


**LABOUR ON COMMERCIAL FARMS IN ZAMBIA: A CASE STUDY OF
THE SOUTHERN PROVINCE, 1945 - 1980**

**BY
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partial fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of
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This dissertation represents my own work, and it
has not previously been submitted for a degree
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APPROVAL

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation examines the process of labour stabilization on the commercial farms in the Southern Province of Zambia between 1945 and 1980. It does this by attempting to show how post-Second World War technological innovations, rural-to-rural migrations, landlessness and population increase, increased investments and re-investments, the shift in agricultural production, and the participation of private and parastatal companies in agriculture contributed to the process of labour stabilization on the commercial farms.

Post-Second World War mechanical and bio-chemical innovations were instrumental in the evolution of a permanent skilled labour force on the commercial farms. Equally instrumental were rural-to-rural migrations, that is, the migration of labour from outer districts and provinces to the commercial farms along the line-of-rail, and the development of the enclosure system and natural population in the native reserves. The colonial state was largely indifferent towards the process of rural labour stabilization as evidenced by its refusal to participate in the production and

provision of workers' houses on the commercial farms. However, during the colonial period, a rural proletariat was formed on the farms. This class lacked access to the means of production, particularly land, and was conscious of its class position and capable of taking class action or struggles.

Increased investment in farm machinery and farm vehicles and the consolidation of the enclosure system in the villages or customary lands further strengthened the process of labour stabilization in the post-colonial period. More skilled labour was required to operate tractors, trucks, and combine harvesters. At the same time, landlessness in the villages increased the participation of the local plateau Tonga in permanent wage employment on the farms. Like the colonial state, the post-colonial state was more concerned with creating material conditions for production and not with guaranteeing farm labour's improved working and living conditions. This was shown by the post-colonial state's generally anti-labour position particularly in relation to workers' housing and unionization.

The diversification of crop production, the return to beef production, and the introduction of irrigation after 1975 broadened and consolidated the process of labour stabilization on the farms. Irrigation led to demand for a relatively large permanent unskilled labour force whilst at the same time increasing the skilled labour component to operate tractors, trucks, and combine harvesters. There was also increased participation of companies in agricultural and pastoral production. Following a recognition agreement between the National Union of Plantation and Agricultural Workers and the Commercial Farmers Bureau in 1974, the former opened several union branches particularly on the company-owned farms. Thus, by 1980, the process of rural proletarianization on the commercial farms in the Southern Province was completed.

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ABBREVIATIONS

ALS:	African Labour Corps
ANC:	African National Congress
BSACO:	British South Africa Company
CFB:	Commercial Farmers Bureau
CSO:	Central Statistical Office
FAO:	Food and Agricultural Organization
ILO:	International Labour Organization
NAZ:	National Archives of Zambia
NRG:	Northern Rhodesia Government
NUPAW:	National Union of Plantation and Agricultural Workers
ROZ:	Republic of Zambia
UNIP:	United National Independence Party
ZNPF:	Zambia National Provident Fund

MEASUREMENTS AND CURRENCY

In January 1968, currency in Zambia changed from Pounds, Shillings and Pence (£ D d) to Kwacha and Ngwee (K N). Figures are both in Kwacha and Ngwee and Pounds. In 1968, six pence was equivalent to five ngwee and twenty shillings (or one pound) to two Kwacha.

2.47 acres is equal to 1 hectare

5/8 of a mile is equal to 1 kilometre

1 foot is equal to .3048 metres

1 pound (lb) is equal to $\frac{1}{2}$ kilogram

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

This study examines the process of labour stabilization on the commercial farms in Zambia (formerly Northern Rhodesia) from 1945 to 1980. It is based on a case-study of the three agriculturally advanced districts in the Southern Province, namely Mazabuka, Monze and Choma.¹

Farm labour, like mine labour and other forms of wage employment, was one of the most important ways through which Africans were drawn into the wage labour system upon the introduction of colonial rule. However, farm labour has received relatively little scholarly attention. This has prompted Kusum Datta to write:

Historical research often reflects the dominant contemporary economic trends. Mining capital and its interests not only dominated the political-economic policies of the state in Zambia from the colonial to the post-colonial times, it equally captivated the attention of historians of Zambia far too long. Consequently, the voluminous labour historiography of Zambia sheds little light on the dynamics of farm labour.²

Furthermore literature on the rural communities shows a preponderance of studies on the development of

