentrate on the production of wool from merino sheep. The sheep not only proved more vulnerable to drought, but wool prices even failed to adequately compensate for the costs of production:

> The merino farmer is the hardest hit. The prices he is able to realize for his work is inadequate to cover costs of production and freight charges to

> markets. Merino hamels or skins are practically unsaleable, and there is no demand for either the sheep or the skins.[112]

The cost of railing a sheep from Keetmanshoop to Johannesburg market in 1931 was 6s. without adding any of the additional expenses such as the auctioneer's commission, the dipping fee and the cost of getting the sheep from the farm to Keetmanshoop in the first place. The ground had become so barren within a hundred mile radius of Keetmanshoop that farmers from further afield were unable to reach the station with their stock at all.[113] The trek to the station could often be too much for weak stock. The journey for stock driven from 'Klipdam', for instance, to the nearest railway station (Ariamsvlei) took eight days with cattle and two weeks with sheep.[114]

The satisfaction of farmers that were able to export their stock would have been short-lived when they found that prices had been practically slashed in half. The Administrator confirmed the dire state of the Union stock markets in 1931:

> A farmer who can get now from 8s 6d to 10s for slaughter sheep which a couple of years ago would have realised 15s or more is fortunate.[115]

The collapse in prices meant that at times over 70 percent of the sale price of a sheep would be absorbed by the railway charge for getting it to the market. The unreliability of the market for Merino sheep contrasted with the steady price that could still be obtained for karakul pelts and acted as an incentive for farmers to convert their flocks. The member of the Legislative Assembly for southern Namibia (a farmer) considered that although karakuls had been bred in the country since 1907, the industry had only taken off in 1933.[116]

Farmers who sold their animals locally also faced depressed prices (as the purchasers then had to carry the cost of the transportation of the stock to the Union). The Farmers Association of the Kalk Plateau in Gibeon district complained bitterly that the prices had fallen so low that they were unable to meet the cost of

living. Mnr. Liebenberg of 'Auros', sold 400 sheep for £92, the equivalent of less than 5s per head.[117] The depletion of farmers' capital meant that they were forced to sell stock at whatever price they could obtain.

The poor quality of the drought-stricken stock was not the only reason that farmers found it difficult to sell their animals in the Union. The abandonment of the gold standard by the British in 1932 (whilst the Union remained tied to it up to 28th December, 1933) resulted in a collapse in the price of goods purchased in the Union for export as a 40 percent gap was created in the exchange rate.[118] The principal victims of this gap were the wool farmers who found their product virtually unsaleable on the Union market. The state was forced to intervene to provide support, once again, for the farming community as the distance from its main markets continued to undermine the competitiveness of its products.

SURVIVAL STRATEGIES AND STATE SUPPORT.

The administration provided export subsidies in an attempt to support production, but these were inadequate. The subsidy for wool, for example, was fixed at only 25 percent. The administration were also forced to recognize that the cost of freight was making exports unviable. A subsidy was introduced to help meet the railway fares, the rate being fixed at 10s per head for cattle and 2s per head for sheep.[119] Vacant Crown lands were made available to white farmers at 'reduced or nominal rates', the administration guaranteed promissory notes for the railage of stock to fresh pasture and lent boring machines to farmers to drill for water.[120]

The degree to which farmers were reliant upon state subsidies for survival led even some loyal officials to question the commercial viability of the farming sector. One magistrate confessed in 1933 that:

> I am pessimistic as far as the future of the present farmers of the Keetmanshoop, Aroab and Bethanie Districts are concerned.[121]

He pointed out that farmers were not only receiving poor prices for their produce, but were also unable to remain on the land that they were leasing or purchasing. The result was that many farmers had 'uitgeboer' (failed as farmers) and had only a few goats left. A second group:

> ... own nothing of their own, everything in their possession is the property of the Lands Department ... they are occupying government land and living off the flocks, in fact, the Administration is maintaining them.[122]

The farmers' investment capital could be calculated in terms of the number of animals that they were able to keep alive. The hire of additional grazing land at the cheapest available rate (2s.6d per hundred small stock per month) meant that farmers would have to sell at least 6 out of every 100 animals just to pay for their grazing - quite apart from the repayments due on loans or the payments due for their own farms.[123] The arithmetic did not make commercial sense, especially as the original purchase of the animals themselves had often be achieved through a loan. The scale of farmers arrears steadily expanded and they were forced to extend their credit or find ways of evading or reducing their debts.

The magistrate at Mariental claimed that many of those classified as 'in the employ of the settler' to help in building or making improvements to a farm were in fact white squatters evading the payment of grazing licence fees.[124] The evidence of police patrols added credence to this claim. The patrol covering the Gochas area reported, for example, that a Mr Maritz had grazed 16 large stock and 1,200 small stock on Zonderput for over six months without paying. The owner claimed that free grazing had been offered in return for help in making a garden and looking after the windmill, a claim that the police saw as incredulous.[125]

The freedom of movement enjoyed by white farmers and their stock gave them an advantage over black pastoralists, but also contained dangers. News of rainfall would lead farmers to concentrate in a particular locality with their stock putting excessive strain on the available resources and facilitating the dissemination of

diseases:

> Farmers flocked in hundreds to snatch up the available grazing in other parts, with the result that the congestion was so great that even the water supply failed... The indiscriminate trekking has virtually infected the whole of the South with scab.[126]

The only major effort to control the movement of farmers and their stock was linked to the vetinary campaign to control the spread of diseases.

The threat of disease could lead the authorities to forbid the movement of stock from one district to another or even to the restriction of a farmer's stock to his farm. Mnr. F.J. van der Merwe's attempts to save his stock by trekking into the Kalahari were thwarted five times during the drought because of the administration's fears that the animals might be infected by an outbreak of foot and mouth disease which had taken place in Bechuanaland.[127] An outbreak of foot and mouth disease at Gobabis led to the closure of the entire border between Namibia and the Union from 3rd October, 1934 (although a concession was made that allowed small stock from southern Namibia to continue to be exported) and the restrictions on movement not entirely removed until September, 1935.[128]

The dipping of stock was a prerequisite for the movement of animals in an infected area, but could lead to heavy losses amongst weak animals. Mr W.A. van Vreden claimed that he had lost 500 of his 1,700 sheep during a dipping operation by police in Bethany district.[129] The cost in terms of delay and stock deaths could be high, whilst the financial cost of paying for the dipping added to the obstacles facing poorer farmers trying to move their stock.

The extreme mobility of the early farmers is evident from statements made to the South West Africa Commission in 1934. 'Schonau' in Warmbad district had been obtained by Mr A.G. Viviers in July, 1921, but within two months the water had dried up and Viviers was forced to buy water from his neighbour and pay 5s. per month for every hundred small stock that he watered there. The next year he left

the farm with his stock and trekked around the district only returning in September, 1923. Once again the water on the farm failed and he had to water his animals on two neighbouring farms and pay for the privilege. In May, 1924 Viviers left again and trekked to Aroab only returning at the end of November. Viviers was able to spend both 1925 and 1926 on 'Schonau', but in 1927 he moved into the Bondelswarts reserve and stayed there until April, 1928 paying 2s.6d for the use of water and grazing within the reserve. Viviers was able to stay on his farm for the next couple of years by hiring additional grazing land as needed from his neighbours, but in September, 1930 he was forced to move once again - this time south into Namaqualand. Viviers returned at the end of the year and managed to hire some Crown Land for six months, before returning once again to his farm. After three months Viviers was trekking again, spending one month with a grazing licence on another farm and moving between his farm and Namaqualand.[130]

The frequent and repetitive moves made by Viviers suggest a seasonal migration with the farm only being adequate during the 'rainy' months around Christmas. Schonau was a large farm (11,819 hectares in extent), yet Viviers was forced to lead a highly mobile lifestyle. The suspension of the settlement programme in 1931 partly reflected the difficulties of selling farms during the drought, but also demonstrated the administration's awareness of the importance of keeping land available to those whose own water and grazing resources were exhausted. The administration sought to maximise the amount of Crown Land available as 'reserve' land during the drought and thus prevent the bunching of farmers and stock.

No farms were given to settlers during the period 1931-1934, and one of the recommendations of the Report of the Land Settlement Commission in 1935 was that blocks of farms should be kept vacant as a permanent reserve to be used by white farmers in times of drought. The movement of stock could make the difference between their death and survival. The magistrate of Warmbad claimed that only farmers who had moved across the border into Namaqualand had been able to save their stock in any significant numbers.[131] However not all farmers were willing or able to move such great distances. Farmers at Stamprietfontein

complained that the exodus of men with their animals left women vulnerable on the farms:

> In the South the men have to trek with their stock. The women sit alone on the farms and have no means of transport whatsoever at their disposal. Danger and hunger lurk at their door [My translation].[132]

Not all women complied with this image. Ms. G. Steenkamp trekked south with her stock, but due to an outbreak of 'Brandsiekte' [Scab] was forced to dip her animals three times before she was allowed to cross into Namaqualand.[133] The stock of other farmers were simply too weak to endure the long journey, but the majority of those that stayed were reduced to total dependence upon the state.

PROBLEMS AND PRIORITIES FOR RECOVERY.

Whilst black stockowners faced regulatory obstacles to movement many white farmers faced financial barriers. Wealthier farmers were able to transport their entire flocks by train to areas with better pasture, but the costs were prohibitive to the majority of farmers in southern Namibia. One farmer faced a bill of £89 10s.3d for sending his sheep from Grunau to Mariental.[134] The higher concentration of poorer white farmers in southern Namibia and length of the drought in the region meant that its impact was severe. The magistrate at Warmbad estimated that 80 percent of the white farmers in his district had been ruined by the end of 1933, 60 percent of them were actually relying on pauper's rations issued by the police. Mr W.A. Kotze of 'Fettkluft Suid' in the district claimed to have lost 1,400 out of his flock of 1,700 sheep and Mr B.J. Van Der Hoover of 'Swarthoek' was left with just 100 Merino sheep from his original flocks of 2,055[135]. Losses of eighty or ninety percent were typical amongst farmers who had been unable to move their stock in time. The local magistrate drew a picture of extreme poverty:

> If it hadn't been for the clothing and material sent from the Union a large number of the European Population would have been absolutely naked today

> and the children would not have been in a position to attend school, owing to lack of clothing.[136]

The District Surgeon in Warmbad reported that the diet of white settlers had deteriorated to such an extent due to poverty that many cases of scurvy were being diagnosed.[137] A senior official in the administration provided an explanation for evidence of malnutrition amongst the white population:

> The people in the South had no ready cash, they had no credit at the stores; vegetable were absolutely unobtainable, and even their stock was absolutely uneatable, and the people were glad to get a little mealie meal.[138]

The resurrection of white farmers reduced to the status of paupers would only be possible if the state were to provide the funds necessary to help the impoverished farmers replace their lost animals.

The Administrator toured the drought-stricken farming regions and faced a barrage of protest that focused on two issues. One was the encouragement that had been given by the administration to settlers to farm with merino sheep and the second the strictness with which the administration continued to demand the repayment of debts during the drought. The farmers argued that they spent considerable amounts of their own money developing their farms and that the investments they made, for example, in sinking boreholes, were financially risky and should be treated with sympathy. An indication of the costs involved can be gained by looking in some detail at the expense incurred in developing a single farm.

Mr. A. Hite provided the South West Africa Commission with a summary of the work he had carried out on his farm, 'Bossis'. The first priority had been the provision of a permanent water supply. Hite had sunk five boreholes, four were dry failures, but had still cost £299 to drill. The fifth had struck water at a depth of 150 feet and had cost a further £90. The problem was that the successful borehole was tightly located in a corner of the farm with limited access to grazing. Hite claimed

that in total he had spent £612 in opening up water on the farm, but had been unable to find water of sufficient quality or quantity to sustain his animals throughout the year. Every year he was forced to trek with his animals to seek water and grazing (which he had to hire). Two reservoirs and a dam were constructed on the farm in an additional attempt to secure water throughout the year. The construction of these cost a further £114. 10s. Pumping machinery had to be provided for the borehole and this cost £178. 15s. The building work on the farm continued with the construction of a four room farmhouse, five outhouses, and a stone kraal and dipping tank for the animals. The total amount that Hite claimed to have spent on his farm was £1,185. 5s.[139]

The extent to which construction and stock purchases were paid for by advances and loans meant that many farmers had substantial debts in addition to their annual instalments towards the purchase price of the farm. Mr. Kuhn of 'Zandvliet' calculated that he was obliged to make repayments to the administration amounting to £108 per year.[140] Yet like black farmers the wealth of white farmers at this time was often based on the capital assets represented by their livestock and the income that they could derive from this.
Livestock losses removed the ability of farmers to repay their debts.

Mr. J.C. Oberholzer of 'Eenzaamheid' in Aroab district had built up a flock of about 1,500 sheep with an advance from the administration. The drought left him with just 28 straggly sheep and no prospect of being able to repay the original loan with which he had purchased his stock.[141] The flocks of many of the farmers had been purchased or built up on the basis on loans from the administration.[142] The extension of generous lines of credit had provided the new settlers with a distinct advantage over their black rivals. When the drought wiped out many of the animals which had been bought with borrowed money, farmers expected the administration to provide them once again with the financial means to acquire stock. A meeting of the farmers of Maltahohe district in 1934 unanimously supported a resolution calling on the administration to provide further loans of £200 - £500 to help them replace the stock that they had lost during the drought.[143] After the drought a

supplementary advance of £60 was made to every farmer to help them buy replacement stock.[144]

One of the greatest topics of complaints for farmers was the cost and frustration of drilling for water. A boring machine would cost £6 per day to hire with the farmer also having to pay for the petrol that was used. The machine could, on average, drill 15-16 feet per day.[145] Sixteen days work on one farm cost the farmer £180, of which £84 was for petrol.[146] Whilst the cost involved might be considerable there was no guarantee that the borehole would produce sufficient or suitable water. One farmer complained:

> I have sunk no less than 26 wells on the farm and have only obtained any water from the last, but the water is insufficient for my purposes [My translation].[147]

The farmer was left with more debts than water, owing £1,610 to the Land Bank plus substantial rent arrears. Farmers were forced to make such risky investments in drilling extra bore holes for two reasons. Firstly, it was stated that farms were only sold once a secure source of water had been located, but the Irrigation Department was judged to have "drilled indiscriminately". The consequence was that there was a lack of foresight in the sinking of boreholes with the Department:

> ... in numerous cases actually drilling on or near the boundary or in the corner of the farm, so that the main portion of the farm could not be used for grazing.[148]

Secondly a farm could only be utilised efficiently if stock could be constantly moved from one part to another to allow the pasture time to recover. The lack of sufficient watering points would result in overcrowding and environmental deterioration of the veld.

The value that had been placed upon farms presented another source of financial

difficulty to farmers. The value provided the basis upon which the size of the annual repayments was calculated. The evidence of farmers to the Land Settlement Commission consistently claimed that their farms were worth no more than 3d-6d per hectare. The values placed upon farms were far higher than this. 'Spes Bona' in Warmbad district was valued at £942 - a value of almost 2s. (1s.11d) per hectare.[149]

The Commission criticised the inconsistency of farm valuations and the inflated demands that these placed upon many farmers:

> The values assigned to the farms are inexplicable, and it also appears that these values increased in proportion to the increase of the demand, for it is found that farms of good quality near a town were allotted half as cheaply as farms more remote, of inferior quality and allotted at a later date.[150]

The Commission's recommendation was that all the farms in the southern districts (south of Rehoboth and Gobabis) should be revalued and priced in the range of 3d to 6d per hectare.[151]

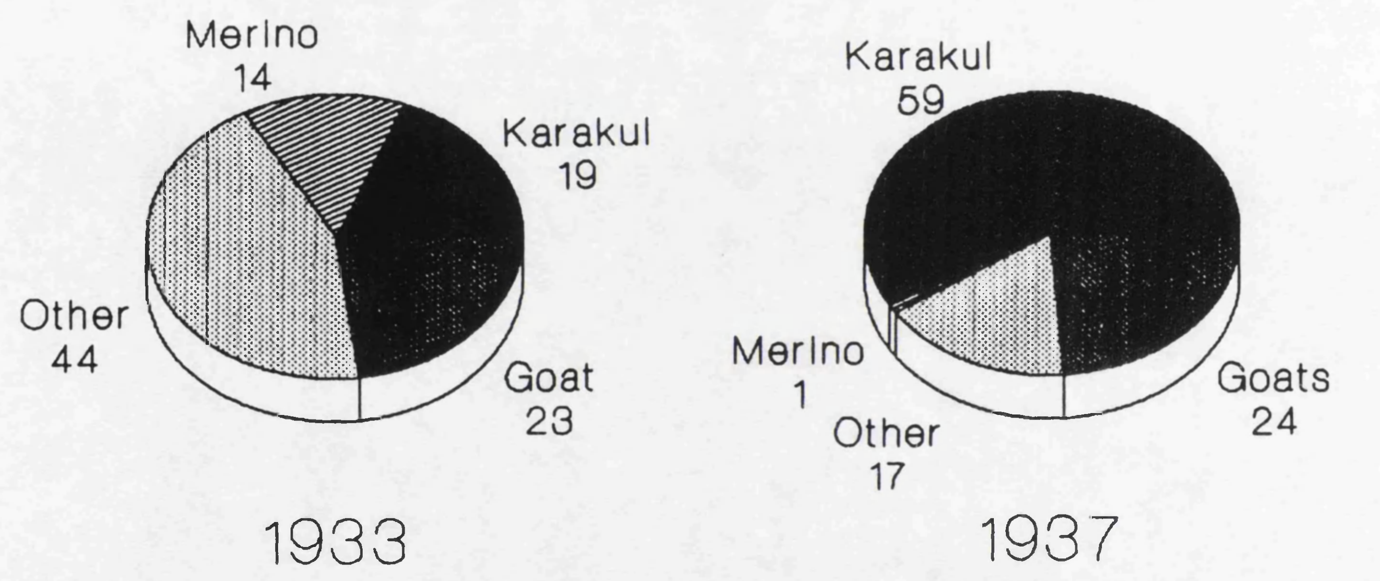
The revaluation of properties was supplemented by a package of further recovery measures that cost the administration an additional £144,733. The charges made by the Irrigation Department for the sinking of boreholes was reduced and the administration agreed to write off outstanding debts for wells that had failed to reach water. Advance payments of up to £400 were made to farmers to allow them to replace their lost stock ie. sufficient to purchase a flock of 700-800 sheep.[152] Proclamation 205 of 1932 suspended the payment of arrears of interest and rent which had previously had to be paid off as a precondition to the granting of a Freehold Title.[153] The Settlers Relief Ordinance (No. 12 of 1935) wrote off rent and interest due on farms for the period 1932-1934 and converted any payments that had been made into credits. A breakdown of the figures for Gibeon district put these measures into context. Whilst rent and interest payments of £2,658 had been made over the period 1932-1934, debts of £10,483 remained. A further £2,649 in

charges for the drilling of boreholes was written off and £13,737 due as arrears dating from before 1932 placed in a suspense account.[154] The administration also agreed to the remission of all rent due for the first five years of a lease and a further remission of rent to cover the period 1932-1934. The writing off of payments due for a period of up to eight years was a substantial concession, but was linked to a radical revision of the value of farms. The value placed on improvements and buildings on farms dating from the German period was reduced by 50 percent and the land value revised.[155] The value of 'Nimerrust' in Aroab district, for instance, was altered from 9d to 6d per hectare.[156] The greatest assistance to the farmers came however from an economic recovery that took place from 1935, an economic recovery which, in southern Namibia, was largely linked to the expansion of the karakul industry.

THE CONVERSION TO KARAKUL.

Drought and depression had demonstrated the vulnerability of merino sheep and the inability of the territory to compete with wool producers in other countries. The period following the drought saw an emphasis on specialisation and breeding amongst sheep flocks. Farmers of southern Namibia switched rapidly and extensively to karakul farming.[157] The novel prosperity that the white farming community experienced at the end of the thirties was particularly important as it provided them with the means to secure alternative sources of farm labour. The growing concern with the quality of livestock was followed by a second wave of land settlement. The transformation of the composition of small stock flocks in the South can be illustrated by a simple comparison of the small stock on

Fig. 5 FLOCK COMPOSITION (1933 & 1937) White stockowners in Gibeon District.



white farms in Gibeon district in the years 1933 and 1937 (Figure 5).[158] Whilst in 1933 karakul sheep made up only 19 percent of farmers' flocks, within five years this had increased to 59 percent and the majority of small stock in the district were karakuls. The pattern was replicated in other districts in the South. Of the 165,406 small stock on farms in Maltahohe district in 1935, 91,403 (55 percent) were karakul and only one of the seventy farms in the district did not have a flock of karakul sheep.[159]

The incentive for the massive increase in the size of the territory's karakul flock was the price that could be obtained for karakul pelts. The average price in 1935 was 18s. 7d. for a young lambs pelt, and a karakul ewe would produce several. Exports of karakul skins to the Union had stood at 97,000 in 1931, by 1935 this had risen to 514,000. The following year the figure had jumped by over 300,000 to reach 814,561 (see Figure 6). The export of karakul skins gave a massive boost to farmers' incomes and particularly benefited those who had invested in karakul flocks.[160] In contrast the prices obtained for other sheep in Warmbad district in 1936 ranged from 10s. to 15s.[161]

The building up of a karakul flock was an expensive business, with a karakul ram for breeding purposes costing £15 in 1934.[162] However, many of the farmers were able to use the stock advances provided by the administration to invest in karakul breeding stock. Mr van der Merwe of 'Quarzriff'(sic), for example, obtained an advance to buy 250 karakul ewes.[163] The magistrate in Warmbad recommended advances for restocking on 24 farms in his district in 1934 alone.[164] The advances played a major role in metamorphosising virtually destitute farmers into karakul farmers, and widening the chasm of marketing opportunity that existed between white and black stockowners.

The fact that large amounts of debt had to be written off following the drought provoked severe criticism of the extravagant policies pursued by the administration. It responded by suspending the payment of any further advances for stock, housing or

Fig. 6: EXPORTS OF KARAKUL PELTS 1924-1955

Thousands

3000
2500
2000
1500
1000
500
0

1924 1927 1930 1933 1936 1939 1942 1945 1948 1951 1954

Karakul Pelts

other extraordinary expenses. The burden for the continuing development of the farming sector was to be placed firmly on the shoulders of the individual farmer. The land settlement scheme was resurrected and new farms allotted once again in 1936, however a stricter policy was now enforced.

WORLD WAR TWO AND THE SECOND WAVE OF LAND SETTLEMENT.

The karakul boom fuelled the revival of the land settlement programme, although in some districts there was already little suitable land still available. As early as 1937 the magistrate at Warmbad felt that:

> Every farm of any worth in the District is now fully occupied.[165]

World War Two led to a virtual halt in the land settlement programme for five years with only 23 farms being allocated during the period 1941-1945. A significant improvement in the price obtained for karakul pelts during the war encouraged increases in flock size and hence the demand for labour. The recruitment of black workers for military purposes squeezed the labour force available for the farms and seems likely to have improved the bargaining position of those that remained. The five-year period immediately after World War Two (1945-1949) saw more farm land given to settlers than had been given out in the previous fifteen year period. Farm land covering an area of 5.4 million hectares was allocated in the period 1950-1954, more than in any other five year period other than 1920-1924.[166] The pace and extent of the land appropriation were so severe that by 1952 the Land and Agricultural Bank were warning that farmers who had not adopted a system of paddocks nor kept their flocks at a sustainable size could no longer rely on being able to trek to fresh pasture on vacant land when the resources available on the farm became inadequate. Farms set aside in the past as reserve grazing areas had largely been given out to new settlers and even marginal land bordering the Kalahari Desert to the east and Namib Desert to the west had been given to settlers.[167]

The second wave of settlement at the end of World War Two took place when 345 returning soldiers and 184 others were provided with farms under the Rehabilitation and Land Settlement Scheme and 338 new farms settled (Figure 7).[168] One of the aims of the second wave of land settlement was the abolition of the strata of white farmers who utilised and, it was alleged, manipulated the system of grazing licences to their advantage. Gibeon district, for instance, contained 397 'holdings' in 1946 of which 122 were still only hired.[169] The constant movement of some farmers around Crown Land made it difficult for the police to keep a check on their stock and it was alleged that:

> A favourite way of getting round the Administration is for one man to take out a grazing licence for a few hundred head of stock and then to allow others to graze stock on the same farm ... When the patrols arrive at the farm one or two flocks are seen while the other flock is kept at some remote outpost.[170]

The karakul boom, which was to earn it the name 'black gold', had two major consequences. It led to a rapid increase in small stock numbers and a growing demand for black farm labourers (and a renewed concern about the 'labour shortage').[171] The power of the farming lobby was at its height during World War Two, reflecting the economic significance of the sector. Only 15 percent of Namibia's export earnings in 1925 had come from agriculture, but by 1945 it contributed 75.4 percent of the total.[172] The massive increase in the numbers of small stock on the land was accelerated by farmers seeking to gain the maximum benefit from the high prices for karakul pelts. The result was overstocking on some farms and a more widespread and vigorous attempt to exclude workers' stock from competing for the precious grazing on their farms. The distribution of land to returning soldiers (and estimates that a further 550 farms would be created) renewed concerns about labour shortages and it was speculated that an additional 3,850 workers would be needed.[173]

Fig. 7: LAND ALIENATION, 1920-1954.
Land sold to settlers (hectares)

Million hectares

7
6
5
4
3
2
1
0

1920 1925 1930 1935 1940 1945 1950

New farms created

The number of small stock in Maltahohe district, for example, rose continuously from a total of 98,119 in 1933 to 176,324 in 1935 and 251,169 by 1938.[174] A brief drought in 1941 revealed the extent to which farmers had sought to utilise every part of their farm and failed to leave any reserve grazing. The Land Bank noted:

> ... the tendency of farmers generally ...to increase the size of their holdings rather than to reduce the numbers of their stock.[175]

The study of white pastoral farmers in southern Namibia shows in this, as in many other instances, that their farming practices bore a closer parallel to those of their black counterparts than they would have cared to admit.

DROUGHT AND RECOVERY.

The serious and lengthy drought of 1945-1946 was even more devastating because of the closer occupation of ground. The drought thus had a magnified impact, forcing the mass movement of stock to the east and south into Namaqualand. A total of 229,669 small stock were moved into the Karoo districts of the Union (virtually the equivalent of the whole small stock population of Warmbad district) and there was massive internal movements of livestock.[176] However it was estimated that, despite this mobility, nearly 13 percent of all large stock and a quarter of all small stock within the Police Zone died during the drought.[177] Some farmers who had been unable to find any alternative grazing land were reported to have been forced to sell their entire flocks once the grazing on their own farms became exhausted.[178]

The administration once again responded to the heavy livestock losses suffered by white farmers with the provision of generous advances to assist in the purchase of new animals. A total of £200,000 was set aside for the scheme and a limit of

£1,000 was set on individual advances. By the end of March, 1949 £170,165 had been awarded as grants and used to purchase 55,700 small stock and 1,000 head of large stock.[179] The scheme was aimed at farmers who had completed the payments on their farms, whilst those still holding farms under the Land Settlement Scheme received additional assistance.[180]

The drought of 1945-1946 finally seemed to convince farmers that it was better to invest in quality, rather than quantity of stock. By the end of 1949 the farmers of Maltahohe had reduced their small stock to just 118,960, but 83 percent of these animals were high grade karakul sheep.[181] The importance of southern Namibia to the territory's karakul industry was demonstrated by the fact that whilst the six districts contained only 3.7 percent of Namibia's large stock, they accommodated 42.6 percent of its karakul sheep.[182] The karakul industry itself had taken a commanding position in the agricultural economy. Whilst in 1936 karakul pelts contributed 39 percent of the value of all agricultural production, by 1946 over 56 percent of the total value came from karakul pelts. The value of the next largest category, cattle exports, was less than a third that of the karakuls.[183]

The policy was to produce select flocks of highly marketable animals in preference to large flocks of low-grade sheep that would be unsaleable on the competitive South African markets. The danger that cross-breeding would reduce the quality of a karakul flock provided a powerful new motive for farmers to exclude or isolate their workers stock. Specialisation in karakul farming once again served to exclude black pastoralists who were effectively denied access to karakul stud stock. Werner cites the fact that as late as 1945 when there were nearly two and a half million karakul sheep in the territory, virtually none could be found in a black reserve.[184]

Stock numbers fell (the peak for karakul was reached in 1943), yet the profits to be gained from the trade in karakul skins were still blamed for environmental vandalism. It was said that they tempted:

> ... the speculative and selfish farmer to enrich himself by overstocking his

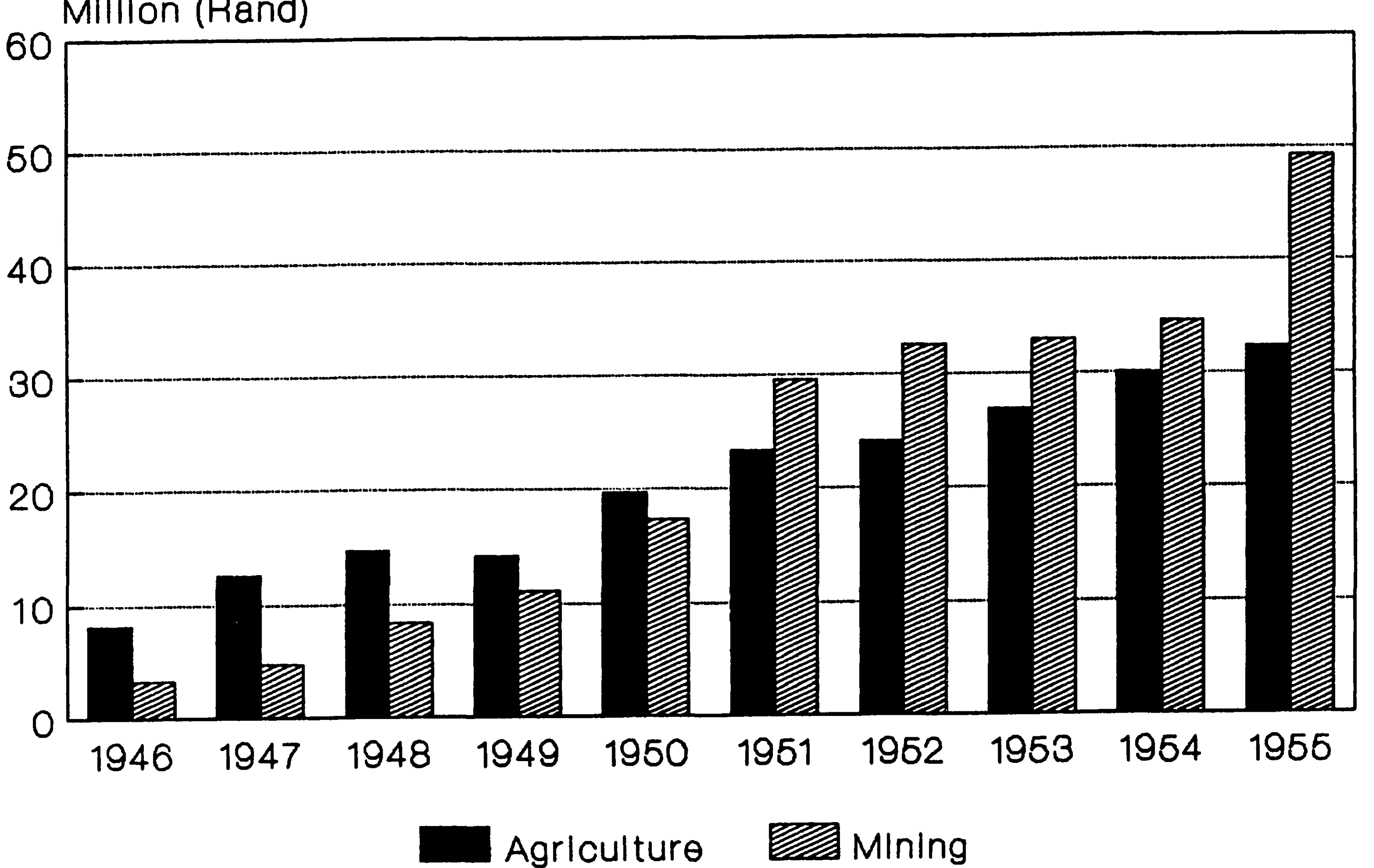
land to a degree which can scarcely be comprehended. This and not the karakul, has created desert islands far beyond the reach of the actual desert.[185]

The allegation was that some farmers were more interested in making quick profits which they could invest in other sectors such as mining, rather than in farming in a sustainable fashion. Proclamation No. 339 of 1948 activated a law that new settlers would have to satisfy a twelve month 'probationary' period, during which they would have to demonstrate their commitment to develop the farm and ability to make it a successful commercial enterprise. The 'Character System' as it became known was not found in neighbouring South Africa.

A danger of concentrating on the initial years of the South African land settlement scheme in Namibia is that one might underestimate the significance of the second wave of land settlement that followed World War Two (Figure 7). In 1946 nearly 5,700,000 hectares were still being used under annual grazing licences by 740 licensees. During the period 1946-1950 two out of every seven small stock were still grazing on government land for temporary periods or even the whole year and paying grazing fees.[186] The existence of this land provided reserve grazing for those who had been allocated land, but also maintained a floating population of farmers who were technically 'landless'.

The second period of rapid expansion in the white commercial farming sector did not prevent agriculture being overtaken as the largest source of revenue within the primary sector. Agriculture was deposed by the resurgence of the mining industry (Figure 8).[187] State support for the sector was less extravagant than in earlier days, yet more interventionist. Mechanisms continued to exist to ensure the survival and commercial development of white farmers. The 1952/53 financial year, for instance, saw a total of £127,960 provided to farmers for the purchase of breeding stock and a further £100,000 set aside to provide advances of up to £600 for farmers who

FIG. 8: COMPARATIVE CONTRIBUTION TO GDP
Agriculture and Mining, 1946-1955



were hiring grazing from private land owners for over a year.[188] The significant difference was that loans and advances were now often linked to a condition that farmers should take advice from the administration (such as the Soil Conservation Department) on ways of improving their farming techniques. The white farming community of southern Namibia, whose position had seemed so precarious in the early 1930s, had by 1955 established itself as specialist karakul producers and considerably widened the economic gap between themselves and black pastoralists.

CONCLUSION.

The significance of the changing fortunes of the white farming community in the context of southern Namibia was twofold. Firstly, the privileged access of the community to state subsidies and advances helped to facilitate and consolidate white land settlement at the expense of a possible black pastoral alternative. The rate of land alienation was, however, less significant than the effectiveness of white occupation and policing of land. The overcrowding of the reserves meant that the pastoral alternative appeared increasingly unrealistic to young black stockowners. Access to land became dependent upon a labour agreement with a white farmer. After 1935 the growth of the karakul industry and more concentrated settlement of the land meant that these farmers were increasingly reluctant to accommodate workers stock in any significant numbers.

The second point is that a significant shift in the basis of labour relations can be associated with the capitalisation of farms after 1935. It became possible to replace informal labour tenancy arrangements with single contract workers. The simplicity of this model was, however, complicated by three factors. One, the demand for farm labour fluctuated and reflected the changing rate of land settlement at a national and local level. Two, the existence of large numbers of farmers who occupied land on temporary licences, rather than owning or leasing it maintained a degree of internal differentiation within the farming community. The range was reflected in considerable variations in the scale and form of payment that they were able to offer. Finally the ebb and flow of the small stock farmer's fortunes were

weighed against those of other sections of the economy with which ultimately the farmer had to compete for labour. The patterns of change within the farm labour market will provide the focus of the final two chapters.

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32. Report 9th July, 1915 - 31st March, 1916. Administrator's Report to Gen. Botha. ADM 137 - 6

33. 'German Repatriates from Maltahohe District' Memo. Acting Magistrate. 23rd February, 1920. LMA 3/1/20 - 3/31/20.

34. SWAP to Mag. Malt. 'Policing of the Protectorate' LMA 3/1/7 - 54

35. The application of high tariff barriers had effectively inhibited the development of legal trading links between Namibia and South Africa, whilst stimulating trade with Germany. In 1912, despite its geographical proximity, only 12.2 % of imports to the territory came from South Africa, whilst 81.37% came from Germany. Administrator, SWA. to L. Botha, PM. Cape Town. 21st January, 1918. ADM 109 - 3370/3. 'The farmers in this territory may be divided into three classes viz. the gentleman farmer, the small company or syndicate farmer, and the soldier or working class type of man. The two former have developed their holdings through imported capital or remittances from Germany, and have been accustomed to live on a scale higher than any income they derived from farming, consequently these people have keenly felt the effects of the war, and the majority are on the verge of bankruptcy'. AR LoN. 1918. p10. UG 34 - '19

36. AR 1916 ADM 106 - 3370. p37.

37. Detached Assistant Mag. Maltahohe to Sec. Prot. 11th January, 1917

38. Report 9th July, 1915 - 31st March, 1916. Administrator's Report to Gen. Botha. p39-44. ADM 137 - 6

39. For example, Hermann Blume paid £2 to graze his animals on 'Osis' for four months, (10/- a month). J.H. van der Merwe paid 12/-6d to graze his animals on 'Naukluft' during the month of May, in the same year1916. Memo. Assist. Mil. Mag. Malt. 6th June, 1916. LMA 3/1/10 - 126

40. AR 1916. ADM 106 - 3370 p37.

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42. Census of South West Africa, 1921. p18-20

43. Return of Leases and Grazing Licences issued during the year 1918. ADM 139 - 3370/3

44. AR Warmbad. 1917. ADM 106 - 3370/2

45. AR 1916. p36. ADM 106 - 3370.

46. Public Notice from Mil. Mag. Warmbad. 15th March, 1918. LKW 3/1/2 - 2/18/1921

47. Petition from Gibeon Farmers Associations to Viscount Buxton. 4th October, 1919. ADM 132 - 6293/7

48. Petition from Gibeon Farmers Associations to Viscount Buxton. 4th October, 1919. ADM 132 - 6293/7

49. Mr Schneider arrived 27th October, 1919 to establish the Board in Windhoek. 'Landnedersetting in Suidwes-Afrika' 10th December, 1960. LAN 34 - 61.

50. Register of Residents and Stock. Warmbad District. 1919. LKW 5/1/4

51. The six richest farmers in the District were - A. Klein (Lovedale) - 670 large stock + 1,800 small stock, P. Le Riche (Stinkdoorn) 600 + 4,500, J. Louw (Springputz) 618 + 2,890, G.H. Oberholzer (Kudung) 620 + 3,600, F. Ukena (Hudab) 692 + 2,926, and J.H. Visser (Zandfontein) 500 + 3,000. Register of Residents and Stock. Warmbad District. 1919. LKW 5/1/4

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83. The two farms were Nomtsas and Chamchawib. Chamchawib had a flock of 350, whilst Nomtsas had massive flocks of around 10,000. AR. Maltahohe. 29th December, 1923. LMA 3/1/39.

84. Report of the Land Settlement Commission. 1935. p7.

85. The three farms were Gamis, Haruchas and Huams. The total number of small stock in the District was 83,002 of which 4,124 were Karakul sheep. The total number of cattle in the District was 8.574. Farm Census. 1924. AGV 186 - VS 8/16

86. 'The Karakul Industry' South West Africa Handbook. 1962. p53.

87. The number of small stock in the District was 92,248 of which 10,332 were Karakul sheep. The number of large stock in the District had dropped to 5,689. Farm Census. 1925. AGV 189 - VS 8/16

88. Ons Vriend 12th November, 1925.

89. 'Livestock and Agricultural Census. Gibeon. 1925' AGV 189 VS 8/6.

90. AR LoN 1926 UG 22 - '27 p68.

91. Annotation on Mag. Warmbad to Sec. 1st November, 1926. SWA. SWAA - A26. vol. 2

92. Report of the Farm Industry Commission. 1927. p4.

93. Questionnaire - J.C. Johannesson. 22nd October, 1926. Farming Industry Commission. KFI 1.

94. Livestock and Agricultural Census. 1924. AGV 189 - VS 8/2.

95. Report of the Farming Industry Commission. 1927. p7.

96. Report of the Farming Industry Commission. 1927. p18.

97. Evidence of H.P. Smit to South West Africa Commission. 4th September, 1935. p1521. KSW 3 - vol. 25.

98. Evidence of H.P. Smit to South West Africa Commission. 4th September, 1935. p1521. KSW 3 - vol. 25.

99. Report of the Land Settlement Commission. 1935. p6.

100. AR Land and Agricultural Bank of South West Africa for the year ending 31st December, 1924. AP 5/2/1/1. p10.

101. AR Keetmanshoop. 1927. 19th January, 1928 LKE 3/1/42 - 17/11

102. AR. Bethanie. 1929. LAR (sic) 9 - 3/7

103. AR. District of Warmbad. 1927. Mag. Warmbad. LKW 3/1/3 - 3/5.

104. AR LoN 1929 UG 23 - '30 p28.

105. AR LoN 1927 UG 31 - '28 p16.

106. AR Keetmanshoop. 1929. 7th January, 1930. LKE 3/1/42 - 17/11/2

107. AR. SWAP. Gibeon. 1930. 22nd December, 1930. LMG 3/1/49 - 17/8/2/2

108. AR. SWAP. Gibeon. 1930. 22nd December, 1930. LMG 3/1/49 - 17/8/2/2

109. AR Maltahohe. 1930. LMA 3/1/48 - 17/8/2

110. Landnedersettings-Kommissie. Kalkfontein. 21st July, 1934. KLS 1 vol. 1.

111. Economic Conditions. Mag. Maltahohe to Sec. SWA. LMA 3/1/48 - 17/8/2

112. AR Keetmanshoop. 1931. LKE 3/1/42 - 17/11/2/2

113. AR 1932. Keetmanshoop. LKE 3/1/42 - 17/11/2 part 2

114. Evidence of J.C. Johannesson. Aroab. 3rd August, 1934. Landnedersettings-Kommissie. KLS 1. vol.1

115. AR LoN 1931 UG 17 - '32 p22.

116. Evidence of C.J. Oberholzer to South West Africa Commission. p1938-1951.

117. Nota van die vergadering van die Kalk Plateau se Boere... 12th November, 1932. SWAA - A 353/23

118. Report of the Land and Agricultural Bank of South West Africa for the year ended 31st December, 1933. p1. AP 5/2/1/1

119. AR LoN 1932 p31.

120. Report of the Land and Agricultural Bank of South West Africa for the year ended 31st December, 1933. p1. AP 5/2/1/1

121. AR 1932. Keetmanshoop. 4th January, 1933. LKE 3/1/42 - 17/11/2 part 2

122. AR 1932. Keetmanshoop. 4th January, 1933. LKE 3/1/42 - 17/11/2 part 2

123. AR 1932. Keetmanshoop. 4th January, 1933. LKE 3/1/42 - 17/11/2 part 2

124. Mag. Mariental to SO. Lands Branch. 19th December, 1932. LAN 37 - 84. vol. 1.

125. List of Trespassers on Settlers Farms. Post Commander. SWAP. Gochas. 7th December, 1932. LAN 37 - 84. vol. 1

126. AR. 1933. Keetmanshoop. 8th January, 1934. LKE 3/1/42 - 17/11/2 pt.2

127. Evidence of F.J. Van Der Merwe. Kalkfontein, 20th July, 1934. Landnedersetting-Kommissie. KLS 1. vol.1.

128. Report of the Board of Management of the Land and Agricultural Bank of South West Africa for the year ended 31st December, 1934. AP 5/2/1/1 p1.