European agriculture per se and on the peasantry.³

The present study marks a significant theoretical and methodological departure from the existing works on farm labour in Zambia. The preceding works have been conceived within the underdevelopment theory explicitly or implicitly.⁴ Although the underdevelopment theory is helpful in understanding the development of capitalism in peripheral social formations and their articulation with the metropolitan countries, it overlooks the importance of internal factors such as class formation in the former.⁵ The discourse of historical materialism, which views social classes as historical categories which arise in the process of the development of production, is more useful. As Samir Amin has noted, the concept of historical materialism such as means of production, relations of production, and social class 'have scientific value only to the extent that they possess universal analytical applicability.'⁶

Lytton Zgambo's work on labour on the commercial farms in the Eastern Province of Zambia focused on land alienation, labour mobilization, the social and economic conditions of labour, and workers' responses

to the poor conditions between 1889 and 1964. Zgambo concluded that both peasant and commercial farming in the province were underdeveloped. This was due to labour migration from the province to more attractive labour markets in the Southern African economic region.⁷ Zgambo's conclusion is at variance with the situation obtaining in the Southern Province of Zambia where both peasant farming from the 1930s onwards, and commercial agriculture, prospered.⁸

Zgambo's pre-occupation with the negative effects of land alienation and labour migration and with poor working and living conditions on the farms made him fail to discern the process of rural class formation. In this study I argue that a class of rural workers was formed on the commercial farms in the Southern Province in the process of capitalist agricultural production. In marxist jargon this class could be called a "rural proletariat".⁹ This class was partially or wholly dependent on money wages for its daily up-keep and long-term reproduction. Certain sections of this rural proletariat lacked access to the means of production or to productive property of its own

thereby making it dependent or partially dependent on the farm wages.

Zgambo's study has methodological weaknesses because it is almost exclusively based on written and archival sources. Both written and archival sources are subject to author-bias which could be ideological or political and even social. Reports of administrative staff and agricultural staff that replete archives tend to reflect official state positions. Hence, on their own archival sources cannot be the basis of an objective study. Oral interviews have the important function of supplementing and verifying documented history by the insiders or the actors themselves, in this case the farmers, farm workers, and other persons. In addition to interviews, I administered a questionnaire to the farmers. This way, a larger number of farmers was reached than could have been the case if the field research was only confined to interviews. Both the interviews and the questionnaires have evident value in that they enable us to know, among other things, the views and opinions of the workers and the employers and the duration of time spent in wage employment by the former. Such

information becomes vital in assessing the levels of proletarianization.

Datta's unpublished seminar paper is also based on written and archival sources. She was concerned with the role of the Zambian colonial state, through the African Labour Corps (ALC), in mobilizing labour for agrarian capital between 1942 and 1952 particularly in the Lusaka and Chisamba areas where labour shortages were more acute.¹⁰ Because of the limited scope of her paper, we learn little or nothing about the making of a rural class of wage-earners on the commercial farms.

The concept of "peasant-worker" which Datta used for migrant farm labour has little analytical value to the Southern Province particularly during the period she is considering. The concept denotes that workers retained strong ties with their home villages and that they were not proletarianized as a consequence. Yet, in 1952, G.J. Labuschagne, the District Assistant for Mazabuka district, noted that on S.A. Andresen's farm: 'Quite a number of his employees have been with him for twenty to thirty years.'¹¹ Certainly, these workers who had worked for such a long period of time could not

be categorized as "peasant-workers".

Similarly, the assertion by Vai Daka that during the colonial period a rural proletariat in Zambia was difficult to identify is untenable.¹² The argument is not based on empirical evidence. Unlike Daka, Gilbert Mudenda identified agricultural workers, composed of plantation (including permanent workers on the commercial farms) and seasonal workers, as the second largest section of the Zambian working class.¹³

What emerges from the aforesaid is that the tendency to view agricultural labour as being exclusively made up of seasonal workers is potentially misleading. A distinction has to be made between the unskilled and seasonal employees on the one hand and the unskilled and skilled permanent employees on the other.¹⁴ It is the latter group that formed the back-bone of the stabilized agricultural labour force. Labour stabilization is an important measure of the level of proletarianization, that is, increased or permanent involvement in wage labour as a result of the separation from the means of production, notably land.

AIMS OF THE STUDY

This study sets itself two broad aims. The first one is to examine the process of labour stabilization on the commercial farms. I argue that technological changes in commercial agriculture after 1945 strengthened the process of labour stabilization. As used in this dissertation, "commercial farms" are pastoral and agricultural enterprises on crownland or stateland which, until 1964, were owned by the white farmers. Before 1964, commercial farms were also known as "settler farms", "white farms", and "European farms". After 1964 some African farmers joined the ranks of commercial farmers following the departure of some white farmers from Zambia in the wake of national political independence. African farmers on the settlement schemes and in the villages are excluded from my definition of a "commercial farmer" because of the lower level of capitalization in this group. "Labour stabilization" means the evolution of a permanent labour force which could be skilled and unskilled. The existence of a permanent labour force calls for better housing, wages, and social facilities in addition to the acquisition of manual and technical skills. In urban sociological theory, "stabilization"

means permanent residence in the urban areas.¹⁵ In this case, it means permanent residence on the commercial farms or in the rural areas and not in the urban areas.