129. Evidence of W.A. Van Vreden. Landnedersettings-Kommissie. Kalkfontein. 20th July, 1934. See also Evidence of Mnr. R.A. Swiegers. Kalkfontein. 19th July, 1934. and Evidence of Mnr. G.J. Barnard. Keetmanshoop. 6th August, 1934.

130. Landnedersettings-Kommissie. Kalkfontein. 21st July, 1934. KLS 1 vol. 1.

131. AR. SWAP. Warmbad. 1933. LKW 3/1/3 - 3/5

132. "In die Suide moes die mans met hulle vee trek. Die vrouens sit alleen op die plase en het hoegenaamd geen vervoermiddel tot hulle beskikking nie. Gevaar en honger staan hulle voor die deur." Deputasie van Boere: Stamprietfontein. 24th May, 1933. SWAA - A353/25

133. Landnedersettings-Kommissie. Ariamsvlei. 17th July, 1934. KLS 1 vol. 1.

134. Drought in the Southern Districts. SWAA 1971 - A413/5 vol. 5.

135. Landnedersettings-Kommissie. Ariamsvlei. 16th July, 1934 and Kalkfontein. 19th July, 1934.KLS 1 vol.1

136. AR. Warmbad. 1934. 3rd January, 1934. LKW 3/1/3 - 3/5

137. Evidence of H.P. Smit to South West Africa Commission. p1523. KSW 3 - vol. 25.

138. Evidence of H.P. Smit to South West Africa Commission. P1547. KSW 3 - vol. 25.

139. A. Hite to Land Settlement Commission. 18th May, 1934. KLS 2 - Bethanie.

140. Kuhn to Land Settlement Commission. 20th June, 1934. KLS 2

141. Landnedersettings-Kommissie. Ariamsvlei. 17th July, 1934. KLS 1 vol. 1.

142. See for example. Evidence of A.J. Du Plooy, Kalkfontein, 20th July, 1934. Evidence of D.J.A. Brandt, Kalkfontein, 23rd July, 1934 and Evidence of C.M. Opperman. Jnr., Aroab, 3rd August, 1934. Landnedersettings-Kommissie. KLS 1. vol.1.

143. Publieke Vergadering van Boere gehou te Maltahohe. 18th August, 1934. KLS 2 - A 32/14 'Maltahohe'

144. South West Africa Commission, 1935. p37

145. Evidence of C.H.B. Oberholzer. Landnedersettings-Kommissie. Kalkfontein. 21st July, 1934.

146. Evidence of A.G. Viviers. Landnedersettings-Kommissie. Kalkfontein. 21st July, 1934.

147. Evidence of Mnr. P. Van Blerk. Landnedersettings-Kommissie. Ariamsvlei 18th July, 1934.

148. Report of the Land Settlement Commission. 1935. p5.

149. Evidence of C.J. Thirion. Ariamsvlei. 17th July, 1934 and Evidence of B.J. Le Roux. Kalkfontein. 19th July, 1934. Landnedersettings-Kommissie. KLS 1. vol. 1.

150. Report of the Land Settlement Commission. 1935. p5.

151. Report of the Land Settlement Commission. 1935. p10.

152. Evidence of H.P. Smit to South West Africa Commission. p1547. KSW 3 - vol. 25.

153. AR LoN. 1935. p27/28.

154. Write off of Boring Charges and Interest and Rent 1932/1934 under Settlers Relief Ordinance. 1935. SWAA 298 - A 32/14

155. AR LoN. 1935. p27/28.

156. Evidence of C.J. Thirion. Landnedersettings-Kommissie. Ariamsvlei. 17th July, 1934. KLS 1 vol. 1.

157. The productive life of a karakul ewe was eight years, during that time it could produce twelve lambs (three every two years) and then be sold for £2 (1955 prices). Half the lambs were killed at birth. Krogh, D. "Economic Aspects of the Karakul Industry in South West Africa" SAJE. Vol. 23 1955

158. The information for the Pie Charts was extracted from the relevant Annual Reports for the District. AR. Gibeon 1933 LMG 3/1/49 - 17/8/2/2 & AR Gibeon 1938 LMG 3/1/49 - 17/8/2/2

159. The Karakul flock at Niederhagen had grown to 1,820. Farm Census. 1935. Maltahohe. AGV 200 VS 13/1

160. AR LoN. 1935. p20.

161. AR. 1936. Warmbad. LKW 3/1/3 - 3/5.

162. Mag. Warmbad to Senior Officer (Lands Branch) 14th August, 1934. LAN 11 - 15 vol 3.

163. Land Inspector to Mag. Warmbad. 25th May, 1937. LAN 11 - 15 vol. 4.

164. Mag. Warmbad to Senior Officer (Lands Branch) 14th August, 1934. LAN 11 - 15 vol 3.

165. AR 1937. Warmbad. LKW 3/1/3 - 3/5

166. Schmokel, W. "The Myth of the White Farmer: Commercial Agriculture in Namibia, 1900-1983" IJAHS 18, 1 (1985)

167. AR Land and Agricultural Bank for the year ending 31st March, 1952. para 31.

168. Report of the South West Africa Native Labourers Commission. 1945-'48. Dr C.J. Lemmer. 3527-3529. p5.

169. 'Total area of farms owned, hired etc for year ending 31st August, 1946' KAP 1 AC6.

170. SWAP Warmbad to Mag. Warmbad. 16th November, 1936. LAN 38 - 84 vol. 2

171. Additional NC. to Mr McHugh. SWAA 2408 - A521/12.

172. United Nations. Documents relating to... 1947. p23.

173. Report of the South West Africa Native Labourers Commission. 1945-'48. Dr C.J. Lemmer. 3527-3529. p5.

174. AR. Maltahohe. 1933, AR. Maltahohe. 1935, AR. SWAP. Maltahohe. 1938. LMA 3/1/48 - 17/8/2.

175. Report of the ... Land and Agricultural Bank of South West Africa for the year ending 31st March, 1941. p1. AP 5/2/1/1

176. Report of the Long Term Agricultural Policy Commission. 1950. p 97 and Table VII.

177. It was estimated that 17.42 percent of farmers' small stock were lost during 1946 due to the drought, 3.37 percent from disease and 2.92 percent from various other causes (such as consumption by jackals), so total losses ran at 23.7 percent. Report of the Long Term Agricultural Policy Commission. 1950. p98. L 793.

178. AR Mariental. 1945. SWAA 912 - A 73/26 vol. 2

179. Annual Report of the Land and Agricultural Bank for the year ending 31st March, 1949. AP 5/2/1/1

180. Windhoek Advertiser. 20th March, 1948. KAP 1 - AC6.

181. AR. Maltahohe. 1949. LMA 3/1/55 - 17/14/2

182. Report of the Long Term Agricultural Policy Commission. Tables V and VIII. 1950. p98. L 793.

183. Table III Value of Agricultural Industry in Terms of Production. KAP 4.

184. Werner. W. *An Economic and Social History of the Herero of Namibia, 1915-1946.* Ph.D. 1989. p322.

185. Report of the Long Term Agricultural Policy Commission. 1950. p98. L 793.

186. Report of the Long Term Agricultural Policy Commission. 1950. p60.

187. Statistics taken from Report of the Commission of Enquiry into South West Africa Affairs, 1962-1963. Table CVI. p317

188. AR Land and Agricultural Bank for the period ending 31st March, 1953. para24-26. AP 5/2/1/1.

CHAPTER FIVE: THE DYNAMICS OF THE FARM LABOUR SYSTEM, 1915-1925.

INTRODUCTION.

The negotiation of contracts between a farmer and a worker in white settler colonies reflected their respective strengths and weaknesses over time. The history of the farm labour force in Namibia is thus a reflection of the declining bargaining power of local black pastoralists and the decisive intervention of migrant workers from beyond the Police Zone in the commercial agricultural sector. Conversely as the acreage under white settlement expanded and the strength and efficiency of the colonial administration increased farmers were able to impose greater restrictions on their workers. The aim of this chapter is to focus on the initial decade of the South African occupation during which the ability of local black pastoralists to negotiate the conditions of their employment was most apparent.

The disruption of the German farming community that resulted from World War One had left opportunities for scattered families to attempt to regroup, gather animals and try to re-establish self-sufficient communities. In the years immediately after the arrival of Union forces the relatively sparse martial administrative structures and the uncertainty about the future of the territory provided some space in which the local black population in southern Namibia were able to revive their own systems of economic and political organisation. The decade was a period of tension between farmers who sought to retain the maximum degree of control over the black workers and their workers, who sought to utilise agreements to revive their own pastoral ambitions. If they needed cash farm labour was undesirable, if they needed grazing for their own flocks it might be a suitable option. If unregulated by contracts black stockowners would move on and off white farms not simply in a direct response to the financial impositions placed upon them, but also in a manner that reflected seasonal and regional variations in precipitation patterns.

The existing historiography on labour relations in white settler colonies in east and southern Africa has already suggested the importance of pastoral incentives in securing farm labourers from aspirant pastoral societies. The importance of grazing rights for workers on a farm remained a 'pervasive' factor in the decision-making process of farm workers in South Africa in the early 1930s.[1] Where workers were able to exercise a degree of choice they sought farms which offered the most generous pastoral benefits. Yet the discrimination shown by farm workers was countered by measures which eroded the ability of workers to demand beneficial conditions within informal agreements. The history of the black farm worker and the changing terms of employment on South African stock farms remains under-researched, but the evidence produced by Keegan suggests that there were increased pressures for the removal of farm workers' stock during the late 1920s and early 1930s.[2] By 1937 a South African Commission reported that on average a farm worker was only allowed to keep five or six animals, although a few still had small herds of up to twenty.[3]

In Kenya early white settlers were also able to offer land in return for labour. 'Squatting' was seen as a means by which an undercapitalised farmer could use the offer of grazing on surplus land to secure a labour force. Efforts were made to regulate this type of agreement into a form of labour tenancy. An Ordinance passed in 1918 decreed that any 'squatter' over the age of 16 would be obliged to work for the farmer for a minimum of 180 days.[4] The willingness of white farmers to offer grazing land to their workers was a mark of temporary weakness. Once the alternative means of gaining access to land had been sufficiently reduced, evictions and stock restrictions were introduced. The Kikuyu squatters evicted from farms during the 1930s frequently found that they could no longer take the option of gaining access with their stock to the limited grazing available in the reserves.[5]

Chronological shifts in the power of the farm worker were accompanied by regional variations relating to the range of economic alternatives available to workers. Johnson describes the negotiating strength of black farm workers in Zimbabwe:

> The real problem for the farmers, which they often acknowledged, was the fact that Africans were not completely dependent on wage labour for their reproduction. Their incomplete separation from their means of production meant there was some scope for exercising choices as to whether one did or did not engage in wage labour, and if one did, at what time of the year, and for how long.[6]

The alternative might be other, more rewarding, forms of waged labour or peasant accumulation in a reserve. Access to a reserve was a major determinant of the wage levels fixed for farm workers. In South Africa:

> Wages ... were far less likely to rise for those who lived permanently on the farms and who were less able than men in the 'reserves' to choose alternative employment.[7]

The dynamics of farm labour involved workers as active participants in the shaping of labour relations and was not just a crude equation based on the extent and efficiency with which the state apparatus placed financial obligations upon black pastoralists. Black pastoralists were constrained, but retained some economic options and a more comprehensive analysis of changing labour patterns can be obtained when local economic and environmental factors are also taken into account. The provision of farm labour did not occur within a 'closed system', despite the blatant hopes of the architects of the reserves of southern Namibia. The ebb and flow of labour did not therefore correspond directly to demand; it also reflected changes in the conditions of supply. Black pastoralists exploited the temporary advantages to revive their pastoral pursuits and deploy their flocks over a wide area, including land that was to be designated for the white settlement scheme.

DEFINING AND DEFYING LABOUR AGREEMENTS, 1915-1925.

The military operations in southern Namibia disturbed the hold of farmers over their labour force in a number of ways. Many Germans left their farms to enlist with the military forces (the policy of encouraging troops who had fought in the 1904-1907 war to settle meant that many farmers would also have been experienced soldiers). The absence of the farmers and the confusion generated by the war facilitated the clandestine departure of their conscripted black workforce. The war loosened the bonds that tied the black labour force to the white settler farms, but also created new wage earning opportunities as the advancing South African forces engaged workers to assist with transportation.

The hope that the German defeat would free farm workers from their obligations was shortlived. Few German farmers were deported, although some were detained whilst the war reached its bloody conclusion in Europe and one of the first actions of the military magistrates who took office in each administrative district was the registration of farm labour. Registration was an attempt to stem the flood of black workers who were deserting from farms. Workers were reported to be ripping off the hated brass tags carrying their pass number, which had been a compulsory accessory under German law, in an effort to 'escape identification'.[8]

Registration was presented as the first stage of the police and monitoring operation by which the new administration would end the alleged brutality shown by farmers towards their workers under German rule. The political motivation behind this policy was apparent at the highest level. The first Administrator reminded the South African Prime Minister that:

> ... a clean record in this matter was essential if we wanted to use the German maltreatment of the natives as a reason for keeping this country.[9]

However the records of the military magistrates suggest that the new administration

was implicitly involved with the attempt by farmers to maintain existing pay and conditions.

The registration process involved the wages and conditions being explained to workers 'in the master's presence'. Despite the intimidatory presence of the farmer and officials it was considered that:

> If the boy makes no remarks, it can be taken as acceptance of his pay.[10]

One official remarked that it was not his policy to inform farm workers of their right to quit provided that they gave thirty days notice on the grounds that 'they are fully aware of this'. However the same official admitted that the second reason for his reluctance to inform farm workers of their rights was the fact that when he did so workers would 'frequently' give in their notice to quit, a fact which seems to undermine the credibility of his first statement.[11]

The production of a written contract whilst legally clarifying a situation was also open to abuse in a largely pre-literate society. Klaas Plaatjie, a worker engaged by Mr Junius on Nuzinabes Farm was prosecuted for desertion in 1918. Junius claimed that Plaatjie had left his service before he had completed the full duration of his year long contract. Plaatjie's counter claim was that he was only aware of an oral agreement which had made no mention of a year's commitment. The process by which the written contract had been drawn up was then described by Junius:

> I sent a boy to Narubis to get the contract produced made and you agreed to the terms. Neither you nor I were present when the contract was made. You never said you and I were to be present when the contract is made. I gave you a copy of the contract.[12]

Plaatjie was unable to prove his assertion that the verbal understanding he had reached with Junius had been substantially different to that contained in the written

contract.

The rigid application of laws regarding notice was one of the ways farmers attempted to retain workers. Workers had to keep 'calendar conscious' if they were to be allowed to leave their job within the parameters of the law. Notice could only be given on the first day of each calendar month. If this date was missed the worker was obliged to work another month before having another opportunity to give notice. One British farmer who had lived in Namibia since 1903 claimed that farm workers had been kept as virtual prisoners by unsubstantiated contracts:

> ... the contracts are usualy (sic) for one year the natives having to give one month's notice at the end of the 11th month, if they did not give the notice exactly on the 1st day of the last month they have been obliged to work for another year, by this means some men have been able to retain these boys for years some up to 9 years, this is the case of most natives who are at presant (sic) old servants on the farms.[13]

Farm workers sought to escape the bonds of legalistic contracts by seeking monthly contracts which would give them the freedom to move on, without hindrance.[14]

Geographical location played an important role in the negotiation of contracts. The areas in which local black stockowners were able to gain access to land enabled 'straddling'. Workers sought to 'straddle' two economic sectors and entered the labour market with specific short-term aims. Farm workers sought the necessary cash to meet the financial demands placed upon them by the authorities and to increase their flocks to the level at which they could sustain themselves as economically independent black pastoralists. The position of farmers was different; they sought a form of contract that would ensure that the farm had a stable labour force.

One farmer in the Gibeon district boasted of the long service that had been provided by his workers. The farm workers were provided with one year contracts, yet all

had been on the farm for over three years and some for as many as fifteen. An explanation of the process of contract renewal suggests that it was not loyalty to their employer that had kept the workers on the farm for so many years:

> ... if notice had not been given by either side one month before the expiration of the contract, such contract has by silent consent been renewed.[15]

If the farmer enforced the first of the month rule, it meant that there was only one day in the year upon which his workers had the opportunity to end their employment contract. The farmer created a stream of correspondence to the magistrate when his 'faithful' workforce all deserted, a move that, given his policy, surprises the historian less than it did the farmer.

The case is unusual only so far in the honesty with which the farmer documented the manner in which he exploited the absence of written contracts to exercise control over his labour force. However the case also illustrates the most significant feature of the initial period after 1915, namely the manner in which workers took advantage of the slackening of the apparatus of control. The first evidence of this was the mass desertion of workers from white farms following the German defeat and the second the reoccupation of land and attempts to reconstruct family units and communities that had been dissipated during the German period.

The mass exodus of black workers from farms during and immediately after World War One provides a powerful statement about the unpopularity of farm labour. The Administrator for the Territory informed General Botha in 1916 that 'Natives have deserted in considerable numbers from their former German employers' and noted '... a distinct disinclination' on their part to return to work.[16] Yet, whilst the majority of farmers were German and the wave of desertions provided useful propaganda for the aspirant Union administration, the desertions should be seen as part of a more broadly based movement by farm labourers.

Mass desertions and 'farm strikes' were often a conscious assertion by farm workers of their right to liberty, in defiance of the presumption of some farmers that workers could be forced to remain permanently in their employ. A patrol in Maltahohe district in 1918 investigated a 'strike' of workers on Kudis Farm. Mr Berner, the farmer, complained that:

> ... all his natives refused duty and want to leave his employ.[17]

Berner's efforts to prosecute his workers for 'disobedience' were misguided as when their (fortunately) written contracts were checked it transpired that they had all expired and that the workers had, in the words of the local Military Commander, '... the right to choose new masters'.[18] Yet it had only been the direct action taken by the workers that had brought their case to official attention.

The case provides an illustration of the inability of the administrative system to adequately police and monitor the recruitment and terms of engagement of local workers on farms. A further irony of the system was that a farm worker wishing to leave a farm and travel to the district magistrate's office to complain about pay, conditions or ill treatment could only legally do so if he obtained a travel pass from the farmer. If a farmer refused permission and a worker left the farm anyway, he was likely to find himself arrested for 'desertion' before he reached the Magisterial Seat in a pre-emptive move by the farmer.[19] The fact that workers tended to desert rather than seek redress through official channels suggests not only the difficulties of gaining access to the system, but also a lack of confidence in the system.

The case of a farm worker called Fritz Karari provides an example of workers' perceptions of the local judiciary. Karari started work on Korab Farm in Maltahohe district in 1921 under a verbal agreement. However when he sought to make a complaint he travelled to Windhoek to speak directly to the Officer-in-Command of Native Affairs in Windhoek. The officer informed the local magistrate that Karari

> ... was only working there for about one week, and had to leave on account of being illtreated by the Dutchman with whom he had no written contract, and further stated that he was afraid to report to you as when you sent him to work for this Dutchman, you told him that if he did not do his work properly you would have him sjamboked.[20]

Farm workers seeking to escape undesirable labour contracts and dubious of the legal system were cast between the Devil and the deep blue sea. The trek of Kahari to Windhoek to lodge his complaint was exceptional; the easier option was to 'disappear'.

The Blue Book published in 1918 listing cases of the ill-treatment of the black population by German soldiers and farmers was to provide a notorious catalogue against which the new administration's approach would be positively juxtaposed. The military administration was keen to point out that 310 cases had been heard since 20th September, 1915 in which 'Masters' had been prosecuted for the ill-treatment of servants.[21] However the Report should not be allowed to conceal the fact that the majority of cases heard in the local military magistrates' courts in southern Namibia consisted of complaints by farmers against their workers and the majority of convictions made by those courts were of farm workers, not farmers. The magistrate's court at Keetmanshoop, for example, convicted 231 people during 1919, of these 209 were black. None of the 34 convictions made under the 'Masters and Servants' were of whites, whilst only 1 of the 13 convictions for assault involved a white person.[22] Despite the pretensions of the Blue Book the judiciary system remained essentially a tool of control for the farmer, an extension of the sjambok.

The files of the military magistrates became clogged with letters of complaint from farmers alarmed at the cripplingly high rate of desertions. A typical case was that of a farmer on Harichas in Maltahohe district who sent letters listing a stream of desertions from his farm. Over a ten-month period (from April, 1916 to January, 1917) individuals or families absconded on eight separate occasions and a total of

12 adults and 17 children left the farm without the farmer's permission.[23] Workers sought to recreate themselves as pastoralists by rebuilding their stock and farmers who wished to retain or attract workers had to allow workers' stock to run on their farm. The shifting pattern of distribution did not, however, correspond directly to the level of grazing available to workers stock. Internal migration suggested that individuals also sought to impose their own order on the distribution of workers within a given farming community for social reasons.

The mass desertion from certain farms was accompanied by attempts to rebuild communities on vacant Crown Land and in the temporary reserves. Where the circumstances were conducive, communities also formed on white farms, but the clumping here was related to the benefits available on those farms. At the end of 1915 there were 54 farms occupied by white settlers in Maltahohe district and eighteen of these had communities with more than 20 black adults. The farms with the greatest hectarage, which were able to offer more generous grazing rights for black residents contained the largest communities. The largest two farms in the district, Nomtsas and Duwiseb, had black/white adult populations of 118/9 and 79/9 respectively.[24] The farms provide examples of a wider phenomena.

A few farms in each district became foci for the growth of communities. The attraction was often the lack of local stock control on the farm. Duwiseb, for example, was owned by a German who had been killed on the Western Front and control was reported to have slackened during his absence. Heirachabis in Warmbad district, another farm which saw the growth of a community, was the seat of a mission station which allowed black residents to retain a comparatively large number of stock on the land. The reconstitution of larger family units facilitated the revival of political organisation in rural areas with many of the larger farm communities recognising one of their members as a leader and spokesperson. By 1917 returns showed that farms such as Duwiseb had appointed headmen, and that even the small adult community (sixteen in 1915) found on Sandhof had chosen a leader.[25] Evidence also emerged that a network of these organised communities was being formed and efforts being made to make them responsible to the

revitalised 'traditional' dynasties that were trying to re-establish their regional authority.

The emergence of a shadowy parallel hierarchy to that being constructed by the military administration was perceived as a threat, particularly by the farming community. The efforts, for example, of Isaak Witbooi to extend his influence and authority over the black occupants of white farms provoked an official investigation in 1918. Fritz Korosiep gave evidence that he was responsible for a 'Company' of ten or twelve men on Kleinfontein farm and had been appointed the 'Foreman' by Witbooi. Korosiep had been given the responsibility of punishing 'wrongdoers' on the farm. Korosiep received his instructions from another Captain (Mahererop) who was based at Rooikop farm and gave evidence that another 'Company' existed on 'Kutes' Farm.[26] The network provides an interesting parallel to the activities of the 'Truppenspieler' movement which the authorities feared was being used to organise rural Herero communities at the same time.[27]

Further evidence of the ability of communities to regroup during this period can be found in the 'ethnic' analysis of the black occupants of farms in the Maltahohe district. The black adult population of Duwiseb and Naudaus farms in 1917 was 78 and 71 of these were classified as 'Herero'. Yet, in contrast, on the neighbouring farm of Gorab and Magnams there were 53 and 26 adult black residents, none of whom were classified as 'Herero'.[28] The statistics suggest a strong degree of selectivity in the movement of people between farms aimed at restoring links broken during the arbitrary distribution of labour practised by the German authorities. The statistics also reveal that the communities on the farms consisted of families and contained a large number of women. On Duwiseb and Naudaus 56% of the black residents were women or girls, whilst on Magnams the figure was even higher, at 65%. The residents of the larger black farm-based communities were not all farm workers. Of the 53 black residents of Gorab, for instance, only 11 men and 6 women were officially employed by the farmer.[29]

One of the assumptions of the German farm labour system had been that the women

in family units containing male employees would also be liable to work for a farmer's family. The Native Reserves Commission of 1921 claimed that women were still used extensively for domestic and light farm work.[30] The evidence suggests that farmers had difficulties, after 1915, persuading women that voluntary work for the farmer was a responsibility in any way linked to their right to reside on the farm. Work would now necessitate payment. In one early case two women described how, after working for a farmer for 10 years without pay or stock in lieu, they had demanded payment and been offered a single goat in settlement.[31] Only a minority of the waged workers listed on any of the farms in Maltahohe district in 1920 were women and extracting work from the unwaged proved, understandably, difficult.[32]

The ability of workers to move onto farms with their families and for women frequently to evade the imposition of labour obligations demonstrates the relative strength of the workers' bargaining position at this time. The magistrate at Maltahohe described the experience of white farmers who recruited local male workers during 1922:

> Almost invariably the boy (sic) brings his wife and family with him, they settle themselves in a pondhoek (sic) on the Employer's farm, the family do no work or attempt to assist the farmer in any way yet at the same time expect to be fed.[33]

The Farmers' Association for the Warmbad district complained bitterly that:

> 95% of the females refuse to perform any kind of work on the farm.[34]

Women demanded the right of residence, whilst resisting any imposed obligation to work. The struggle between farmers and farm workers revolved around the negotiation of a form of labour tenancy. Yet the absence of written contracts often made these informal in nature and dependent on a number of local factors which influenced the balance of concession and control within each working relationship.

The farmer sought the labour of the local male worker and his family, whilst workers sought access to grazing land for their stock.

The frequent complaint made by farmers during this early period was that recruiting local workers also meant sharing their land with the workers' animals. One farmer at 'Hanaus' in Gibeon district dismissed two workers because they had accumulated 370 head of small stock on his farm, only to discover that the four local workers he recruited in their place arrived on the farm with a flock of 800.[35] The perspective of much of the potential workforce was that they sought to accumulate stock and recover lost lands, thus farm labour was acceptable only as a temporary measure, if it assisted them in obtaining this goal.

Farmers that attempted to prevent farm workers bringing their flocks with them found recruitment difficult. Farmers complained that it was the 'invariable practice' of black pastoralists seeking work on their farms to enquire whether they would be able to bring all their own flocks onto the farm.[36] One farmer explained that those who attempted to prevent their workers bringing their flocks with them found recruitment difficult in a competitive labour market:

> If a farmer were to refuse to take a native's stock on to his farm, the native would refuse to work for him, and it would probably be found that his neighbour was quite prepared to take the native with his stock.[37]

Individual agreements could turn on the ceiling set for the number of workers' stock that a farmer would provide access to. Baron von Essebeck agreed to employ two local men on his farm at Kachas in Gibeon district in 1918 and to let them graze a flock of 200 of their own animals on the farm, but when the workers arrived they were driving a flock of over 500 small stock. The Baron turned them away and so lost his two workers.[38]

Farm workers commonly not only looking after their employer's flocks, but also significant flocks of their own, or those of friends and relatives. The Drought

Investigation Commission of 1924 quoted the suspicions of officials regarding the ownership of animals accompanying freshly recruited farm workers:

> ... that many of these goats are 'boarders' belonging to other natives (ie. not servants of the farmer). Needless to say, any hire paid for the grazing will not go to the owner of the farm.[39]

Farm workers were alleged to be seeking the maximum communal benefit from their agreements. Once grazing fees were being imposed on those renting grazing on Crown Land and in reserves the advantages of distributing animals to those who had employment arrangements that provided for free or cheap access to grazing land became obvious.The presence of younger members of the family on the farm could mean that they would be able to take responsibility for these animals. Farm workers were obviously reluctant to admit that they were keeping animals belonging to relations amongst their flock on a farm. The Court Records however present circumstantial evidence that this was a fairly common practice.[40] The distribution of stock was a fairly standard pastoral device and it seems likely that farm workers sought to utilise their new bargaining power to gain access to fresh grazing areas as a condition of employment.

The transient period of optimism that followed the South African invasion stirred memories of pastoral independence amongst the black stockowners of southern Namibia. Farm workers were economically ambitious to establish themselves as independent stock farmers with their own farms. The perspective of the workers is typified by the notes provided by a trooper sent to investigate an apparent 'strike' by farm workers on Kutel Farm in Maltahohe district:

> ... about 7.30am on morning of 22nd January, 1918 I rounded up all natives on farm, and asked them any complaints, answer no so I ask them why don't they work, their reply was we don't want to work any longer as we are now Rich, and want to start our own farming, on Swartsrand.[41]

The Swartsrand was an inaccessible area to the north-west of Berseba reserve which had yet to be settled by aspirant white farmers. The existence of this vacant area gave credibility to the farm workers' ambitions that would be harder to sustain a few decades later when almost all the land with pastoral potential in southern Namibia had been alienated.

The ability of black stockowners to find alternative grazing land on vacant Crown Land, in the established and temporary reserves and within the Rehoboth Gebiet strengthened their bargaining position. The options available, though limited, meant that farmers were competing for workers in the labour market and those with surplus grazing areas were perceived to have an advantage in attracting workers. Local circumstances, namely the local alternatives to moving stock onto a particular farm, were crucial in the thousands of interpersonal negotiations that took place. The evidence suggests that is some cases black stockowners were able to obtain an arrangement to stay on a farm with their flocks without working for the farmer, but by paying a monthly grazing fee or on the understanding that younger members of the family would provide labour.[42] The laws against 'squatting' meant that this type of relationship was seldom openly admitted to, but was sometimes uncovered during court cases. Goliath Swartbooi, a farm labourer in Keetmanshoop district, explained his relationship to the farmer on whose land he lived in February, 1918:

> I do not work for Mr Wache. I live on his farm. I do not work. I have 70 goats. I pay 5/- [shillings] pm. to live there. I work for no one.[43]

Klaas Isak lived on Springputz in Warmbad district in 1920, but had no contract with the owner and received no pay. Yet Isak kept a flock of around 200 small stock on the farm.[44] The implication was that Isak either paid to stay on the farm or provided labour on a irregular basis when required in return for his access to pasture.

The condoning of 'squatting' provided a means by which farmers attempted to fix a parochial labour force that could be employed as necessary on brief contracts - a

system which given the cash poverty of many of the immigrant white farmers must have seemed an appealing prospect. A circular distributed by the military administration in July, 1918 confirmed uniform rates for grazing and squatting fees on Crown Lands which had been introduced in December, 1915. Large stock were charged at 3d per head and small stock at 2s.6d per 100 head.[45] The farmer who wanted to attract labour in an area where Crown Land was available to black stockowners therefore had to undercut these rates.

The mutual convenience of an informal agreement in which local black stockowners attempted to achieve a balance between squatting and casual labour, the informal oral nature of early contracts and the frailty of the new state apparatus suggests that such deals were more widespread than was officially admitted. The promulgation of Native Administration Proclamation No. 11 of 1921 provided legislation dealing directly with 'squatting' and 'kaffir farming', yet the evidence suggests that there remained a considerable gap between theory and practice. A witness at the Farm Industry Commission in 1926 articulated a widespread scepticism:

> The law prohibited native squatting, but it was not being carried out. Many farmers had native families considerably in excess of those allowed squatting on their farms.[46]

The evidence of the previous chapter would suggest that the practice reflected not only the relative bargaining strength of a labour force in a period of increasing labour demand and mobility, but also the financial weakness of many of the new white settlers. Land was one of the few assets that many of them could offer in order to secure a labour force.

Statistical and narrative evidence of the relative prosperity of black stockowners during the period of stock recovery following 1915 can be found in abundance. One indication of this would be the number of grazing licences that were issued to black stockowners to graze their flocks on Crown Land unoccupied (by white settlers). The Register of Grazing Licences for Keetmanshoop district revealed that

in March 1918, 139 black stockowners were registered as having made payments (officially dubbed 'Squatters Fees'). Many of these had been paid for a period of over two years, eighty-eight dating from 1st January 1916. The flocks of many of those listed were of a considerable size. An analysis of the flock size of licensees is provided in Table 11.[47]

TABLE 11: An Analysis of the size of flocks owned by black stockowners issued with grazing licences in Keetmanshoop District (01.01.1916 to 01.01.1918).

Size of flock.	No. of Stockowners.
None	13
1-99	32
100-199	38
200-399	34
400-799	16
Over 800	6
TOTAL	139

The category that are listed as 'None' consisted of those whose licences had been cancelled when they left a farm or those who owned only large stock. The statistics reveal that virtually three-quarters of those with small stock flocks had more than double the number required to obtain an Exemption Certificate (the mean average flock size of licensees with small stock flocks was actually 239). The wealthiest recorded black stockowner in the district, Frederick Hinta, obtained a licence on 4th March, 1918 to graze 1,500 small stock and 34 large stock on Waterfall Farm. Hinta was expected to pay £2 6s. every month in fees.[48]

Whilst comparative statistics for white settlers in Keetmanshoop district in the same year were not obtainable, a comparison can be made with those in the neighbouring district of Maltahohe in 1917. A few examples illustrate the fact that the white settlers flocks were often of a comparable size to those of their black licensees. Count von Luttichau at Niederhagen Farm tended a flock of 200 sheep, P.A. Smit at Amub Farm ran a flock of 243 and in total 14 of the 47 white stockowners listed possessed flocks of 500 or less animals. Whilst the average flock size of the farmers was 886, the statistics suggest that there was a (significant) minority whose livestock holdings were little more substantial than those of the black pastoralists.

The bargaining power that the accumulation of stock provided black stockowners who were able to gather a flock of over fifty small animals, and thus qualify for an Exemption Certificate, was recognised by local officials:

> Very few natives are obliged to work for a living ... on several farms the natives own more stock than their employers. This class of servant is inclined to neglect his master's work in order to look after his own stock.[49]

The correlation between the difficulties of certain farmers in obtaining labour and the proximity of Crown Land available for hire was noted in South Africa and similar problems faced farmers near reserves or other accessible land in Namibia. The state intervened to remove larger black stockowners with grazing licences from 'unoccupied' farms by giving black licensees an ultimatum to sell stock or move to a 'native area'.[50]

Statistics of black stock ownership cloak differences in the quality of stock and questions concerning access to markets; but it is apparent that the expanding flocks of black pastoralists in southern Namibia were perceived as posing a direct threat to the supply and control of black farm labour. The Farmers' Association for the Kalkfeld area passed a resolution in 1920 which attempted to standardise the value of grazing offered to workers. The Association recommended that workers should pay 1s. per month for each individual large stock and 1s. per month for every ten

small stock.[51] The alleged average monthly wage of 12s. would thus be totally consumed by the payment of grazing fees for 120 goats. The charges were six times heavier than those that had been made in most of the reserves and locations at the beginning of 1918. The resolution was obviously not aimed at preventing the exploitation of workers, but rather at eliminating competitive differentiation in rates between farmers by setting them at an universally exorbitant level that would drive workers' stock from the farms. The Association and its like were never able to enforce a standardised rate of value for grazing rights successfully, but many farmers continued to use informal grazing fees as a means of reducing wages. By 1923, however, it was clear that many farmers were enforcing restrictions on the number of stock that a worker was allowed on a farm. The Secretary for South West Africa reported the allegations of black stockowners that:

> ... in many cases farmers will not permit labourers to bring their stock on to farms with them.[52]

The alternative that farmers were to offer was to be the straight payment of wages in cash.

WAGE LABOUR

One of the first actions of the military administration had been an attempt to introduce a uniform scale of wages for farm labourers. The move was probably part of the broader campaign to demonstrate to an international audience that Union rule would be more beneficial to the black population than a return to German rule. Paragraph 12, Section IV of the 'Memorandum on Native Affairs' issued on 3rd August, 1916 required all military magistrates to set minimum wages. The military magistrate for Gibeon subsequently wrote to farmers detailing the decision that he had reached for his district:

> ... in accordance with instructions from the Secretary for the Protectorate I have drawn up a scale of minimum wages for the District. According to this

scale the minimum for a farm labourer is 12s/6d per month + (sic) the various Police Posts have been instructed not to contract labourers for less amounts.[53]

The official definition of the minimum wage failed, however, to stem the flow of black labour from the farms. The farmers of Maltahohe district suffered the greatest difficulties in obtaining farm labour. The local Farmers' Union argued that farm workers were deserting and moving to the neighbouring district of Bethanie and into the reserves at Berseba and Rehoboth.[54] The military magistrate at Maltahohe was flooded with so many complaints of desertion, in 1918, he circulated a letter throughout the whole of the Police Zone. The letter promised that local farmers would pay 'Not less than £1' (ie. more than 20 shillings) to workers prepared to travel to the district and also make provision for their families to travel and live on the farm.[55] Yet there is no evidence that this scale of wages was applied or that the offer generated any significant response, and the general level of wages in the region was far lower. The military magistrate of Keetmanshoop district estimated that the average wage paid to farm workers in his district in 1918 was 12s. per month plus food.[56] The potential for stock accumulation was of far greater importance than the level of wage promised to local farm workers. The population drain from Maltahohe can be directly linked to the absence of a suitable reserve or vacant land upon which grazing licences could be obtained.[57]

The promise of adequate wages on paper was easy enough, but the reality was also very different. Farmers were able to subvert the official dictate or contractual terms in a number of ways. The substraction from (or even substitution for) wages of grazing fees has already been noted. Farmers were also able to utilise formal and informal networks to prevent competitive wages being offered and claim deductions and payments in kind to reduce the hypothetical pay statement to a negligible or even negative sum.

The meetings of the local Farmers Associations provided a ready mechanism for the exchange of information about local wages and passage of resolutions carrying

recommendations about wage levels. Farmers who were not organised within an Association would meet on other occasions, such as social events and markets. The Administrator recognised in his Annual Report for 1922 that:

> All seem to act in concert to keep down the wages of selected labourers. An alert farmer could to-morrow (sic) drain his neighbours of his best labourers by offering quite ordinary inducements, which the farmers combine at present not to offer (my emphasis).[58]

The short-term goals of local labourers entering the labour market made the control of wages the major factor inhibiting the recruitment of farm workers. The resident black stockowners of the Berseba and Bondels reserves were not obliged to pay grazing fees and could therefore enter the labour market with greater flexibility than others. In 1925 an estimated 250 of the younger Berseba residents were working outside the reserve, but they were working in Keetmanshoop, on the railways and at the Luderitz diamond fields - not on the neighbouring farms.[59] Equally in the Bondels reserve it was reported that most of the absent men were working in the mines and only 14 were employed on farms in the district.[60]

Farm work was the least desirable of a range of contemporary wage earning options. A labourer with the South West Africa Railways could earn between 1s.9d and 2s.6d per day with rations in 1920 and a 'House Boy' £1 to £1. 10s. per month with food.[61] Cash wages were more reliable in urban employment and the hours more regular. A letter to the Windhoek Advertiser in 1924 signed by 'Farm Workers' emphasised the link between poor pay and an unenthusiastic workforce:

> We have heard it said that natives are lazy - We would respectfully submit that Farms servants are woefully underpaid.[62]

The receipt of payments could also be erratic in regularity and amount (as variable deductions were made for rations, grazing and goods).

The paucity of capital reserves with which some of the new settlers arrived meant that some claimed to be too poor to even pay the meagre wages given to farm workers. The Administrator expressed particular concern about the problem in 1924:

> In the districts of Gibeon and Maltahohe cases have come to light where farmers have resorted to the practice of paying their servants wages by means of IOUs, which they have failed to redeem upon the termination of the contracts.[63]

The payment of wages to farm workers in southern Namibia was particularly unreliable due to the large numbers of new settlers, their initial emphasis on capital investments and a localised drought that hit the region during 1924.

The great distance, in terms of time and space, between many of the outlying farms and the nearest market town meant that farmers were also able to control the access of their workers to consumer goods:

> Once he [the labourer] is on the farm his master can rarely spare him, rarely if ever he gets a chance to come to buy what he requires at the stores. The master usually does the purchasing - and great dissatisfaction usually follows.[64]

The problem was not simply one of taste. Workers were often left unclear as to what items were included in their pay or deducted from it and at what cost:

> The grievance appears to be that after they have worked for some months and wish for a settlement, the farmer produces a book and informs them that they have nothing to come, as they have bought certain articles from the master during the time employed and that they really owe the Master money.[65]

The fear expressed was that farm labour could prove a trap, rather than an opportunity. The comments raised the spectre of 'debt bondage' in which the contracts of local farm labourers would have to be endlessly extended in response to the escalating debt of the worker to their employer. Life and hope reduced to a treadmill.

The most evident source of confusion lay in the way in which basic rations and old clothes might or might not be included in an agreement. The form that such fringe benefits would take was often left vague in agreements. A typical example was a courtroom claim by one farmer that he had agreed to employ a worker for four months at a wage of 10s. per month plus 'food and old clothes'.[66] But when it came to a final settlement workers might find the cost of a shirt or pair of trousers deducted from their wages.[67] One 'Ovambo' worker, Moses Hangula, claimed that he had been offered a verbal contract in 1921 to work on Gorab Farm in Malthahohe district for a year at a wage of 20s. <u>and food</u>. Hangula claimed that once he started he was told that the cost of his food would be deducted from his wages.[68] The Maltahöhe special offer had strings attached to it. The payment of wages in kind could also confuse the question of wages. If a goat was given to a worker at the end of a month should he consider it a gift, his meat ration or his pay ? Payment in kind was common throughout the region.[69]

A shepherd working for a Mr Badenhorst on Godas Farm in Keetmanshoop district in 1915 described the method of payment used by his employer during a Court Case:

> I receive 15/0 a month from my master, also my food - if I don't get paid for two months my master gives me three goats.[70]

The payment of wages in stock created two persistent difficulties. One was the calculation of the value of the animal being offered as a cash substitute. The local 'Native Affairs' official of the day estimated that the market value of 'an ordinary breeding goat' was in fact only 5s. to 10s.[71] The Administrator explained, in

1922, that:

> ... the system of giving stock for long periods of service is being discouraged as this not only leads to disputes but owing to the great depreciation in values, results in inadequate value being paid for work done.[72]

The language of the market ('depreciation') is misleading as the primary aim of farm workers at this stage was the accumulation of stock to achieve the economic strength that would allow them to enter the labour market with greater discretion. But what number of animals should be considered just compensation for a month's labour? The payment of one or two goats each month could be weighed against the average increase in flock size over a twelve month period. An annual 'salary' of 12 goats would be exceeded by the natural increase of a flock of 20 goats in a good year (a fact that underlines the importance of grazing rights and stock access in labour agreements). Farm workers in Maltahohe district suffered as much from the devaluation of their labour through payment in kind as those in neighbouring districts:

> Very frequently... the servant never sees any money for months at a time for instead of being paid in cash he is paid in kind by a sheep or a goat which method of payment invariably causes a dispute as to the value of the animal tendered in payment.[73]

The fact that payments in kind became increasingly common during periods of drought meant that the animals offered in payment were often in poor condition and would be consumed by a worker's family as a supplement to inadequate rations.

The second difficulty attached to payment in kind was the dangers inherent in the accumulation of stock by a farm worker. On farms where workers received sufficient rations and were paid with animals of good quality, payment in kind might assist a worker's efforts to enlarge their own individual flock. However, ironically,

the success of their efforts could have severe consequences in relation to their access to grazing land. The Administrator warned in 1922 of:

> ... the undesirability of assisting natives to accumulate animals for which there is no accommodation, and the farming community itself objects as a rule to natives acquiring stock in spite of many of its members giving them the opportunity to obtain it.[74]

The aspirations of local farm workers that access to farm land could revive their pastoral fortunes were to be quickly shattered.