I further argue that rural-to-rural migration, that is, migration from the relatively poor districts and provinces to the commercial farms along the line-of-rail, and landlessness hastened the process of labour stabilization on the commercial farms. The two processes were instrumental to the development of commercial agriculture.¹⁶

The second aim is to examine both colonial and post-colonial agricultural labour policy particularly in relation to farm housing and the unionization of farm labour. I argue that the state, as a dominant fraction in society, can either slow down or accelerate the process of class formation by virtue of its ability to formulate agricultural policy and legislation. For instance, the state can slow down class formation by merely creating material conditions for production alone without ensuring labour's reproductive needs. At the same time the state can accelerate class formation by guaranteeing labour's reproductive

facilities such as housing and improved working conditions.¹⁷

This dissertation is organized into five chapters. After the introduction, chapter two examines the process of labour stabilization on the commercial farms between 1945 and 1964. The third chapter examines post-colonial labour stabilization and policy. The fourth chapter briefly examines the impact of the diversification of commercial agricultural production and the introduction of irrigation on the stabilization of farm labour between 1975 and 1980. The final chapter is a summary and conclusion.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

In Southern Africa, Zambia was the northern-most out-post of British political and economic interests initially represented by Cecil Rhodes' British South Africa Company (BSACO). At first the British Colonial Office was opposed to large-scale white settlement north of the Zambezi river. Lord Milner, the High Commissioner for South Africa between 1897 and 1905, regarded the area north of the Zambezi as a tropical dependency,

like Uganda, which was unsuitable for large-scale white settlement. His successor, Lord Selbourne, shared a similar view.¹⁸

The BSACO officials "on the spot" whilst accentuating to Zambia's initial role as a labour reservoir for the mines and farms in Zimbabwe (formerly Southern Rhodesia) and South Africa, had other views. They realised that progress north of the Zambezi river could only come about through large-scale white agrarian settlement. White settlement was encouraged in the areas which were considered suitable particularly along the line-of-rail from Livingstone to the Copperbelt.¹⁹ In the Southern Province the first farm was granted in January 1902 in the Kalomo area to H.F. Walker, a 'a famous hunter and transport rider.'²⁰

Most of the white farmers from Zimbabwe and South Africa were attracted into the Southern Province, particularly after the extension of the rail line from Livingstone to the Katanga (now Shaba) copper mines between 1905 and 1910, by the prospects of acquiring cheap land, labour, and cattle. By 1908 there were sixty-eight farms in the then North-Western

Rhodesia. Out of these farms, fifty-eight were occupied, thirty of them by the relatively well capitalized farmers.²¹ Most of these early farmers had little capital and farming experience. At times, they combined farming with cattle trading and transport riding.²² They produced maize and beef for the limited domestic and the Shaba markets.

For a while, the Zambian Copperbelt construction boom of the late 1920s boosted commercial agriculture. A Land Settlement Board was established to encourage white immigration and to provide agricultural loans to the farmers. In 1929, an agricultural research station was opened at Mazabuka to provide expertise to white farmers. The process of land alienation was hastened in order to give room to an anticipated influx of white farmers. But the boom was cut short by the World Depression of 1929 which ruined many farmers. In order to protect the white farmers from African producers in the post-depression period, the colonial state introduced the Maize Control Board in 1936 which in part offered higher price for white produced maize.²³ Generally the problems of capital, expertise, climatic

conditions, market fluctuations, lack of a clear BSACO agricultural policy, and competition within the Southern African economic region hampered the full development of white agriculture in the first four decades of colonial rule.²⁴

Before the introduction of tractors largely in the post-Second World War period, ox-drawn technology was used widely by the white farmers. As Lewis Gann has noted, by 1913 some farmers were already using a wide range of ox-drawn agricultural machinery. These included implements such as ox-drawn Deere disc ploughs, disc harrows, zig-zag harrows, mould-board ploughs, cultivators, chains and stink-wood yokes.²⁵ The average number of ploughs owned by the farmers was eight. Over twenty men were required to handle five ploughs in turns. In addition, a similar number of men was required to guide the animals.²⁶ In other words, ox-drawn plough technology required a large unskilled seasonal labour force. Bio-chemical technology was still rudimentary. Cow-dung was used widely to fertilize crops. Hybrid maize seed was still non-existent.