CONCLUSION

Farm labour was not a good choice for black stockowners who wished to raise cash to pay grazing fees or buy consumer goods in the decade after the defeat of the German forces. Black stockowners could benefit, however, if they were able to obtain access to grazing for their flocks at a rate preferable to any other convenient alternatives. The initial poverty of many of the new settlers and uncertainty about the distribution of land meant that black pastoralists found they were able to negotiate grazing concessions in return for their labour. The dynamics of farm labour recruitment were, however, to be fundamentally transformed by the devastating drought that crept over the region from the late 1920s and ushered in the era of the contract farm worker from northern Namibia.

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48. Grazing Licenses. Monthly Returns. District of Keetmanshoop. March, 1918. LKE 7/7/1.

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50. When Jan Stephanus a wealthy black stockowner with a grazing licence died, the Secretary for SWA. ordered that his heir could receive a further two-year lease near Verdwad Farm, but must then move to a Reserve or sell his animals. Sec. SWA to Senior Officer (Lands Branch) 19th August, 1921. LAN. 25 35.

51. Minutes. Farmers Association Kalkfeld 13th November, 1920. ADM 117 - 4060.

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67. The Magistrate at Maltahohe reckoned that in 1920 a farm labourer would need a months wages to buy a shirt and two months wages to buy a pair of trousers. Mag. Maltahohe to Sec. Prot. 12th January, 1920. ADM 108 - 3370/4.

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69. 'In the district of Warmbad most farmers are compelled to pay wages in kind owing to their having no market for their stock on account of the drought'. AR. LoN. 1924. p22.

70. Rex vs. C. Bloom. LKE 1/1/1 - 58/15.

71. '... farmers engage boys at 15/- per month, and when paying them off, they give them the equivalent in stock. The equivalent of a goat usually being 15/- ... I need not point out that 15/- is much in excess of the value of an ordinary breeding goat, which is worth from 5/- to 10/- according to size'. NC. Keetmanshoop to NC. Windhoek. 25th November, 1915. ADM 509.

72. AR LoN. 1922. p21.

73. NA. AR. Maltahohe. 1922. 15th January, 1923. LMA 3/1/27 - 2/1/1923.

74. AR. LoN. 1922. p21.

CHAPTER SIX: THE RISE OF THE 'INDISPENSABLE' MIGRANT FARM WORKER.

"*The Ovambo herdboy is the doyen of the karakul labour corps and his services are indispensable*". [Report of the Long Term Agricultural Policy Commission, 1950].[1]

INTRODUCTION.

The double blows of drought and depression marked a decade of deprivation and dispossession for the black stockowners of southern Namibia. The period 1925-1935 decisive. The bargaining power of black pastoralists seeking access to land distributed to white settlers was dramatically reduced and the expulsion of black flocks from farms accelerated the desolation of the black pastoral economy. It was to be a period from which black pastoralism in southern Namibia never recovered.

After 1935 the boom in the karakul industry bought relative prosperity to the white farmers of southern Namibia and a dramatic expansion in the use of migrant workers on farms. The bargaining strength of local labour was undermined at a time when it might have been reviving as they were displaced by mainly adolescent migrant workers. The period 1935-1945 might be seen as one in which black pastoralists were transformed into a black proletariat. Yet the terms upon which black pastoralists were incorporated into the system were still negotiated to some extent, as they were able to exercise a greater degree of choice than the adolescents sent south in cattle wagons by the labour recruiting organisations. The recruiting organisations merged into a single organisation in order to respond to the accelerating demand for recruits. Whilst Hayes has examined the ramifications of the contract labour system in the north in the period up to 1935, little has been published on the link between the recruiting system and the supply of farm labour

in the subsequent period. This will therefore be dealt with at some length.

The adaption of the migrant labour system to meet the vocal demands of the farming lobby failed to resolve the 'labour problem'. The post-war decade was marked by a continuing and growing 'farm labour crisis' as migrant workers also sought to escape the farming sector. Local and migrant workers developed a common aversion to farm labour and sought to detach themselves from the grip of the white farming community. The state was forced to consider a more interventionist strategy in order to secure a reliable supply of labour to the farms, whilst changes in technology and livestock produced modifications in the labour requirements on the predominantly karakul sheep rearing farms of southern Namibia. Prosperity and specialisation led to increasing differentiation within the farm labour force and the emergence of three distinctive groups of workers - permanent, short-term contract and migrant.

THE DECADE OF DESOLATION, 1926-1935.

The drought which heralded the ruin of the black pastoralist on white farms hit early in southern Namibia, squeezing the water and stock from many farms during 1924. The period that followed saw twin combines reaping the black pastoralist. The rapid land alienation of the 1920s reduced the flexibility in the pastoral system and removed much of the more accessible alternative grazing land. Closer occupation led to closer control. However the contest for land and resources was sharpened by the environmental and economic crisis that gripped the region. The drought of 1924 exposed:

> ... the insecure position in which native servants who have grazing rights upon their master's farm find themselves when a drought occurs or when their stock begins to show a substantial increase, for their employers under such circumstances are forced to dispense with their services and they are then at a loss to know where to go.[2]

The accommodation of worker's stock was a symptom of the temporary economic weakness of white farmers. An increase in a farmer's flocks or decrease in the grazing and watering resources available on a farm inevitably put pressure on the worker to reduce or remove their flocks. In addition, the official proclamation of Gibeon reserve in 1924 had completed the formation of a district network of reserves in southern Namibia where the 'surplus' stock of black farm workers could be concentrated. The Administrator was clear that the pastoral initiative of farm workers was doomed:

> To anyone looking ahead it is patent that with the closer settlement of the country native squatters who at present are tolerated and even welcomed on private farms as labourers, even though they have a lot of stock, would become a burden to the real owners at a later date when the natural increase in population and stock would make it impossible for the land to carry both European and native on the ground of the former.[3]

The expanding area of land occupied by white settlers provoked calls for stronger measures to end competition by black stockowners for land and pasture.

The establishment of the reserves, and cheaper grazing fees charged within them, served to concentrate black stockowners who were unable to obtain an acceptable agreement giving access to white farmland. The restrictions on the entry and movement of black pastoralists on Crown Land were also tightened. The Administrator ruling in 1926 that even stockowners who were classified as 'Coloured' should not be given grazing licences if this bought them into 'conflict with European farmers'.[4]

The Farm Industry Commission of 1927 used the discourse of modernisation to justify proposals to place a limit on the number of livestock that could be kept by a farm worker. The fact that the majority of the animals held by black stockowners were goats provided an additional environmental rationale for the reduction of flocks. Goats were seen as particularly damaging to foliage because of the

thoroughness with which they grazed. The Drought Investigation Commission of 1924 had succinctly concluded that 'Goats are a menace to the Country', and urged drastic action to deal with the scourge and allow the white farmer 'the utmost use of his land'.[5] The dilemma facing farmers was that the offer of grazing remained the most effective means of attracting workers. Eight families who had left Tses reserve during 1926 had reportedly been attracted by the offer of free grazing for their combined livestock of 1,112 small stock and 77 large stock.[6]

The Farm Industry Commission proposed the introduction of a rigid limit on the number of stock that an individual worker might keep on a farm. Each worker should only be allowed to keep up to 5 head of cattle and 20 head of small stock on a farm. The number might be increased with special permission, but should never exceed a total of 20 head of cattle or 100 small stock.[7] Such rigid stock restrictions would have generated a massive expulsion of stock from farms and consequent haemorrhage of farm labour. The statistics available on the number of animals owned by black stockowners on white farms in Bethanie district in 1925 can be used to project the impact of stock restrictions. The district contained 25 farms accommodating black stockowners. The 65 black stockowners possessed 7,701 head of small stock, giving an average flock size of 118 - well over the absolute maximum of 100 proposed by the Commission. A more detailed analysis of the statistics reveal that only 3 of the stockowners fell beneath the recommended maximum of the Commission and over half of all the stockowners (30 of 65) owned flocks of over 100 animals.[8]

The introduction of legislation proved initially impractical and ultimately unnecessary. The first point was that the financial difficulties of many of the white settlers introduced to the territory in the 1920s and the fierce competition for labour meant that the restriction of grazing rights would emphasise the differences between those farmers with the capital to pay cash wages and those (the majority in southern Namibia) who were not able to. The reality of the 1920s remained that, so long as they were environmentally sustainable, grazing rights were the collateral used to secure labour.[9] The second point was that the spreading drought which reduced or

totally terminated the carrying capacity of farms forced farmers to expel workers stock in an effort to save their own. The drought, rather than the state, provided the motivation for the reduction of workers' stock.

The periodisation of the drought (as discussed in Chapter Four) suggests that the whole of southern Namibia experienced a succession of years of inadequate rainfall between 1929 and 1935, a period far longer than that applied nationally to date the drought (1931-1933).[10] The erratic distribution of rainfall meant, however that drought conditions prevailed in some areas at an even earlier date. The pattern of stock evictions was therefore linked to local differences in the timing of the crisis as water and grazing resources became exhausted and individual farms became unworkable.

Farm workers who were made redundant during the drought lost their access to the water and grazing available on the farm and suffered devastating losses as a consequence. The magistrate for Keetmanshoop noted in 1932 that:

> During the continued drought the grazing has been depleted and farmers have had to dispense with the services of the natives, who have had to remove into reserves with their stock as they were unable to find elsewhere.[11]

The concentration of farm workers' stock in reserves whose resources had already been overstretched led to devastating losses (as demonstrated in Chapter 2).

The drought significantly reduced the size of flocks owned by black farm workers. A comparison can be made between the stock statistics for black farm workers in Bethanie district in 1925 and 1935. The white farms of the district contained 65 black stockowners owning 7,701 units of small stock in 1925. By 1935 the number of black stockowners on farms in the district had risen to 112, yet the number of small stock units had fallen dramatically to 3,668. The average flock size per worker had accordingly dropped from 118 in 1925 to just 33 in 1935.[12] The

drought impoverished black stockowners who had previously been able to profit from labour tenancies that included grazing rights, but the impact of the drought was not limited to changes in flock size, it also affected pay levels.

The real value of the wages paid to farm workers was gnawed away during the period of the drought. The magistrate at Keetmanshoop reported that in 1932 the wages paid to farm workers in the district ranged from '5/- to 15/- value per month and food'(my emphasis).[13] Fifteen years previous, in 1918, the magistrate for the district had described the average wage for farm workers as 12s. per month plus food. The official wage level of farm workers had remained static, but the replacement of cash wages with payment in kind meant that in real terms wages fell during the drought. Workers commonly received neither the benefit of a cash wage, nor that of free extensive grazing rights.

The drought led to a growing number of reports from magistrates of cases in which young farm workers were receiving merely food for work. The payment of wages in kind made it difficult to distinguish between wages and rations. The magistrate at Mariental described the 'pay' provided to farm workers in 1934 as:

> .... the barest necessities and 2 or 3 slaughter goats and their skins per month, but (preferably) animals which have died or become useless to the employer.[14]

Farmers would also withhold wages to compensate for stock losses for which a particular shepherd was blamed.[15] The payment of wages in kind meant that the loss of an animal might result in the forfeiture of the monthly goat 'payment' to compensate the farmer for the loss.[16] The fact that shepherds could be prosecuted under the Masters and Servants Act for negligence if they lost animals meant that complaints against such deductions seemed futile. None of the court cases in the local magistrates courts in the period up to 1935 resulted from workers' complaints about unfair deductions from their wages.

The explanation of the large increase in the number of stock theft cases that occurred during the period of the drought becomes evident in the context of farm labour relations. It would be overstating the case to view stock theft as 'resistance' (with the implications of organisation that this implies); however the majority of cases did involve farm workers consuming animals in their charge. The 'thefts' were generally limited to a single animal and statements in defence frequently referred to hunger and the inadequacy of rations. The consumption of a goat might thus rationally be justified as covertly claiming wages due.

The consequence of these changes was a shift in the composition of the labour force on white farms. The only motive left for working on many farms was the fact that farmers provided basic rations during a period of hunger. Farmers argued that the rations provided were actually more valuable than the cash wages offered. On average workers would receive 2lb of meal per day as the stable part of their diet. The prices prevailing in the dtore at Gibeon in 1926 suggest that, if a farmer bought a 200lb sack of meal, the monthly ration would cost him 8s.12d.[17] The meal would usually be supplemented by a slaughter goat, tea, milk, coffee and sugar in varying quantities - suggesting that the total ration would indeed have cost roughly the equivalent of the average wage.

The implication was that the herder-worker was replaced by the hungry worker during the drought. Farm workers with stock resources who were expelled from white farms would draw on their flock for subsistence in the reserve; only once the flock had been destroyed would they be forced to seek work on a white farm to avoid starvation. Farm labour became the preserve of the poorest sector of the local black population, whilst the wealthier stock owners attempted to keep their stock alive in the inadequate reserves and/or gain the more reliable cash wages offered through urban employment.[18]

The eviction of black stockowners from farms and the deficiencies of the reserves meant that the movement from rural to urban areas became more pronounced throughout the Police Zone towards the end of the 1920s. The black urban

population increased by almost 11 percent between 1928 and 1930, whilst the black population of white farming areas began to steadily decline.[19] White residents expressed concern at the sudden black influx whilst the depression meant that many whites began competing for jobs that would normally have been done only by blacks. The consequence was Proclamation No. 4 of 1932 which extended the provisions of the Natives (Urban Areas) Proclamation of 1924 (which had only been applied to Windhoek) to all the major urban locations. The enforcement of this Proclamation had an immediate impact and by the end of the year the number of black residents in urban locations had slumped to 19,683.[20] Conversely the black population in rural areas began to increase again for the first time in 1933[21]. The evolving pattern of population distribution can be clearly seen in Figure 1 (page 59).[22]

THE INTRODUCTION OF LONG DISTANCE MIGRANT LABOUR.

The difficulties that white farmers had in obtaining compliant and stockfree local black workers had fuelled a number of schemes to import labour from further afield. The Germans were reported to have been considering the possibility of importing South African or Chinese labour to replace the workforce that had been decimated during the 1904-1907 War before they were overtaken by events.[23] The famine that gripped northern Namibia in 1915, the year of the South African invasion, revealed the potential of the region as a source of labour.

A massive southwards movement of population could be linked to the assault of Portuguese forces on communities in southern Angola and the serious famine that hit the region in 1915. Many of the refugees walked south in search of food, hundreds reportedly dying along the way. The newly installed Resident Commissioner for Ovamboland noted that the recruitment of these migrants by the administration had caused 'a glut ... in the labour market'.[24] The nature of the migration meant that the bulk of the workers sought work in the most northerly districts of the Police Zone.[25] The extensive distances involved made it difficult for many of the new influx of farmers to southern Namibia to afford the transport

costs required to obtain these early migrant workers. However, there is evidence that, as early as 1917, some Oshiwambo speaking families were established on farms in southern Namibia. Two married 'Ovambo' couples were employed, for example on Urikos Farm and another on Duwisib Farm in Maltahohe district.[26]

The evident movement of women to the south contrasts with later restrictions preventing them from entering the Police Zone. A few of these early migrants settled, but the majority merely remained for a temporary period of six months. Hayes has demonstrated the extent to which this flow of migrant labour from the north reflected fluctuating environmental, social and economic pressures rather than a direct response to distant demands in the labour market.[27] The mass of the early migrant workers sought work in the mining industry and the initiative to form recruiting organisations to enhance labour recruitment came from the mining companies. A death toll of 457 in 1924 (an appalling rate of 74.2 per 1000) had led to drastic decline in recruits in 1925 and the organisation of a conference that brought together the main employers of migrant labour (the administration, the railways and the mines).[28] One of those who attended the conference described its outcome succinctly:

> At the Conference in 1926 when the so-called 'Gentlemen's Agreement' was entered into, the recruiting areas of the different organisations were so defined that there should be no overlapping. Competition was eliminated.[29]

The two recruiting organisations established at the conference co-ordinated their activities and effectively operated a monopoly that could be used to control the distribution and remuneration of migrant labour throughout the territory. Contracts were standardised at twelve months, with the worker having the opportunity of renewing the contract for a further year with either the same or a new employer and fixed wage scales drawn up.

The conference established the notorious 'ABC' classification system for workers. Letters were used to categorize the medical fitness of each recruit. 'A' and 'B'

grade recruits were considered fit enough to work in the mines, whilst 'C' grade recruits were considered fit, but underage for mine work (ie. under 18).[30] The 'C' grade consisted therefore of teenage boys (women were not considered by the recruiting organisations) and were regarded as capable of light farm work, whilst grade 'B' workers were recommended for heavier work. However it was the 'C' grade workers who were to be most sought after by the farming community.

The advantage that farmers could gain from employing the younger recruits was that the wage levels set were significantly lower. One woman recalled that:

> The farmers preferred workers from the North because they were cheap ... Local people tried to live in the town where life was better. Life on the farms was very hard.[31]

The starting wage for a 'C' grade worker was initially fixed at 8s. per month for the first 4 months of a contract, whilst a 'B' grade worker would have to be paid 20 percent more at 10s.[32] The employment of grade 'C' young migrant workers as shepherds would significantly undercut the wages demanded by local blacks and would provide workers unaccompanied by dependents or bestial baggage.

The formation of the two recruiting organisations did not provide the solution to the labour problem in southern Namibia. The records showed that 1,171 out of the 3,927 workers recruited in 1927 went to work on farms. Yet most of these went to farms to the north of Windhoek. The mining industry continued to absorb the majority of labour recruits up to 1935, but the early geographical concentration of recruits was also due to specific reasons.

The poverty of farmers in southern Namibia made it difficult for them to pay the cash wages required, a fact that destroyed a plan to import labour from the north-west Cape.[33] Farmers who were wealthy enough to pay the wages were also those most likely to have sufficient land to attract local workers with the offer of grazing. The payment of a recruitment fee and the obligation that the farmer had to

pay for the return journey of migrant workers were additional pecuniary deterrents.[34] Geography dictated that those farmers least able to obtain hard cash were faced with the most prohibitive rail fares. Only economic prosperity would allow the white farmers of southern Namibia to take advantage of the opportunity presented by migrant labour.

RECRUITING MIGRANT WORKERS AS KARAKUL SHEPHERDS.

The growth of the karakul industry following the drought was dramatic as farmers switched to the one product that had demonstrated an ability to retain its value. The collapse of other commodity markets meant that by 1933 karakul pelts constituted an incredible 82 percent of the export earnings for the entire territory.[35] The absolute number of karakul sheep in the territory trebled between 1934 and 1939, reaching a peak of over three million in 1943.[36]

The impact of the transformation of the commercial small stock sector on labour requirements can be demonstrated for a specific district, Mariental. The police in one patrol area of Mariental district monitored stock levels on 64 white farms. The number of small stock running on these farms increased from 96,091 in December, 1933 to 183,589 four years later. The demand for 'herdboys' had correspondingly increased by 'almost a hundred percent'.[37] The change in the quantity and quality of the small stock on farms in southern Namibia had two immediate effects. The first was to increase the demand for migrant labourers and the second to change the terms of engagement of local black workers employed on farms.

The number of migrant workers supplied to the farming sector exceeded those sent to the mining industry for the first time in 1934; by 1937 62 percent of all recruits were sent to work on farms, and from 1940-1946 over three-quarters of all migrant workers were being distributed to the farming community. The growing importance of the migrant labourer in the farming sector in the period 1927-1945 can be seen in Figure 9.[38] The evidence shows that part of this expansion consisted of migrant workers who were used to meet the increased labour demands created in the

Fig.9 MIGRANT LABOUR, 1927-1945

Distribution: Farms and Mines.

Thousands

12

10

8

6

4

2

0

1927 1930 1935 1940 1945

Farms Mines

southern districts. The magistrate at Mariental reported in 1938 that migrant workers were relieving the major labour difficulties faced by farmers in the district.[39] A total of 958 migrant workers were working on the farms of Gibeon district by 1939.[40] The karakul industry even paid for an influx of migrant workers into the distant and impoverished district of Warmbad. One police patrol area in Warmbad district reported a steady increase in the number of migrant workers employed on farms under their supervision. In 1939 only 14 were employed, the following year the figure had risen to 41 and by 1943 the farms employed 101 migrant contract workers.[41] The statistics, however, concealed a high turnover amongst the workforce on farms.

Migrant workers were recruited on the basis of a twelve-month contract, which (following Proclamation No. 20 of 1939) could then be extended for a further two periods of one year each. The maximum period a migrant worker could remain in the Police Zone was therefore set at three years. The workers had the freedom to remain with their original employer or move to a new job at the end of each year. The reality was that few sought to renew their farm contracts and it was realised that farm labour was viewed as the necessary price of a ticket south. Farm workers who renewed their contracts sought more lucrative work with the Public Works Department or the Railways.[42]

The Farm Labour Commission of 1939 identified the deduction made by farmers when stock were lost and the withholding of luxury ration items (such as sugar and tobacco) as two of the major causes of migrant workers' dissatisfaction with farm labour. Migrant workers seeking to accumulate wages to return to the North were unlikely to renew a contract with an employer who paid little or no wage. The Commission also reported that the awareness of 'C' grade workers that their compatriots in the mining industry worked a fixed number of hours for a higher wage, led some to object to the longer hours that they were often asked to work on white farms.[43] The Assistant Native Commissioner recognised that:

> Farm labourers with their lower wages work harder and longer than mines

> and urban areas natives. As a rule they do not get Sundays off.[44]

The reasons for the reluctance of migrant workers to remain on farms beyond their initial contractual obligation were clearly understood.

The administration's proposed solution to the high turnover of migrant workers was to extend the duration of the initial contract period. Sheep farmers argued that the training of a specialist shepherd took time and that the initial contract should be for two years so that farmers gained a just return for the effort involved.[45] But the poor wages and conditions associated with farm labour discouraged young workers from volunteering for two year contracts, and the efforts of the Recruitment Officer to find volunteers in 1939 were fruitless:

> We have many orders from the farmers in the South for Contracts for two years. Yesterday arrived a batch of 50 boys in Tsumeb, but only one agreed to a two year contract.[46]

No volunteers at all were found in second batch of 58 recruits.[47] The conspicuous opposition of the recruits to longer farm contracts and the concern of community leaders in the north about the prolonged absence of young men forced the administration into compromise. The maximum period of contract in the Police Zone was reduced in 1940 from three to two years with the initial contract period of twelve months being retained.[48]

One of the primary motives for farmers in southern Namibia
to demand an extension of the initial contract period was the high percentage of the recruitment fee that was absorbed by the railage. The standard charge for a grade 'C' farm worker in 1938 was 10s., to this was added 2s.6d to cover the cost of a medical examination and a 'distributing charge' of 3s.3d.[49] The total recruiting fee was then rounded up to 16s., however the farmer was also responsible for paying for the cost of the return railway journey to the nearest station. A reduced 'umfaan' rate applied from 1938 to 1940 to the young recruits travelling on the

railways (providing an added incentive for farmers to prefer adolescent to adult workers), however this was abolished in September, 1940 and new uniform rates applied.[50]

The relevance of this can be judged by considering the standard charges made in 1941 for these journeys. The fare to Otjiwarongo in central Namibia was 13s.8d, the fare to Mariental 39s.11d and the fare to Warmbad in the far south 49s.5d.[51] The fee due from a farmer in Warmbad district would thus be treble the basic recruiting fee. Indeed the total payment would be the equivalent of more than the first six months wages of a new recruit. The further away from the recruiting area a district was located the more likely it was that only the wealthier farmers would seek to recruit migrant workers.

Once farmers in southern Namibia had reached a position of financial liquidity there were obvious advantages to be derived from the employment of migrant workers. Three in particular should be highlighted. Migrant workers were not accompanied by their families. The difficulties farmers had experienced in extracting additional unwaged labour from black women on farms meant that families were perceived as a burden, rather than an asset.[52] Migrant workers were also unaccompanied by the bestial baggage associated with local workers, an important point given the increasing pressures on resources created by the rapid growth in the size of farmers' flocks. Finally migrant workers created a more stable and pliable workforce - contractually bound for a minimum of twelve months - whilst local workers could move in response to new opportunities in the neighbourhood. Migrant workers could also provide a means of meeting the labour needs of farms which had difficulties in attracting local workers due to the harshness of pay and conditions, their isolation, or the refusal of the farmer to accept stock.

Farmers felt that, for a number of reasons, migrant workers were more likely to be obedient and less likely to desert. Migrant farm workers were extremely young: In 1937 the Native Commissioner in Ovamboland estimated that their average age of was sixteen.[53] Ovambo workers travelling to the far South entered a region in

which the bulk of the local workforce spoke Nama, a linguistically very different language. The workers in the far south were also a vast distance from their homes and the prospects of deserting and successfully returning to the north slim.

The advantages of employing migrant workers were such that there were a stream of reports in the late 1930s that they were being used to displace local workers. The residents of Krantzplatz reserve complained at their AGM in 1938 that:

> ... more Hottentots (sic) are coming to the Reserve because the farmers don't want them with their stock and get Ovambos.[54]

The widespread replacement of local stock-owning farm workers with migrant workers was confirmed by the local magistrate.[55] It should be noted however that the rapid increase in stock in the late 1930s and consequent demand for labour that fuelled the importation of migrant labour also created opportunities for local black stockowners to gain grazing rights on certain farms once again.

THE CONTROL OF FARM WORKERS STOCK.

Contracts in Gibeon district for local workers in the 1940s normally contained a clause which allowed the worker to have free grazing for a certain number of stock.[56] The difference was that local black stockowners who sought to renew their employment contracts on white farms after the drought discovered that they could no longer obtain grazing concessions as generous as those that had previously been available, and that contractual limits on the number of stock that could be grazed were rigidly enforced. It was also noted that where workers did build up their flocks the lack of alternative spaces for them to move their animals to left them vulnerable to overcharging for grazing.

The magistrate for Windhoek estimated that 16 percent of farmers charged very high grazing fees:

> ... ranging from 3d to 1/- per head of large stock in most cases the charges are 6d and upwards, and from 4/-8 to 8/-4 per hundred of small stock (mostly at 8/-4 per hundred), which cases compare most unfavourably with those charged by the Lands Department to Europeans for grazing on Crownlands, namely: - 3d per head for large stock and 2/-6 per hundred for small stock.[57]

The charging of such heavy grazing fees provided a mechanism for reducing the number of stock, yet also exploited the weakened bargaining position of workers. The accommodation of workers stock was no longer an obligation imposed on farmers, but a privilege for which workers might pay heavily.

The success of black farm workers in building up their stock could be perceived as an obstacle limiting the expansion of karakul flocks. The achievement of black farm workers in Maltahohe district (which only contained the pitifully small Neuhof reserve as an alternative space for black stockowners) in rebuilding their stock after the drought met a predictable stumbling block. A large reduction in the number of black-owned stock on white farms in the district between 1938 and 1939 was attributed to the insistence of farmers that black residents reduce their flocks of goats.[58] Once stock levels reached the limit the 'surplus' would have to be sold (often to the farmer) or the worker would be asked to leave.[59] The stock balance varied from farm to farm, yet the increase of the karakul flocks progressively squeezed out other animals. The importance of preserving the purity of the breed also led farmers to be less tolerant of the presence of any animals that might cross-breed with and spoil the purity of their karakul flock.

The mass evictions of black stock from white farms during the 1930s and subsequent distress led the administration to order the police to monitor the accumulation of black stock and residents on white farms more efficiently and encourage lower limits.[60] The difference now was that farmers also had an economic incentive to co-operate with the Administration's request. The impoverishment of local black stockowners as a result of the drought (described in

chapter two) meant that farmers were able to recruit a number of local workers who due to their extreme poverty were forced to accept far more restrictive conditions of employment.

The heavy stock losses in the reserves and the stricter restrictions on the accumulation of stock by workers on white farms resulted in the re-emergence of a strata of farm labourers who had been propelled into farm labour by hunger. Once in employment the low wages and difficulties of maintaining the family without the previous pool of domestic stock led many of these families to fall into the farmer's debt. The operation by the larger farmers of small stores increased the grip of farmers over the poorer workers on their farms. Debt bondage presented these workers and their families with the real risk of becoming trapped on the farm.

The deteriorating provisions for farm worker's stock and the continuing paucity of pay did not result in the capture of all local workers as 'debt slaves'. It was officially recognised that there was a general movement of local workers and their families away from farms and into the urban areas and the reserves.[61] The broad shift in population distribution within the Police Zone is evident in Figure 10 which contains a comparison of population distribution in the years 1936 and 1946.[62] The pattern was replicated in southern Namibia. The population of the black location in Keetmanshoop virtually doubled between 1934 and 1946 and the population of the reserves in the region grew steadily.[63] Urban employment for black workers offered benefits such as rights to sick pay and days off that were unknown to farm labourers.[64]

THE LAUNCH OF SWANLA.

The shift in the balance of economic power between the agricultural and mining sectors that followed the drought was reflected in the political decisions being taken about labour recruitment. The mining industry had provided the main contribution to Gross Domestic Product in the period from 1920-1931, but following the drought

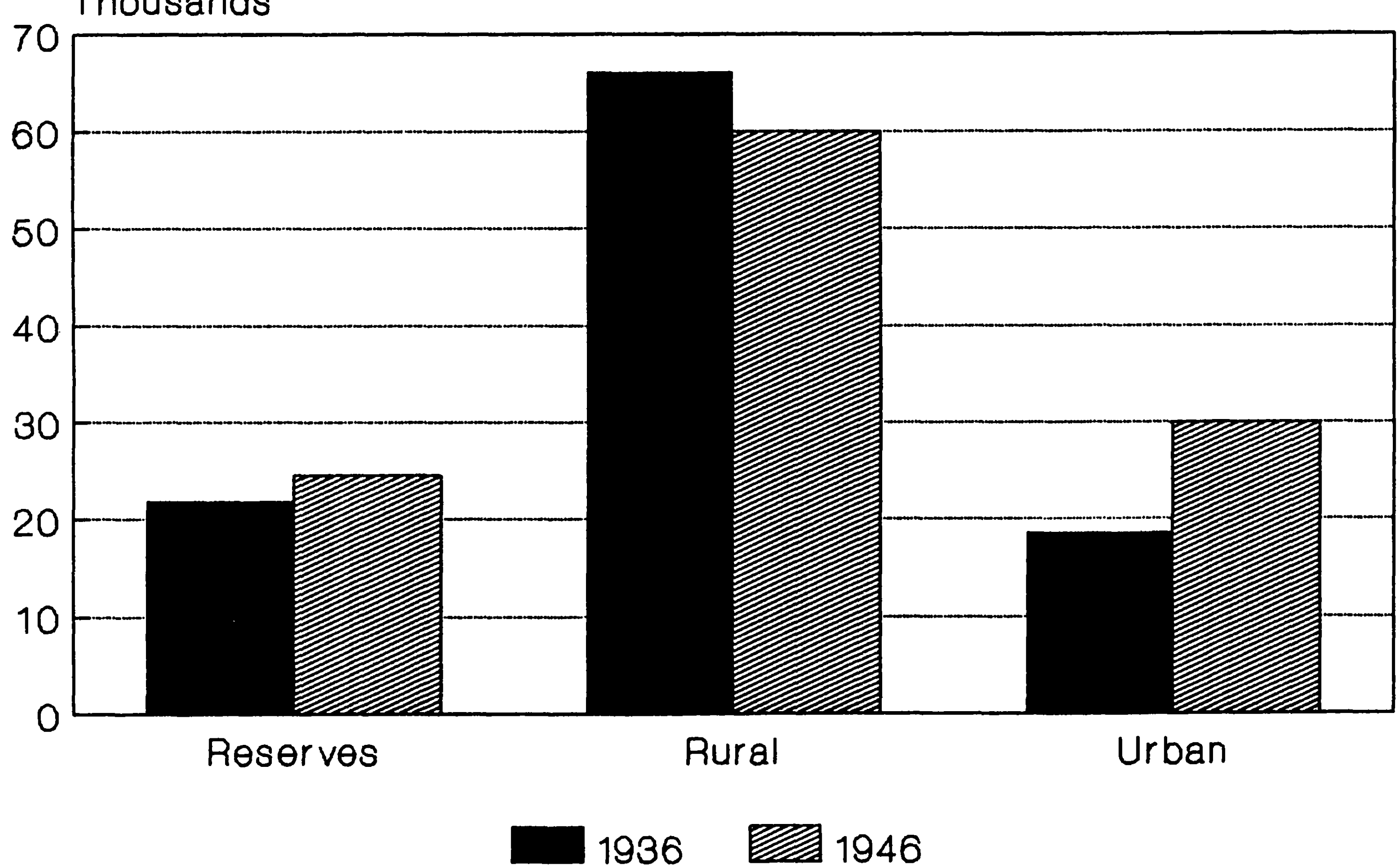


Fig. 10: BLACK POPULATION DISTRIBUTION
Reserve, Rural and Urban: 1936 & 1946
Thousands
70
60
50
40
30
20
10
0
Reserves
Rural
Urban
1936
1946

the agricultural sector became economically dominant. The mean average annual contribution of agriculture in the period 1936-1945 was the equivalent of 7,220,000 Rand in contrast to the 179,000 Rand contributed by the mining industry.[65]

The priority given to the agricultural sector is most evident in the arrangements made for obtaining military recruits for the 'Native Military Corps'. Guidelines were issued that military recruitment should not be actively undertaken in 'the southern half of the territory', nor 'on farms'.[66] Recruitment was also to be restricted to grade 'A' and 'B' workers, leaving the supply of 'C' grade, used exclusively as farm labour, unaffected. The recruitment of large numbers of recruits into the army was one of the first tasks of the newly formed South West Africa Native Labour Association Ltd. (SWANLA) which was launched following the merger of the NLO and SLO on 16th November, 1942.[67]

Two incidents can be used to demonstrate the political strength of the farming community towards the end of World War Two and the manner in which it was able to keep the wages paid to both migrant and local farm workers low. The introduction of the 'Native Minimum Wages Proclamation' which was to come into force from 1st January, 1944 sent shock waves through the farming community. The farmers concern was less with the concept of a minimum wage, than with the clause in the Proclamation that made it illegal for farmers to make any deduction from a worker's wages to compensate for the value of grazing provided for the worker's stock.[68] The fury of white farmers was such that the administration never dared enforce the Proclamation.

The second example was the way in which the farming community and SWANLA combined to manipulate the 'ABC' system to keep the wages of farm workers low. Hahn, the Native Commissioner at Ondangua, complained in 1945 that some 'C' grade recruits were being marked fit only for 'light' farm labour.[69] The original agreement had been that all 'C' grade workers were supplied for light farm work, with 'B' grade workers being available for heavier jobs. A study of recruitment figures demonstrated that in the previous two years not a single 'B' grade worker

had been recruited.[70] Hahn's conclusion was that the younger recruits were being used by farmers to carry out heavy farm work cheaply. The fact that SWANLA had requested that the administration lower the medical standards of the examination taken by recruits seemed to suggest that they were seeking to increase their recruitment of the most popular ('C' grade) recruits in order to satisfy the farming community.[71]

An additional inference that can be made from the evidence is that migrant workers were sought to carry out particular roles on the farm cheaply. The reasons for this were apparent. The youth of the grade 'C' workers meant that by very definition they lacked previous work experience. Migrant farm workers seldom renewed their contract on a farm or returned to the same farm twice. One of the ironies of the contract labour system was that the preference of farmers for grade 'C' labourers meant that they failed to obtain the experience of those who had previously completed a previous contract on a farm, but due to their increased age were more likely to be categorised at a higher, less desirable grade. The migrant farm workers also aspired to escape the farming sector and enter other higher paid sectors of the labour market. Finally it was evident that they came from a very different agricultural and environmental background to that found in southern Namibia.

Farmers were more likely to find specialist stock skills amongst the local black workforce, whilst giving unskilled work to the lower paid migrant workers. The use of the migrant worker to perform particular tasks created an ethnic element to the stratification within the workforce. The structure of the labour force on a particular farm would normally place the local worker at a social and economic advantage with a greater knowledge of the farm and tasks required and of the local languages used on the farm (such as Nama, Afrikaans and German). The lack of control that migrant workers had over their destinations also meant that they could be used to supply farms that were boycotted by or unpopular with local workers.[72] Local farm workers alleged that farmers with bad reputations would also ask the police to force local people to work for them.[73]

THE DROUGHT OF 1946.

The final decade of the period under review opened with another drought that devastated the flocks of black and white stockowners. The combination of the drought and the pastoral implications of extensive fencing signalled the final demise of the black stockowner on the farms. Local farm workers were expected to maintain no more animals than were necessary for subsistence requirements and farm ceased to provide the opportunity for accumulation of stock. Local stockowners sought to secure a specialised niche in the labour market as skilled seasonal workers seeking seasonal employment, for instance, as sheep shearers.

The use of migrant workers was central to the efforts made by the farming community to keep their labour costs low. However the disillusionment of migrant workers with farm labour meant that migrant workers, like local workers, tried to detach themselves from the farming sector. The farming lobby sought to use the recruiting organisation, SWANLA, to maintain their labour supply. Yet the diversification of the Namibian economy over this period increased the range and importance of vocational opportunities available to migrant workers and diminished the economic influence of farmers. Less than half of all the migrant workers recruited by SWANLA in 1949 were assigned to farms (the dominance of farm destinations had been previously unbroken since 1933).[74] The dominance of agriculture over mining in the primary industrial sector of the economy also ended in 1951.[75]

The impact of the drought of 1946 demonstrated the consequences of the exclusion of the stock of local workers from farms. The number of small stock owned by black farm workers on farms in the Keetmanshoop district was more than halved between 1934 and 1946, whilst the numbers in the two large reserves within the district trebled. Whereas in 1934 30 percent of small stock owned by blacks were found on farms, by 1946 the figure had fallen to just 5 percent. When the 1946 drought struck, the overstocking and closer settlement of ground around the reserve meant that reserve residents suffered significantly heavier losses than those farm

workers who were able to trek with their employer.[76] It was widely claimed that the losses of stock experienced by both black and white stockowners during the 1946 drought were far heavier than in the previous major drought due to the lack of reserve grazing and difficulties of mobility due to the high levels of stocking and land alienation.

THE ENGAGEMENT OF LOCAL FARM WORKERS, 1946-1955.

In Warmbad district the residents of the Bondelswarts reserve sought to build up their flocks of sheep which were more marketable than goats. By 1946 43 percent of their small stock consisted of sheep, however only 6 percent of the farm workers' flocks running on the surrounding farms consisted of sheep.[77] The vast majority of the animals were goats, reflecting the farmers perception of the workers' flock as a source of milk and meat, rather than an autonomous commercial enterprise. One local farm worker recalled that during nine years of working on the same farm (1940-1949) he was only allowed to keep 10 goats, 5 sheep and 2 donkeys.[78] The prospect of local workers building up their own flocks of karakul sheep was still being actively discouraged in the south in 1948 '... because it might influence the overseas market adversely'.[79] Farms no longer provided a viable route to pastoral prosperity for farm workers, instead there was evidence of a growing number of isolated local workers being kept in debt bondage on farms. One magistrate admitted in 1948 that:

> The majority of farmers are notoriously bad bookkeepers - most keep no books at all - and some I regret to say are unscrupulous in their financial dealings with their native employees. Some have shops of their own and others purchase foods for their native employees and charge more then they actually paid. I have had cases where recruited and other natives were so much in debt to their employers that they have been forced to enter into further contracts of service after the first term has expired. Some farmers make use of this method to ensure having servants.[80]

Debt could also be a powerful way of forcing migrant workers to renew a contract on a farm for a second year, rather than leaving after twelve months.

Differences in opportunity can also be related to the differing scale of urban development within the districts. Whilst none of the districts covered experienced major industrialisation, the scale of urban development with each district did have a considerably differing impact. In Keetmanshoop only 52 percent of black waged labour worked on farms in 1953, whilst in the neighbouring district of Maltahohe, containing a small town and a small reserve, 82 percent of the waged workers were estimated to be on farms.[81] The lack of incentives for local workers to seek employment on farms fuelled the continuing drift to urban areas throughout the early 1950s.[82]

The spread of the 'camp system' (which allowed for the rotation of flocks around a series of sub-divided areas) and jackal-proof fencing after World War Two reduced the labour requirements of the karakul farms of southern Namibia, yet the post-war settlement scheme intensified the labour problem facing farmers during the 1950s.[83] The strategy of local workers to escape the farming sector or only enter it conditionally contributed to the 'problem'. The workers in Bethanie district were reported to be trying to avoid permanent farm labour preferring to work in groups as sheep shearers for just three months of the year.[84] In February, 1951 42 of the 52 Work Passes issued in Tses reserve were for sheep shearing teams travelling to the surrounding farms.[85] The South West Africa Native Labourers Commission of 1948 found that generally local workers:

> ...were adverse to entering into any contract other than a monthly one.[86]

The resistance of local workers to farm employment led farmers to demand greater labour control by the authorities. Allegations were even in Maltahohe district that the police were trying to prevent local workers from selecting their employees according to the pay and conditions offered.[87] The accusations fuelled wider claims that the police were dictating the distribution of labour to individual farms

throughout southern Namibia and it was one of the issues raised at the 'Nama Tribal Meeting' held later that year.[88] The state sought to restrict the freedom of choice which gave local workers their, very limited, strength in the labour market.

SYMPTOMS OF RESISTANCE BY CONTRACT FARM WORKERS.

The failure of the local workforce to meet farmers requirements led them to place greater expectations on SWANLA. In 1946 it was estimated that over 50 percent of all farm labourers were migrant workers.[89] However the prolonged resistance of the farming community to any improvements in the pay and conditions of migrant farm workers meant that SWANLA also had rising difficulty in sustaining the supply of recruits. The opposition of migrant workers to farm labour took two tangible forms. The first was desertion and other actions by those employed and the second the refusal of fresh recruits to accept farm work.

Hahn, the Native Commissioner for Ovamboland received many letters from migrant workers complaining about the pay and conditions on the farms of southern Namibia and expressing the workers frustration at the failure of the legal system to hear or address their grievances. Attempts to complain through local channels all too often resulted in charges of 'desertion' against the complainant. When Valentinus Sacheus and Malenga Tsikalepo complained about rations and the number of hours they were forced to work on a farm in Keetmanshoop they claimed they were simply told to return. When they refused they were allegedly beaten and when they still refused sentenced to two weeks in prison before being returned to their original employer.[90] The case was typical of the many that led to the deteriorating reputation of farm labour.