The generally poor performance of white agriculture before 1945 was responsible for high labour turnover on the commercial farms. Absenteeism, desertions, and general perfidy were the order of the day on the farms. Referring to labour problems in all the farming districts in Zambia in 1938, G. St. J. Orde Browne, the head of the commission of inquiry appointed to inquire into the labour problems of Zambia, had this to report:

The principal difficulties are: a poor supply of labour at all times, with a definite shortage at seasons of special agricultural importance; irregular attendance, with the resultant evils of ill-organized work schedules; and a general unreliability of the native worker. The usual vicious circle exists; low-grade labour, worth only a meagre wage; poor housing and rations as a result; consequent unpopularity of the area; and a steady degeneration of the whole standard of work.²⁷

In the pre-Second World War period local plateau Tonga worked on the farms when in need of money to pay taxes and to meet other obligations.²⁸ Target labour denotes the delayed proletarianization of the peasantry and was dictated by the requirements of nascent capitalist agriculture whose labour demands were largely seasonal.²⁹ The local Tonga were prone to desertion

and absenteeism. Brutality
resentment by the local people over
also responsible for the unreliability of
labour. It is partly for this reason that local
labour was regarded by the white farmers and the
colonial officials as unreliable and dishonest.³⁰

Despite the initial unreliability of local Tonga
labour, farm work did in fact provide an alternative to
the long, and often dangerous journeys to the labour
markets in Zimbabwe and South Africa and, from the late
1920s, to the Zambian Copperbelt. By selling their
labour-power on the farms, the plateau Tonga were able
to earn money with which to buy capital goods such as
ploughs, consumer goods, and pay taxes and meet education,
health and court expenses.

In Zambia, the Native Tenancy Agreement was operative
from 1921 in order to ensure an internal flow of labour
on the white farms. The Tenancy system was officially
terminated in 1924. As Samuel Chipungu has argued, by
1924, 'most settlers had either improved their estates
or were eager to improve even the land the tenant

occupied. Settlers therefore relied upon wage labour to ensure continued production.'³¹ Labour tenancy closely corresponded with a phenomenon known as "primitive accumulation". This is accumulation prior in time to full capitalist production. Giovanni Arrighi had defined this process, which he calls "primary accumulation", 'as a process in which non-market mechanisms predominate.... The process is completed when the gap is so wide that producers in the non-capitalist sector are prepared to sell their labour-time "spontaneously" at whatever wage rate is consistent with steady accumulation in the capitalist sector.'³² Primitive accumulation characterized pre-Second World War socio-economic relations in Zambia.

Partly because of the termination of the Tenancy system, there is evidence of increased African participation in wage labour on the white farms. In 1928, it was reported that: 'There is a class of labourers that prefers farm-work and will accept no other.'³³ Further evidence from Chief Simuyobi's area in Mazabuka district shows that between 1939 and 1940, out of forty-one able-bodies men working in the territory, mainly on the white farms,

twenty-one of them had been in employment for over two years.³⁴ If proletarianization is measured by the duration of time spent in wage employment, then this process was present in the pre-1945 period.

However, the pre-1945 forms of proletarianization were markedly different from those in the post-1945 period. For example, the pre-1945 form proletarianization was mostly characterized by reproduction of the unskilled force partly due to relatively shorter duration in employment most of the workers experienced. Post-1945 form of proletarianization was largely characterized by acquisition of technical skills as a result of technological changes that took place in commercial agriculture. Moreover, because of landlessness, capitalist relations of production in the post-1945 period were marked by the loss of access to the means of production by the farm workers.

Furthermore, for reasons ranging from famine to loss of land due to the construction of the Kariba Dam in the 1950s, there was considerable movement in large number of the Gwembe Valley Tonga to the plateau. Most of the Valley Tonga sought employment on the farms and never went back to the famine-prone Gwembe district.³⁵ The

Valley Tonga tended to be more proletarianized compared with the plateau Tonga. This phenomenon of rural-to-rural migration which also involved labour from other provinces such as Western, Eastern, Northern, and North-Western, was instrumental in the development of commercial agriculture. Labour was drawn from the relatively remote areas to more developed centres of capitalist agricultural production.