Johannes Shalie was arrested three miles outside of Warmbad whilst trying to lodge a complaint about his employer. Shalie claimed that the farmer had refused to issue him with a pass and then, when he left the farm, gone ahead and arranged his interception and arrest for desertion. Shalie made the valid point that 'owing to the long distance, we will not desert', but claimed that the farm workers had gone on

strike in protest instead. The sheer distances involved meant that desertions were comparatively low on the farms of southern Namibia. One worker, for example, took one month and sixteen days to walk from his a farm in Bethanie district to the Okavango border post at Karakuwiza, another recalled that during a three-month escape he lived on food supplied by other farm workers along his route.[91] One device that workers used to make the term of their contract more tolerable were unauthorised nocturnal visits to neighbouring farms, to seek food and company.[92]

The case is also revealing in the extent to which it reveals the blurring of the distinction between the powers of the authorities and those of the farmer. Shalie was sentenced to two weeks in prison or to a £3 fine. The fine was paid by Shalie's employer who then expected Shalie to work for nothing for the next three months. The ease with which court sentences were converted into deductions from the pay packet must have made it difficult for workers to discern the limits of a farmer's power to make deductions from wages for petty offenses.[93]

The estimated number of desertions from farms within the Police Zone over a period of twelve months ending in 1947 was 600. At the end of this period 297 arrests had been made within the Police Zone and 21 beyond, but 282 of those who had escaped remained free. It was also claimed that migrant workers might desert 'in sympathy' with one worker who had suffered injustice and that this action might even spread to neighbouring farms.[94] The success of the deserter and the police was related to the distance that had to be covered by those seeking to return north. Whilst 39 of the 40 deserters in Keetmanshoop district were recaptured within the Police Zone, only 27 of the 81 deserters from Outjo district in the north had been recaptured at all.[95] The police admitted that 'only an insignificant number' of those that made it to Ovamboland were ever punished and suspected that they simply recontracted under a different name[96]

The administration recognised the clear link between desertions and the growing reluctance of recruits to accept farm labour up to 1948 when it became a prerequisite to a contract on the mines. The Deputy Commissioner for police

explained that:

> ... for no apparent reason, natives have refused to go to employers to whom they have been contracted ... It would appear that the natives keep one another informed of the conditions under which they work at the various employers.[97]

The surprisingly detailed community knowledge about the conditions on individual farms was accompanied by a more general aversion to farm labour. The situation had reached crisis point by 1948. The Report of the Native Labourers Commission published in that year cited the example of a recruiting parade at Ondangua attended by 500 hopeful able-bodied recruits. Work in the mines was offered to less than 100 of the prospective candidates, whilst the rest were offered the opportunity to volunteer for farm labour, but:

> ...the only boys who stepped forward were about a dozen youths aged 14 or 15 years. An adult boy who was about to come forward was laughed at by his companions to such an extent that he shame-facedly retired into the ranks.[98]

The classification of labour and differentiated scale of wages had created a stigma around farm labour. Officials were themselves also aware of the evidence that the young recruits supplied to farmers were often the victims of physical assaults that, given their youth, verged on child abuse.[99] The use of child labour on farms is a subject which deserves further research. The work of shepherding flocks on isolated camps must have been particularly lonely.[100]

The difficulties of recruitment were such that by 1948 SWANLA were reported to be three months in arrears with the supply of farm labourers having orders for 754 shepherds and 1,240 general farm labourers outstanding.[101] At the end of 1950 SWANLA reported that many workers would 'rather remain at home than accept farm work' and noted the fact that:

> ... many class A recruits prefer Urban Area work at class B wages to farm work at the considerably higher scale of remuneration.[102]

Recruits that agreed to accept a contract as a farm labourer seem to have done so on the basis that it was the only way to obtain a 'passport to the south' and the possibility of urban employment.

The ban on the employment of migrant workers in urban areas had been relaxed following the recommendation of the Farm Labour Commission of 1939.[103] The power of farming interests and concerns about the assumption that the lifestyle of towns would be a corruptor of youth ensured that 'C' grade labourers remained officially ineligible for urban work. However it was reported to be common practice for workers to 'break their journey' during repatriation in a town and then to seek work. Migrant farm workers hoped to be able to leave the farm and take up employment in an urban area for the second year of contract.[104] The operation of a network of mutual support in the North was evident in the discovery by the Manager of SWANLA that recruits:

> ... frequently .. carry letters issued to other Ovambos, impersonating them.[105]

The ruse was aimed primarily at helping migrant farm workers to obtain the higher paid urban wages. Work selection by migrant workers was evidently more sophisticated than a crudely determinist correlation to wage levels. The provision of higher wages was not deemed a sufficient motivation for migrant workers to volunteer for farm work. One reason for this may have been a credibility gap between the paper promise on a contract and the reality of mysterious deductions narrated by returning farm workers. The practice that farmers followed of making migrant labourers on a year's contract work a'thirteen month year' was one major cause of discontent. The extra, apparently unpaid, final month's work was supposedly to allow the farmer to pay for the return rail fare of the worker. One farm worker claimed that he was only paid for 20 of the 25 months he spent on a

farm in Karasburg as five month's pay was deducted to cover the expense of the return journey to the north (the deductions may have actually included other expenses, but the perception of injustice remained).[106]

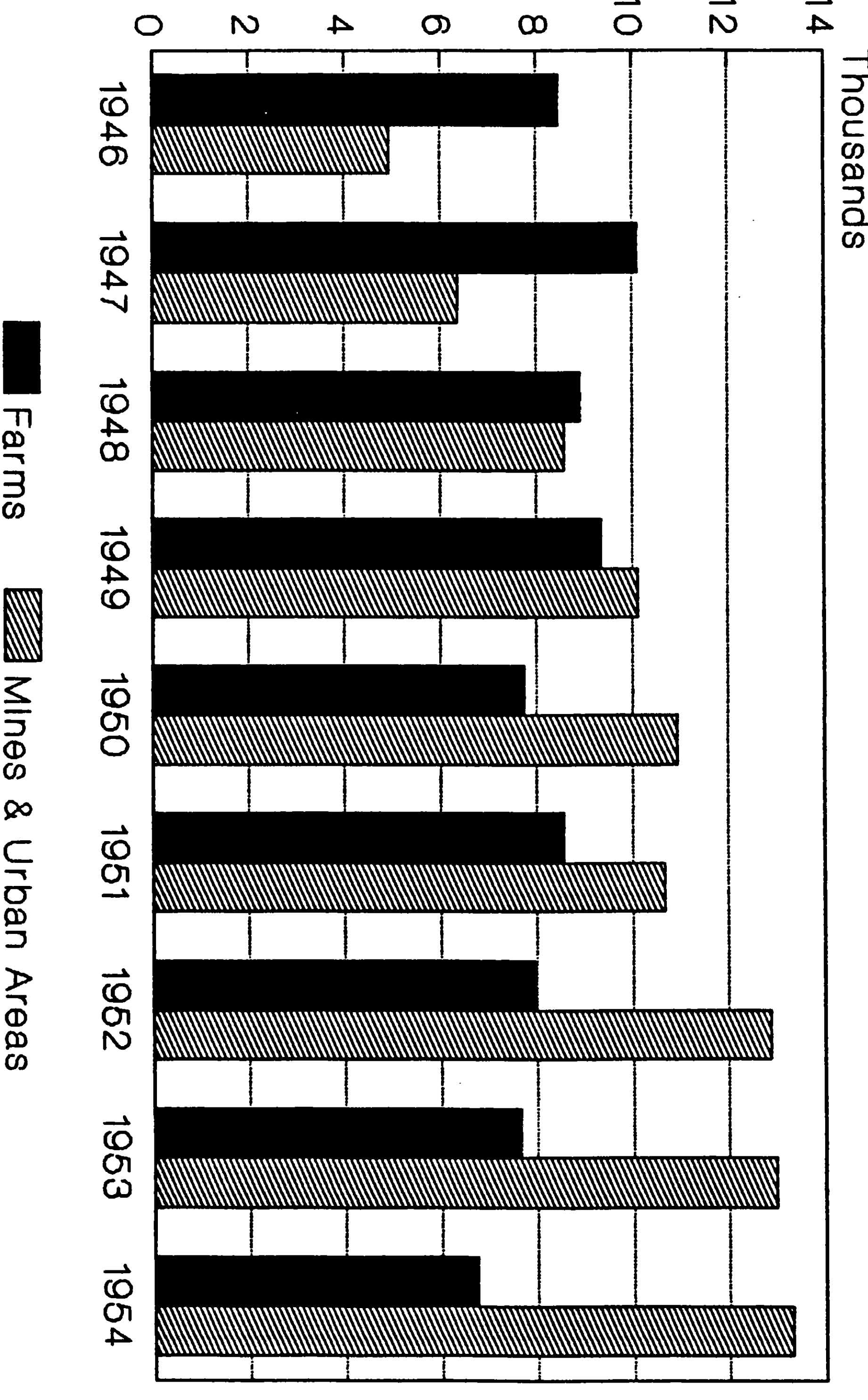
SWANLA'S CONTROL OF FARM LABOUR RECRUITMENT.

The promise of good wages did not persuade workers to travel to farms, but the prospect of an increase in the number of jobs in the mining industry was seen as diverting workers from the farming sector. In 1949 more migrant workers were employed in the mining industry (including through WENELA) than on farms for the first time since 1931, and by 1951 the local Namibian mining companies employed more migrant workers than the farmers (Figure 11). The recruitment of workers for the Witwatersrand mines in the Union from 1947 (by WENELA) was a particular cause of concern to the farming community. The aversion of migrant workers to farm labour contracts meant that efforts to secure a more stable workforce through the encouragement of voluntary two year contracts were doomed to failure. SWANLA told the Commission that over the last nine months not a single recruit had been prepared to accept a two year farm labour contract.[107]

The failure of voluntary measures led SWANLA to adopt a more coercive approach to help it meet the demands of the farmers. The response to the informal boycott of farm labour was that after 1948 it was decided that all new migrant workers would have to spend at least one contract as a farm worker before they would be able to travel to the mines.[108] A letter to Hahn written in Afrikaans and signed 'The Contract Farm Workers of SWA' complained bitterly about this imposition. The letter described the new regulation as a form of slavery and demanded the freedom for recruits to choose the nature of their employment.[109] The following year it was announced that WENELA, the recruiting organisation for the Union mines, would only be allowed to recruit 'Angolan' immigrants.[110] The measures merely encouraged the metamorphosis of many identities, rather than the recruitment of many more farm workers.

Fig. 11 MIGRANT LABOUR DISTRIBUTION

Farms versus Mines and Urban: 1946-1954



The most effective measure in the package designed to improved the flow of migrant farm labour was introduced in 1949 when the minimum initial contract period for farm workers was extended from twelve to eighteen months as a direct result of pressure on the administration by the farming lobby and contrary to the advice of SWANLA themselves or the evident wishes of the recruits.[111] The new contracts could be renewed with the same or a new farmer for a further six months and the two year maximum period was retained.[112] The change in the regulations stopped short of the two year contract favoured by many farmers, yet served to stabilise the migrant farm workforce through the extension of the minimal contract period, rather than an improvement of the inducements. The measures sought to control, not coax.

The adaption of the recruitment system to enhance the distribution of farm labour reflected the farmers' view that greater powers of control and coercion could be used to resolve their labour problems. However officials in the 'Native Affairs' Department were aware that the problems of supply continued to be linked to the pay and conditions found on farms. The failure to enforce the minimum wages proposed in the legislation of 1944 led the Chief Native Commissioner to declare angrily in 1947 that farm workers were 'not getting a square deal in wages'.[113] Wages had remained static whilst farmers had enjoyed up to 200 percent increases in their profits, and it was argued that the failure to improve the scale of farm wages by 80-100 percent meant that the migrant workers were 'being exploited'.[114] The 'Native Labourers Commission' of 1948 recommended a minimum wage of 25s per month for a shepherd and 20s. per month for a general labourer during the first year of contract.[115] Yet any attempt to increase wages modestly met strong resistance from the farming community.

The failure to improve pay was accompanied by a failure to address the criticisms made by farm workers of the conditions under which they worked. One District Surgeon claimed in 1948 that 50 percent of the farmers in the district he covered only included meat in their worker's rations when an animal died and that malnutrition was affecting the performance of farm workers.[116] The dereliction

of diet on farms was complemented by a neglect of basic standards of accommodation for farm workers. The police post at Ariamsvlei reported in 1950 that:

> Even at farms where natives are expected to reside permanently, little huts built of sticks, bits of sack, and cut-open jam tins, and cardboard boxes, are supplied, the farmer simply flatly refusing to contribute anything of value towards building of proper accommodation.[117]

The inadequacies of accommodation for farm workers were aggravated by the camp system. The movement of flocks between paddocks meant that herders were obliged to spend long periods alone at distant outposts away from even the crude housing available and sometimes without any shelter or even water.[118]

SWANLA reported that by 1949 they were being forced to offer wages for farm workers above the recommended scale in an attempt to address the recruitment problem. Yet the results remained 'largely disappointing' and SWANLA was unable to attract recruits in 'adequate numbers'.[119] The date, 1949, is important in understanding the reasons for this problem when put in the context of the role of 'Extra-territorial' workers within the migrant labour system. The Native Labourers Commission suggested that, in 1946, as many as 48 percent of the SWANLA recruits originated from Angola.[120] Angolan migrant workers played a crucial role in the farm labour system, yet the attempt to restrict WENELA's recruitment to Angolans in 1949 must have increased the number seeking contracts in the Union and reduced the inclination of these workers to seek contracts as farm workers. The increasing reluctance of workers from Northern Namibia to agree to farm work meant that the supply from Angola was essential to meet the particular labour shortage on farms and it was argued that a pay increase was essential to maintain this supply.[121]

SWANLA argued that the best opportunity for solving the farm labour problem in Namibia was to increase recruitment from Angola.[122] The administration even

gave financial support to a 'goodwill' journey to southern Angola in 1953 by Mr Cope, SWANLA's recruitment officer in Ovamboland.[123] SWANLA also improved pay. The decision was made that from 1st August, 1949 the practice of obliging workers to work a thirteenth or twenty-fifth month on their contract (in order to 'pay' their own fare back to the north) would end.[124] New pay rates eventually came into force from 1st May, 1951 with a special rate of increase for workers who renewed their contract for the designated extension period with the same employer. The link between urbanisation and difficulties in recruitment were further addressed by the establishment of Committees to fix quota limits for the black urban population of each district.[125]

The year 1955 saw the South West Africa Agricultural Union passing a resolution requesting the introduction of 30 month contracts for farm workers and the agreement that unmarried farm workers would be able to extend the length of a two year contract by a further six months.[126] Farmers still preferred proposals that helped them keep and control existing labour for a longer period. The preference partly reflected the gradual evolution of a labour policy on the farms of southern Namibia that favoured a smaller, more experienced and skilled workforce. A survey revealed that by 1958 farms in Gibeon and Warmbad districts had, on average, less that 3 farm workers each.[127]

CONCLUSION.

The spreading ripples of labour recruitment over the period 1915-1955 represented the continuing failure of the farming industry to offer competitive wages in the labour market. Farmers faced the initial difficulty of 'capturing' local black pastoralists and converting them into a rural proletariat. The destruction of the black pastoral economy failed, however, to result in the wholesale conscription of the local labour force. The replacement of pastoral priorities with a precedence for pay resulted in a movement of workers to towns, rather than farms.

The rapid increase in labour demand after 1935 led to the increasing use of migrant

workers, but the adversities associated with farm labour made the regulation of this supply also problematic. By 1955 the Land and Agricultural Bank were reporting that the labour crisis and difficulty of obtaining herders was forcing some farmers to convert their small stock flocks into cattle herds whilst others were once again forced to grant grazing concessions to secure the services of those few local black stockowners who maintained a pastoral economic base within a reserve.[128]

NOTES - CHAPTER SIX.

1. Report of the Long Term Agricultural Policy Commission. 1950. p78.

2. AR. LoN. 1924. p22.

3. AR. LoN. 1925. p109.

4. Sec. SWA. to Mag. Warmbad. 29th October, 1926. SWAA 1153 - A 158/26 vol. 2.

5. Report of the Drought Investigation Commission. June, 1924. AP 5/7/1. p108. para. 428.

6. Monthly Report. Super. Tses. November, 1926. SWAA 1429 - A 217/10 vol. 1.

7. Report of the Farm Industry Commission. 1927. p21.

8. 'Bethanie'. Livestock and Agricultural Census. 1925. AGV 189 - SV 8/4.

9. Evidence of the large number of stock that remained on white farms despite the recommendations of the Commission can be found in the records of the local Magistrates Courts. Jan Van Ghent and Willem Abasmat, two Nama speaking workers on Narubis Farm had 100 and 400 goats respectively on the farm in 1928. Rex vs Karl Moller et al. 313/28. LKE 1/1/10. See also Rex vs Cornelius Tomas, 165/28. The Manager of the Land and Agricultural Bank of South West Africa was still appealing for legislation restricting the number of goats allowed to black families living on white farms in his Annual Report for 1928. 'Report ... for year ending 31st December, 1928' AP 5/2/1.

10. Report of the South West Africa Commission. 1936. para. 140.

11. AR. Mag. Keetmanshoop. 1932. 4th January, 1933. LKE 3/1/42 - 17/11/2 part. 2.

12. 'Bethanie'. Livestock and Agricultural Census. 1925. AGV 189 - SV 8/4. and 'Bethanie' Livestock and Agricultural Census. 1935. AGV 200 - VS 13/1.

13. AR. Mag. Keetmanshoop 1932. LKE 3/1/42 - 17/11/2.

14. ANNA. 1934. Mariental SWAA 2409 - A 521/13 vol. 2.

15. AR NA. Warmbad. 1929. 6th November, 1929. LKW 3/1/3 - 2/6/

16. Informants remembered that a lost sheep would actually lead to the loss of two months wages. Interview. Abed Ashipala. 27th November, 1990. Interview. Festus Teotold 27th November, 1990.

17. C. Rothange, Store Manager to Mag. Gibeon. 5th January, 1926. LMG 3/1/21 - 17/16/23.

18. AR NA. 1932. Mag. Mariental to CNC. 16th January, 1933. LMG 3/1/29 - 2/5/2.

19. AR LoN. 1928. p22 & AR LoN. 1930. p63.

20. AR LoN 1932. p138.

21. The figures for rural areas are complicated by the fact that they include those migrant workers engaged in the mining sector, the fact that only 60 migrant workers were recruited for the mines in 1933 suggests that the rural increase was due to the expulsion of local workers from urban areas, rather than an influx of migrant workers from the North. AR LoN 1933. p82.

22. Statistics derived from AR LoN. 1928. p22, 1930. p63, 1932 p138 and 1933 p 82.

23. Drechsler, H. Let Us Die Fighting. Zed Press. London. 1980. p233.

24. Resident Commissioner, Ovamboland to British Resident, Neutral Zone. ADM 42 - 533/3.

25. Hayes notes the complaint of the Magistrate at Karibib that he had over 5,000 surplus workers in his District in 1916. Hayes, P The Failure to Realise 'Human Capital': Ovambo Migrant Labour and the Early South African State, 1925-1930. ICS Seminar Paper. 1992. p1.

26. Nine migrant workers arriving in Bethany District in May, 1916 consisted of four couples and just one single man. Record. 29th May, 1916. NAW 10 - 19/1916/6. 'Ovambo Labour' Act. Mil. Mag. Maltahoehe to Officer i/c NA. Windhuk. 26th May, 1917. LMA 3/1/6 - 23.

27. Hayes, P. The Failure to Realise 'Human Capital': Ovambo Migrant Labour and the Early South African State, 1925-1930. ICS Seminar Paper. 1992. pl

28. Moorsom, R. 'Migrant Workers and the Formation of SWANLA, 1900-1926' SALB. 1978. Vol. 4 (1). p109

29. Naturelle Arbeidskonferensie. 24th August, 1937. SWAA - A 521/13 vol. 1.

30. Naturelle Arbeidskonferensie. SWAA - A 521/13. vol. 1.

31. Interview. Miriam Hanze. 19th February, 1991.

32. Naturelle Arbeidskonferensie. SWAA - A 521/13. vol. 1.

33. NC. Windhoek to Sec. NA. Pretoria. 13th June, 1927. SWAA 2409 - A 521/13 vol. 1. Mag. Maltahohe to Sec. SWA 6th May, 1925. SWAA 2409 - A 521/13 vol. 1.

34. AR. NA. Maltahohe. 1929. LMA 3/1/40 - 2/6/2.

35. Cited in Werner, W. An Economic and Social History of the Herero of Namibia, 1915-1946. Ph.D. 1989. p321.

36. Figures cited in Werner, W. An Economic and Social History of the Herero of Namibia, 1915-1946. Ph.D. 1989. p 322.

37. SWAP, Mariental to Mag. Mariental. 24th December, 1937. LMG 3/1/29 - 2/5/2.

38. The statistics used to compile this Chart were derived from evidence submitted to the Long Term Agricultural Policy Commission. Sec. SWANLA to Chair. Long Term Agricultural Policy Commission. 30th July, 1948. KAP vol. 3 AC 12.

39. 610 "Ovambos and Okavangos". AR. NA. 1938. Mag. Mariental to CNC. 6th January, 1939.

40. AR. NA. 1939 Mag. Mariental to CNC 27th December, 1939 LMG 3/1/29 - 2/5/2.

41. SWAP. Warmbad to Mag. Karasburg. 13th December, 1943. LKW 3/4/2 - 2/16/3.

42. Farm Labour Commission. 1939. p62.

43. Report of the Farm Labour Commission. 1939. p46. and p56.

44. Assistant NC, Windhoek to CNC. 13th March, 1937. SWAA 1202 - A 158/131 vol. 1.

45. Report of the Farm Labour Commission. 1939. p38.

46. Quoted in Report of the Farm Labour Commission. 1939 p43.

47. Report of the Farm Labour Commission. 1939. p38.

48. Circular. CNC. 26th February, 1940. SWAA 2412 - A 521/13/3 vol. 2

49. Report of the Farm Labour Commission. 1939. p13-15.

50. 'Discussion...' 23rd April, 1945. SWAA 2426 - A 521/26 vol. 6.

51. 'Comparative Railfares'. 17th October, 1941. SWAA 2427 - A 521/26/1.

52. This perception was reportedly still one of the main motivations behind the preference of farmers for migrant workers in the early 1970s. See Gebhardt, F.B. SALDRU Farm Labour Conference. 1976. p8.

53. NC. Ovamboland to CNC. 2nd August, 1937. SWAA 2416 - A 521/20.

54. Minutes. AGM Krantzplatz. 4th December, 1938. LMG 3/1/28 - 2/1/2/6.

55. Mag. Mariental to CNC. LMG 3/1/28 - 2/1/2/6.

56. NA AR. 1940. Gibeon. LMG 3/1/55 - 2/12/1

57. Mag. Windhoek to Sec. SWA 17th February, 1938. SWAA 404 - A50/6 vol. 2

58. The total number of small stock belonging to black stockowners in the District fell from 21,810 in 1938 to 18,749 the following year. AR NA. Maltahohe. 1939. LMA 3/1/56 - N 1/15/6

59. 'When we had a lot of animals the farm owners would chase us away or make us pay a certain amount for using his grass... Even if the labourer was a good and trustworthy worker if he had a few animals he would be chased away'. Interview. Pastor Paul Peters. 22nd February, 1991.