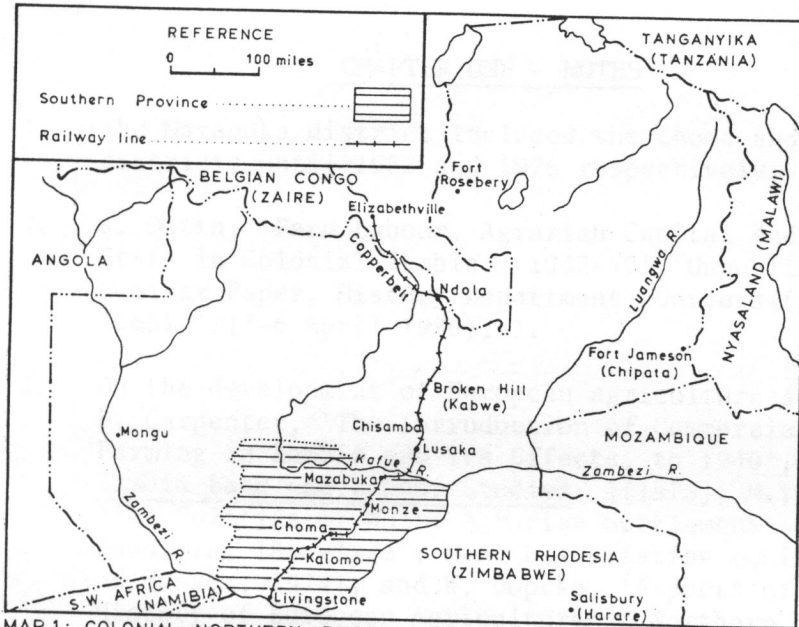
It could be said that target and migratory forms of labour organization in the pre-Second World War period corresponded with the level and demands of commercial agriculture. The nature of technology entailed that labour was rarely stabilized as it remained largely seasonal and unskilled except in a few cases. High labour turnover in the pre-Second World War period goes to explain that relations between agrarian capital and farm labour during this period were not as yet strong. In the native reserves or villages, landlessness had not yet become highly marked. As a result of this, potential proletarians could still fall back to the land, a major means of production.

GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION

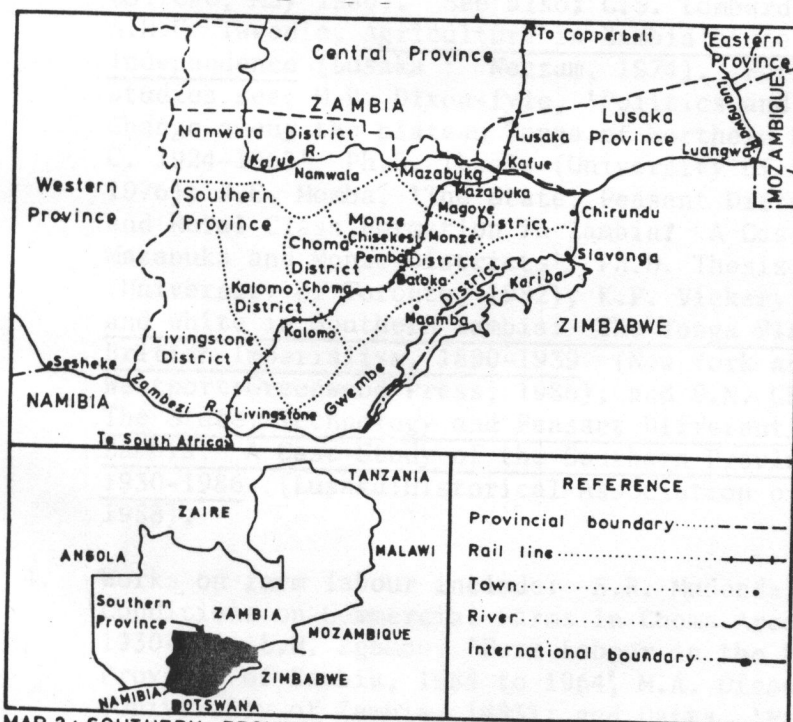
In the Southern Province, commercial farms were established along the line-of-rail on what is commonly known as the Tonga plateau. The Tonga plateau is part of the eastern, central and southern African plateau system. The Tonga plateau lies between the Kafue river in the north and the Zambezi river to the south. The altitude ranges from 914 to 1,542 metres above the sea level with Choma as the highest point.

The plateau is mainly gently undulating savanna woodland and grassland country. The sandy plateau soils in the Choma and Kalomo districts gradually give way to the rich upper valley soils as the plateau gently drops northwards towards the Kafue river. In the east, the plateau escarpment hill soils predominate. West of Choma, the plateau sands give way to the Kalahari bracken-sands. Southwards, the plateau drops gently towards the Mosi-O-Tunya (Victoria) Falls. Rainfall decreases from the north to the south so that Mazabuka to the north is relatively well-watered compared with Kalomo further south.

The soils and rainfall distribution influenced the agricultural pattern that evolved in the Southern Province. Choma and Kalomo districts became predominantly tobacco growing because of the sandy soils whereas Monze and Mazabuka became maize growing districts because of the relatively richer soils. Cattle ranching was common in all the districts. Most of the commercial farms were located in the Mazabuka district which also had the advantage of being closer to Lusaka and the Copperbelt, the major markets for agricultural and pastoral produce. (See also Appendix II on the extent of land alienation).



MAP 1: COLONIAL NORTHERN RHODESIA (ZAMBIA).



MAP 2: SOUTHERN PROVINCE OF ZAMBIA.

Source: S.N. Chipungu, The State, Technology and Peasant Differentiation in Zambia: A Case Study of the Southern Province, 1930-1986 (Lusaka: Historical Association of Zambia, 1988), p.19.

CHAPTER ONE - NOTES

1. The Mazabuka district included the Choma and Monze districts until 1952 and 1976 respectively.
2. K. Datta, 'Farm Labour, Agrarian Capital and the State in Colonial Zambia: 1942-52', Unpublished Seminar Paper, History Department, University of Zambia' (3-6 April 1986), 1.
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4. Works on farm labour include: S.R. Mudenda, 'Labour Conditions on Commercial Farms in Choma Area, 1930-56'; L.H. Zgambo, 'Farm Labour in the Eastern Province of Zambia, 1988 to 1964', M.A. Dissertation (University of Zambia, 1983); and Datta, 'Farm Labour'. On theoretical aspects see V. Daka, 'The Effects of the Nature of the Development of Colonial

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5. On the value of the underdevelopment theory see: D. Goodman and M. Redclift, From Peasant to Proletarian: Capitalist Development and Agrarian Transitions (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1981), p.25. On the weakness of the underdevelopment theory see: J.G. Taylor, From Modernization to Modes of Production: A Critique of the Sociologies of Development and Underdevelopment (London: Macmillan Press, 1976), ix, pp.84-101 and p.143.
 6. S. Amin, Class and Nation: Historically and in the Current Crisis (London: Heinmann, 1980), p.3.
 7. Zgambo, 'Farm Labour', 151-5.
 8. Vickey, Black and White, p.2.
 9. R.O.K. Ajulu, 'A Brief Summary of Proletarianization in Kenya, 1895-1939', J.E. Bardill (ed.), Class Formation and Class Struggle: Selected Proceedings of The Fourth Annual Southern African Universities Social Science Conference (Moriya: National University of Lesotho, 20-23 June 1981), p.22. Ajulu disapproves the use of the concept of "semi-proletariat" and calls it untheoretical because it does not relate wage labour to the means of production but to the time spent in wage employment.
 10. Datta, 'Farm Labour', 12-13. On adequate labour supply in the Southern Province see: Northern Rhodesia Government (NRG), Land Board Information for Intending Settlers (Lusaka: government Printer, 1948), 23.
 11. National Archives of Zambia (NAZ), SEC 2/1061, Mazabuka Tour Reports, 1952.

12. Daka, 'The Effects', p.93.
13. G.N. Mudenda, 'Class Formation in Contemporary Zambia: Some Theoretical Problems and Considerations', J.E. Bardill (ed.), Class Formation and Class Struggle: Selected Proceedings of the Fourth Annual Southern African Universities Social Science Conference (Maseru: National University of Lesotho, 20-23 June 1981), p. 198.
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19. M. Gelfand, Northern Rhodesia in the Days of the Charter: A Medical and Social Study, 1878-1924 (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1961), p.1.

20. W.V. Brelsford, Generation of Men: The European Pioneers of Northern Rhodesia (Salisbury: Street Manning for the Northern Rhodesia Society, 1965), p.124.
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CHAPTER TWO

LABOUR STABILIZATION ON COMMERCIAL FARMS AND THE COLONIAL STATE, 1945-1964

This chapter examines the process of labour stabilization on the commercial farms between 1945 and 1964. I argue that technological changes in commercial agriculture after 1945 strengthened and broadened the stabilization of farm labour. This process was facilitated by rural-to-rural migration and landlessness. I also examine the role of the colonial state in relation to the stabilization of farm labour. My contention is that technological changes rather than state intervention were more important in the process of labour stabilization even though the colonial state fully recognized the need to stabilize farm labour. As a matter of fact the Northern Rhodesia Government did little or nothing to accelerate labour stabilization particularly in relation to the production and provision of farm housing.

POST-SECOND WORLD WAR INNOVATIONS IN AGRICULTURE

Post-Second World War technological innovations were both mechanical and bio-chemical. Mechanical technology involved the wide-spread use of tractors and tractor-drawn

implements such as ploughs, harrows, cultivators, sub-soilers, and planters. Bio-chemical innovations were in the form of chemical fertilizers and hybrid maize seed (SR 52).