60. AR LoN. 1937. p46.

61. Report of the South West Africa Native Labourers Commission, 1945-1948. p5.

62. The statistics are derived from Olivier, p16 and Sec. SWANLA to Chair. Long Term Agricultural Policy Commission. 30th July, 1948. KAP vol. 3 AC 12.

63. Minutes of 'Enquiry into Control and Management of Municipal Native Location by Municipality of Keetmanshoop ...' 22nd October, 1934 and AR NA. Keetmanshoop. 1946 SWAA 1228 - A 166/15 vol. 1.

64. Assistant NC, Windhoek to CNC. 13th March, 1937. SWAA 1202 - A 158/131 vol. 1.

65. Statistics derived from Table CVII Report of the Commission of Enquiry into South West Africa Affairs, 1962-1963. p319.

66. 'Recruitment of SWA Natives for Native Military Corps'. Circular No A 50/169 of Administrator. 13th October, 1941. SWAA 468 - A 50/169.

67. SWANLA Ltd. AR. 1943. SWAA 2426 - A 521/26 vol. 5.

68. 'Minimum Native Wages'. 8th January, 1944. Windhoek Advertiser.

69. 'Discussion...' 23rd April, 1945. SWAA 2426 - A 521/26 vol. 6.

70. NC. Ondangua to CNC. SWAA 2426 - A 521/26 vol. 6.

71. 'Discussion ...' 23rd April, 1945. SWAA 2426 - A 521/26 vol. 6.

72. One might tentatively suggest that it is within this hierarchy of social and labour power that one might find the development of the ethnic stereotyping that persists to this day. Whilst carrying out fieldwork in Namibia I was struck by the common perception in southern Namibia that 'Ovambos' were 'stupid', whilst in the North the most common insult applied to the Nama of the South was that they were 'lazy'. These misconceptions had no basis in contemporary experience, yet might be partly seen as providing 'a way of seeing' and understanding the respective different experiences of the migrant and local worker within the farm labour system of Southern
Namibia.

73. Interview. Johannes Peterson. 19th February, 1991.

74. See Sec. SWANLA to Chairman. Long Term Agricultural Policy Commission. 30th July, 1948. KAP vol. 3 AC 12. and 'Verdeling van ET en N. Naturelle' 29th January, 1955. SWAA 2428 - A 521/26/3 vol. 2.

75. See Table CVII in Odendaal Report p 319.

76. Losses in Berseba and Tses reserve ran at 39%, whilst those of black owned stock running on farms was comparable, at 24%, with the rate of loss suffered by white farmers. The concentration of animals in the smaller reserves such as Soromas led to even heavier losses. In Soromas stockowners lost a staggering 70% of their stock, whilst their colleagues working on farms suffered a mere 16% loss. AR LoN. 1934 p46 and 'Stock owned by Natives (Exclusive of Reserves) 1st September, 1945 to 31st August, 1946.' SWAA S 1/4/2.

77. 'Stock owned by Natives (Exclusive of Reserves) 1st September, 1945 to 31st August, 1946.' SWAA S 1/4/2.

78. Interview. Gertze Swaartbooi. 15th February, 1991.

79. Discussion with Add. NC. Mr J.H. Allen (under heading 'Native Agriculture in Southern Areas') 3rd December, 1948. KAP1 - AC 6/1

80. Mag. Keetmanshoop to CNC. 2nd July, 1948. LKE 3/2/5 - N 3/1/2 vol. 1.

81. In Keetmanshoop only 2,013 of 3,831 black workers were on farms, but in Maltahohe 1,000 of 1,225 were. 'Verspreiding van Naturelle-Arbeid' 1953. SWAA 480 - A 50/188/1953 (Annex).

82. AR NA. 1955 BAC 52 - HN 1/15/6

83. Jaarverslag oor Bantoesake. 1959. Mag. Keetmanshoop to CBC. 30th May, 1960.

84. NA AR. 1944. JP. Bethanie to Mag. Bethanie. 3rd January, 1945. SWAA 475 - A 50/188/10 deel 27.

85. Monthly Report. February, 1951. Tses. SWAA 1430 - A 217/10 vol. 2.

86. Report of the South West Africa Labourers Commission, 1945-1948. p5.

87. Mag. Maltahohe to CNC. 31st August, 1953. SWAA - A 50/188 vol. 1 and Hultha Hanse et al. (sixteen women) to CNC. SWAA - A 50/75/33/9

88. Minutes - 'Vergadering van Nama-Stamleiers ... te Mariental Gehou.' 11th September, 1953. SWAA 491 - A 50/238 vol. 2.

89. Report of the South West Africa Labourers Commission, 1945-1948. p5.

90. NC. Ondangua to CNC, Windhoek. 10th February, 1950. SWAA - A 50/75/33/7. See also Daniel Kambabi to 'Master Nakale' ('Nakale' was the Oshiwambo word for a sjambok, generally used as a nickname for Hahn), Ondangua. SWAA - A50/75/33/9

91. Dep. Comm. SAP. Windhoek to CNC. 28th August, 1951. SWAA - A 50/75/33/N. Interview. Simpson Darius. 21st November, 1990.

92. 'If I wanted to visit other farm workers I would wait until night and when the farmer went to sleep I would 'iyake'. Interview. Jasordu Nime. 21st November, 1990. Also Interviews Gideon Nalukaku 21st November, 1990, Festus Teotold. 27th November, 1990, Abed Ashipala 27th November, 1990.

93. Station Commander, SAP. Warmbad to Mag. Karasburg and attached statements. 28th January, 1950. SWAA 451 - A 30/75/33/5

94. Report of the South West Africa Labourers Commission, 1945-1948. p23.

95. Dep. Comm. SWAP to CNC, Windhoek. 16th July, 1947. SWAA - A 521/13 vol4.

96. Dep. Comm. SAP. Windhoek to Sec. SWA. 28th January, 1948. SWAA - A 396/1 vol. 2

97. Dep. Comm. SAP. Windhoek to Sec. SWA. 28th January, 1948. SWAA - A 396/1 vol. 2

98. Report of the South West Africa Labourers Commission, 1945-1948. p17

99. The Native Commissioner for Ovamboland observed '... that a considerable number of these recruits bear marks of canings or floggings on their buttocks and other parts of their bodies. On investigation I was informed that their employers had flogged them for losing sheep or cattle or some other offence' and noted with regret '... the growing disinclination of natives who have been so treated to complain to the Police of the area concerned. The general reason given is that they

receive another hiding from the Police.' NC. Ovamboland to CNC. 11th January, 1946. SWAA - A 521./13 vol.3

100. Local farm workers also often started very young. One informant remembered starting his first job at the age of 12. Interview. Gertze Swaartbooi. 15th February, 1991. Another informant commented that on one farm 'children that didn't work couldn't stay' Interview. Cornelius Frederick. 21st December, 1990.

101. Report of the South West Africa Labourers Commission, 1945-1948. p17.

102. SWANLA Report on period 01/01/1949 to 30/06/1950. 30th December, 1950. SWAA 2426 - A 521/26 vol. 7

103. Report of the Farm Labour Commission. 1939. p60.

104. CNC to Sec. Labourers Commission. 14th June, 1947. SWAA 453 - A 50/75/34 vol. 1

105. Vlok, SWANLA Manager to Sec. SWA. 18th December, 1951. SWAA - A 50/75/34 vol. 1

106. Interview. Jasordu Nime. 21st November, 1990.

107. Report of the South West Africa Labourers Commission, 1945-1948. p21.

108. Press Release ... Farm Labour. February, 1953. SWAA - A 521/7 vol. 2

109. "Hulle moet hul voe self apas. Ons is nou waarlik moeg van hierdie slawerny wat weggesteek is ... Die kontrak van die plase bring net vir onse volke armheid en verwoesting." NC. Ondangua to CNC. 6th October, 1951. SWAA - A 50/75/34 vol. 1

110. Emmett. A. The Rise of African Nationalism in South West Africa/Namibia, 1915-1966. Ph.D 1987. p466.

111. Rheinallt Jones, J.D. 'Administration of South West Africa' Race Relations Journal. 1952. XIX (1). p15-17.

112. SWANLA Circular. 16th October, 1950 SWAA 2436 - A 521/26 vol.7

113. 'Notes of Discussion between CNC, Mr Courtney-Clarke & Vlok of SWANLA, NCs Ovamboland, & Additional NC.' 6th June, 1947. A 161. Vol. 4.

114. 'Notes of Discussion between CNC, Mr Courtney-Clarke & Vlok of SWANLA, NCs Ovamboland, & Additional NC.' 6th June, 1947. A 161. Vol. 4.

115. Report of the ... Native Labourers Commission, 1945-48. p46.

116. Evidence of 'Dr. D.' Report of the SWA Native Labourers Commission, 1945-48. p36.

117. AR NA. SAP. Ariamsvlei. 1950. LKW 3/1/7 - 17/14/2

118. AR NA 1949. Mag. Keetmanshoop SWAA 478 - A 50/188/1949.118.

119. Memo. SWANLA to Admin. 7th January, 1949 SWAA 2426 - A521/26 vol. 7

120. Report of the ... Native Labourers Commission, 1945-48. p9.

121. Special Meeting of SWANLA Board of Management. 6th June, 1955. BAC 81 HN 3/13/2 vol.1

122. SWANLA Report on period 01/01/1949 to 30/06/1950. SWAA 2426 - A 521/26 vol. 7

123. Press Release ... Farm Labour. February, 1953. SWAA - A 521/7 vol. 2

124. Rheinallt Jones, J.D. 'Administration of South West Africa' Race Relations Journal. 1952. XIX (1). p15-17.

125. Rheinallt Jones, J.D. 'Administration of South West Africa' Race Relations Journal. 1952. XIX (1). p15-17. and 'Press Release ... Farm Labour' February, 1952. SWAA - A 521/7 vol. 2.

126. SWALU Nuusbrief. 15th July, 1955. BAC 81 - HN 3/13/2 vol.1

127. 'Hoeveel Ovambos gemiddeld per Plaas ?' Die SWA Boer. 1958.

128. AR LAB. 1955. AP 5/2/1/1 and NA AR. 1951. Mag. Bethanie SWAA 480 - A 50/188/1951.

CONCLUSION.

The aim of this dissertation has been to present a study of economic change and its consequences within a rural region. The actions and responses of one group of actors to the process of land alienation and labour recruitment influenced others operating within the system. The dynamic of change was not simply the translation of legislation - the impact of change varied according to important vertical and horizontal differences within and between communities at the local level. The environmental constraints of southern Namibia meant that the emphasis was placed on the relationship between land and labour within a pastoral economy and the key importance of mobility has been emphasised.

The regional experience of southern Namibia was, where necessary, placed within the broader national context. The most obvious example of this was the importance of migrant workers from northern Namibia and Angola within the commercial farming sector. Local experiences have therefore been used to provide a window into more general patterns of change during a period that is neglected in the existing historiography.

The focus on southern Namibia sought to explore a region that is interesting because of its virtually exclusively pastoral economy, but also because the reaction of the black population to colonialism during the period covered has been neglected. Historians may prefer to write about explosive acts of resistance to colonial rule, but the experience of black pastoralists in southern Namibia is equally important in understanding the structuring of the regional economy. The legacy of the period was the establishment of a clear division between dispossessed black pastoralists and a commercial farming sector dominated by the families of white immigrants. There was nothing inevitable about this division, without the intervention of a discriminatory state; however it seems inevitable that those who gained preferential positions within the regional rural economy of southern Namibia will resist any efforts to restructure it.

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A 23. Papers and library of Dr. C.J. Lemmer. 1946-1954.

A 90. Books of Warmbad Village Management Board. 1916-1956.

A 98. Papers of E.C. Biermann. 1896-1960.

A 117. Correspondence of Rev. E.J. Leonard. 1918-1933.

A 161. Papers of J. Neser. 1918-1950.

A 312. Papers of the Private Secretaries to the Administrators of South West Africa. 1915-1959.

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ADM 3370 Annual Report. 1916.
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AGV A 2/1A Purchase of Stock. Loans from Land & Agricultural Bank. 1927-1929.
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BAC Archives of the Chief Bantu Affairs Commissioner. Windhoek. 1953-1960.

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KAP Evidence presented to the Long Term Agricultural Policy Commission. 1948.

Files of evidence of particular interest presented to the Commission included:

KAP AC 6/1 Occupation of Land. Native Reserves. 1948.
KAP AC 7/3 Stock Losses from Drought and Disease. 1948.
KAP AC 12 Farm Labour. 1948.

KFI Evidence presented to the Farm Industry Commission. 1926-1927.

A questionnaire was circulated by the Commission to farmers in the territory inviting them to provide details of their financial and stock assets. 141 of the questionnaires received were from the Districts covered by this thesis [See KFI 1, 3 and 5].

KLS Evidence presented to the Land Settlement Commission. 1934-1935

Oral and written evidence was accepted by the Commission. The files also contain useful lists of farms giving the size, the basis of the occupants land rights and the name of the occupant(s) for each individual farm as of 1st February, 1935 [see KLS 1 and 2].

KSW Evidence presented to the South West Africa Commission. 1935.

A complete set of transcripts of the evidence presented to the Commission as it toured the territory is available. The evidence includes detailed statements by prominent settlers in Southern Namibia and of senior officials in the Native Affairs Department (see KSW 25-46).

LAN Archives of the Lands Branch of the South West Africa Administration. 1920-1960.

Files of particular interest included:

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LAN 8 11 Gazettal of Farms. 1916-1950.
LAN 11 15 Advances to Settlers. 1926-1937.
LAN 37 84 Grazing Licences. 1928-1949.
LAN 40 87 Land Settlement Enquiry Commission. 1935.

LAR Archives of the Magistrate at Aroab. 1915-1941.

The Magisterial Seat at Aroab was abolished in 1941 and the land that had made up the District added to neighbouring Districts. Reports from Aroab District for the period of its existence can be found in a number of files, including:

LAR 2/4 Native Affairs. Reports and Returns. 1924-1930.

LBE Archives of the Magistrate at Bethanie. 1915-1955.

The Magisterial District of Bethanie only had a small staff and the Magistrate's Office was closed completely from 1931 to 1947. The majority of business for the District during this period was dealt with by the Keetmanshoop Magistrates Office. A Special Justice of the Peace heard cases in the District from 1944 to 1947. The archive is thus smaller than that found for most other Districts, however some interesting cases were heard before the Magistrate and Special Justice of the Peace (see LBE 6 - 9).

LKE Archives of the Magistrate at Keetmanshoop. 1915-1955.

Files of particular interest included:

LKE 1/1/1 - 1/1/16		Criminal Cases. Magistrate Keetmanshoop. 1915-1955
LKE 3/1/13	52/7/4/17/8	Return of Labour Contracts. Tses. 1917-1919.
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LKE 3/1/45	2/13/2	Native Affairs. Annual Reports. 1931-1934.
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LKE 7/7/1		Grazing Licenses. Monthly Returns. 1918-1921.

LKW Archives of the Magistrate at Karasburg/Warmbad. 1915-1955.

Files of particular interest included:

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Abbreviations.

CJAS - Canadian Journal of African Studies.
JAH - Journal of African History.
JMAS - Journal of Modern African Studies.
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INTERVIEWS.

The following list provides the name of the individual interviewed, the date of the interview, the place where the interview was carried out, the date of birth of the person and the main topics covered in each interview.

Ruben Hendricks (01.10.1990 Keetmanshoop)
Born. 1939. Politics of Berseba Reserve, 1940s and 1950s.

Dirk Kooper (02.10.1990 Keetmanshoop)
Born. 1908. Pay and conditions on farms in Keetmanshoop District.

Paulus Van Der Westhuyzen (03.10.1990 Keetmanshoop)
Born 1940. Pay and conditions on farms in Keetmanshoop District.

Karl Böck (03.10.1990 Keetmanshoop)
Born 1940. Pay and conditions on farms in Keetmanshoop & Karasburg Districts.

Rebecca Dierstan (26.10.1990 Warmbad)
Born 01.01.1917. The genealogy of the leadership of the Bondelswarts. The Bondelswarts Rising of 1922. Life in Bondelswarts Reserve. Pay and conditions on farms in Karasburg District. Odendaal Plan.

Anna Christiaans (27.10.1990 Karasburg)
Born 06.02.1939. 'Kaptein' of the Bondelswarts. Life in Bondelswarts Reserve. Odendaal Plan.

Ernst Kaffer (27.10.1990 Guichabis)
Born 22.01.1930. The Bondelswarts Rising of 1922. The meeting of 1946 about incorporation. The Odendaal Plan. Life in Bondelswarts Reserve.

Jan A. Laberloth (28.10.1990 Karasburg)
Born 22.05.1918. Administration and politics of the Bondels Reserve. History of the Bondelswarts Community. The Bondelswarts Rising of 1922.

Angula Andimba (21.11.1990 Olulongo)
Born 1916. Former contract farm worker from Onantsi in Ovamboland. Migrant labour system. Pay and conditions on farms in Mariental, Tsumeb and Omaruru District. 1941-1946. Problems leaving one farm.

Jasordu Nime (21.11.1990 Olulongo)
Born 1912. Former contract farm worker from Angola. Migrant labour system. Pay and conditions on farms in Karasburg and Windhoek Districts.

Mateus David (21.11.1990 Olulongo)
Born 1921. Former contract farm worker from Oshali in Ondonga. Migrant labour system. Payù-|| ndonditions on a farm in Karasburg District.

Gideon Nalukaku (21.11.1990 Olulongo)
Born 1921. Former contract farm worker from Okaloko. Migrant labour system. Pay and conditions on farms in Outjo, Windhoek and Mariental Districts.

Samuel Amukugo (21.11.1990 Olulongo)
Born 22.09.1939 Former contract farm worker from Okatana in Uukwambi. Migrant labour system. Pay and conditions on a farm in Tsumeb District (1958-1960).

Johannes Kafula (21.11.1990 Olulongo)
Born 1920. Former contract farm worker from Eengwena in Uukwanyama. Migrant labour system. Pay and conditions on a farm in Maltahohe District.

Sakaria Nahole (21.11.1990 Olulongo)
Born 1921. Former contract farm worker from Iinongo in Ondonga. Migrant labour system. Pay and conditions on farms in Okahandja, Outjo and Karasburg Districts.

Simson Darius (21.11.1990 Olulongo)
Born 1930. Former contract farm worker from Onathinge in Ondonga. Migrant labour system. Pay and conditions on a farm in Gobabis District.

Tomas Walaula (21.11.1990 Olulongo)
Born 1939. Former contract farm worker from Onkuni in Ondonga. Migrant labour system. Pay and conditions on a farm in Tsumeb District.

Festus Teotold (27.11.1990 Eheke)
Born 19.12.1923. Former contract farm worker from Okatale in Ondonga. Migrant labour system. Pay and conditions on farms in Otjiwarongo, Grootfontein, Okahandja and Karasburg Districts (1944 - c.1950)

Thomas Michael (27.11.1990 Eheke)
Born 10/1944. Former contract worker from Enkono in Ondonga. Migrant labour system. Pay and conditions on a farm in Outjo District (1962 - c.1965).

Silas Mashina (27.11.1990 Eheke)
Born c. 1922. Former contract farm worker from Onamungundo in Ondonga. Migrant labour system. Pay and conditions on farms in Grootfontein District (1956 - c.1960)

Jacob Awene (27.11.1990 Eheke)
Born c. 1923. Former contract farm worker from Onekaku in Ondonga. Migrant labour system. Pay and conditions on a farm in Bethanie District.

Abed Ashipala (27.11.1990 Eheke)
Born 24.12.1923. Former contract farm worker from Oniipa in Ondonga. Migrant labour system. Pay and conditions on a farm in Keetmanshoop District (1942-1944).

Cornelius Frederick (21.12.1990 Kosis)
Born 25.12.1917. Youngest son of Josef Frederik ('Headman' of Soromas Reserve. 1927-1938). Stock limits in Soromas Reserve. Pay and conditions on farms in Bethanie District

Pastor Paul Peters (22.02.1991 Gibeon)
Born 26.07.1912. The establishment of the AME Church in Southern Namibia. Pay and conditions on farms in Maltahohe & Gibeon Districts.

Rev. Willem. Moses Jod (21.02.1991 Mariental)
Born 1919. The establishment and work of the AME Church in Southern Namibia.

Sabina Joseph (19.02.1991 Maltahohe)
Born 1923. Stock limits and local impact of World War Two in Maltahohe District.

Miriam Hanze (19.02.1991 Maltahohe)
Born 1928. Pay and conditions on a farm (1946-1948) in Karasburg District.

Fritz !Gariseb (19.02.1991 Maltahohe)
Born 15.09.1925. Identity and land rights.

Jesias Izaak (19.02.1991 Maltahohe)
Born 31.10.1916. Gibeon Meeting (1946) regarding incorporation. Rhenish Mission and education.

Johannes A. Peterson (19.02.1991 Maltahohe)
Born 26.06.1923. Reputation of local farmers. Controls over movement in Maltahohe District. Contract workers from north.

Christina Appolus (15.02.1991 Mariental)
Born 1938. Childhood on farm in Keetmanshoop District and forced removal from farm. Experience of 1946 drought in Berseba Reserve.

Gertze Swaartbooi (15.02.1991 Mariental)
Born 1929. Pay and conditions on a farm in Karasburg District (1940-1949) and a farm by the Orange River (1949-1967). The Odendaal Plan. The causes of the Bondelswarts Rising of 1922. The treatment of Bondelswarts prisoners in 1922.