As seen in chapter one, pre-1945 agriculture was largely dependent on the use of Ox-drawn technology. The situation changed dramatically after 1945 with the introduction of tractors and related implements. Despite the post-Second World War shortage of agricultural implements, the tempo of mechanization went ahead. In 1947, the Livingstone Mail carried this advertisement: 'Farm Mechanization [Limited] have the pleasure in announcing that a demonstration of the Ferguson tractor and system of mechanized farming will take place at Mr. J.J. Potgieter's farm.'¹

The established farmers were mechanizing at a fast rate. Even the new farmers were advised in 1948 'to concentrate at first on types of agriculture which call for as little manual labour as possible.'² In order to facilitate the mechanization of commercial agriculture the minimum capital qualification for general mixed farming purpose was put at £3,000 in the Railway Belt.³

In order to meet the new challenges, the loaning functions of the Land Baord, formed in 1946, were taken over by the Land and Agricultural Bank in August 1953.⁴ The financial re-organization acted as an ancillary to the mechanizing farmers.

The introduction of tractors and related implements marked a turning point in the agricultural history of Zambia. The application of mechanical technology to farming gave the farmers a lot of confidence in the agricultural industry more than ever before. The situation was summarized in a 1949 tour report of the Mazabuka district as follows: 'New lands were being cleared with a tractor driven by the farmer and two or three [men]. The increasing reliance on complete mechanization of farming operations is most marked.'⁵ By the end of 1949, for instance, white farmers in Zambia owned about 650 tractors.⁶ By 1962, 2,008 tractors were in use throughout the country.⁷ In the Southern Province the average number of tractors owned by the white farmers was two in the 1950s, rising to three in the early 1960s.⁸

The technological "revolution" in post-Second World War commercial agriculture would not have been complete without bio-chemical innovations. Cow-dung, which had been a common manure used by the white farmers, was being replaced with chemical fertilizers. By 1959, fertilizers and insecticides accounted for over 14 per cent of the gross input account of white agriculture.⁹ The usage of chemical fertilizers rose from 15,880 tons in 1960 to over 21,539 tons in 1963 on the commercial farms.¹⁰ Similarly, hybrid maize seed (SR 52) quickly replaced the indigenous maize seed variety. For example, the proportion of the total crop grown using hybrid maize seed on the commercial farms rose from 47 per cent in 1956 to 77 per cent and 92 per cent in 1960 and 1964 respectively.¹¹ So complete was the technological "revolution" that in 1964 A.O. Ballantyne, a Chief Agricultural Research Officer, acknowledged that the Zambian commercial farmers' 'standards and methods of farming must be amongst the highest in the world.'¹²

The effects of the technological "revolution" were felt immediately. Skilled manpower was required to

operate and repair tractors and a wide range of farm machinery. The introduction of mechanical technology also led to the decline in size of the agricultural labour force. Large groups operating ox-drawn ploughs were no longer necessary. By 1953, the District Commissioner for Mazabuka district was able to comment: 'I think many farmers have now graduated from the stage of [a large labour force] doing nothing like a full day's work to a smaller force working harder. There is much more mechanization than before so that large groups are not necessary.'¹³ Even though comparable figures for the Southern Province are not available,¹⁴ P.T. Street, a Mazabuka farmer since 1949, said that he halved his labour force during the same period.¹⁵ On C.N. Gosling's Kaleya Farm, the number of workers fell from twenty-one in 1950¹⁶ to twelve in 1954.¹⁷ On F. Godson's Kaunga Farm, the labour force dropped from seventy-four to forty-four between 1950 and 1954 respectively.¹⁸

LABOUR STABILIZATION ON COMMERCIAL FARMS 1945-1964

After 1945, the need to stabilize farm labour was widely recognized by agrarian capital and the colonial state. This was due to the technological innovations mentioned above which became a characteristic feature of

commercial agriculture after 1945. A stable married labour force which could be engaged throughout the year was now required. In 1949 it was noted in a tour report of the Mazabuka district:

From a severely practical point of view, the farmers showed that they fully appreciated the value of providing their labour with good food, housing and, in the case of permanent workers, suitable gardens to cultivate. It is of course the aim of every farmer to build up as stable a labour force as possible and the provision of these facilities is becoming rapidly recognized as a vitally important stabilizing factor on the labour front.¹⁹

Since agricultural wages were lower compared with other sectors of the national economy, gardens were regarded as a "hidden emolument" to farm labour. The provision of gardens actually accelerated the process of proletarianization. Gardens were mainly worked by women and children.

The introduction of mechanical and bio-chemical technology strengthened the relations of production between agrarian capital and farm labour. Previously, agrarian capital's labour requirements were largely seasonal. As a result of this, a large unskilled seasonal labour force was maintained.

Mechanical technology introduced a new element in labour requirements on the commercial farms. The major requirement was for skilled manpower to drive the tractors and to repair farm machinery. Additionally, brick-layers and carpenters were needed to carry out farm building and maintenance work. A skilled and semi-skilled permanent labour force was required to perform all these jobs. In several cases, long serving workers were trained on the farms to be drivers, mechanics, brick-layers, and carpenter. This arrangement greatly facilitated the stabilization of farm labour. In 1953, G.E.K. Walsh, the District Officer for Mazabuka, noted: 'In many cases a very stable force has been built up, with many Africans having lost all contact with their villages, and with children born on the farms now working also.'²⁰

Increased agricultural production on the commercial farms led to demand for the labour of the wives and the children of the stabilized farm workers. For example, maize sales to the Maize Control Board from the commercial farms in Zambia rose from 274,000 bags in 1945²¹ to 3,700,000 in 1961.²² The labour of the wives and the children of stabilized farm workers was required

for weeding and harvesting. In an interview, M. Petric, a farm manager at the Maize Research Institute in Mazabuka, expressed his sentiments regarding the use of this form of labour as follows: 'Personally I favour a situation where farm workers and their entire families are all actively involved in the process of production. Women and children can earn additional money to supplement the incomes of the husbands and fathers respectively.'²³ The use of this form of labour reduced the demand for unskilled seasonal male labour at peak periods of the agricultural cycle such as planting, weeding, and harvesting.

One point emerges clearly from the aforesaid. This is that whereas mining capital, for instance, was largely bent on the exploitation of male labour in the process of production, agrarian capital was able to exploit the labour-power of the male farm workers, their wives, children and even dependants. This trend is further evidence that "workers families" had developed on some commercial farms in the Southern Province. And the development of the working class families was encouraged on the commercial farms after 1945.²⁴ For example, in 1952, on C.H. Robinson's Moneen Farm in the Mazabuka

district, out of a total labour force of forty-eight, twelve or 25 per cent were children.²⁵ Even though statistics on female labourers are not available, oral evidence suggests that there was widespread use of this form of labour.²⁶

Another phenomenon that strengthened the process of labour stabilization on the commercial farms in Mazabuka district, particularly in the 1940s and 1950s, was rural-to-rural migration. Labour from other districts, provinces, and territories was regarded by the white farmers as stable, productive, and reliable compared with local plateau Tonga labour which still preferred short employment duration. Because the local Tonga continued selling their labour-power on "target labour" basis even after 1945, it was mainly labour from other areas which acquired technical and supervisory skills on the farms during the colonial period. For example, on the Chisekesi farms in 1949 and 1950, out of 152 workers, sixty-two or over 40 per cent were from the Western, Central, Copperbelt, Eastern and Northern Provinces and from as far afield as Zimbabwe, Malawi (formerly Nyasaland), Zaire (formerly Congo-Leopoldville),

Mozambique, and Angola.²⁷ According to a tour report of the Mazabuka district in September 1949, the Ngoni from the Eastern Province and Malawi 'formed the back-bone of many a labour force.'²⁸

At the same time, there was a considerable movement of labour within the province. Labour was drawn from the poorer districts such as Gwembe, Kalomo, and parts of Namwala to the Tonga plateau where employment opportunities on the farms were high. The Ila from Namwala, together with the Lozi from the Western Province, were famous as herdsmen on the farms. Most of the workers from the other districts, provinces, and territories were either assimilated by the local plateau Tonga or were proletarianized on the white farms.²⁹ Thus, rural-to-rural migration was instrumental to the development of commercial agriculture at the time when the local people were resisting the process of rural proletarianization.

From the mid-1950s, however, there was increasing involvement of the local Tonga in wage employment on the commercial farms on a permanent basis. This was largely due to the shortage of land in the native reserves and population increase. The population increase, coupled

with the development of the enclosure system in the native reserves, led to pressure on existing land from the mid-1950s.

The Land Tenure report of 1957 discussed in detail the development of the enclosure system and noted that: 'It is now common to find fences round Tonga farms.'³⁰ Even though the "enclosing peasants" gave the prevention of cattle trespass in crops as the reason for fencing, the enclosure system, as the 1957 Land Tenure report further noted, represented 'an individual attitude to the possession of land when a man is stabilized.'³¹ Of Chiefs Monze and Siamusonde's areas, it was reported: '...a new type of enclosure is taking place for some people are fencing in large areas of bush in order to grab land while it is plentiful.'³² Another report in 1959 described the situation as follows: 'Among the Tonga there is considerable fencing of arable land to define boundaries and avoid encroachment by neighbours and a general feeling that fencing gives one added sense of security.'³³

As a result of the development of the enclosure system, landlessness became very acute in the native

reserves. In 1952, Elizabeth Colson noted: 'Little cultivable land is left unclaimed to-day, and shifting cultivation is no longer possible. In some areas, it is largely difficult to provide sufficient fields for the young people who are growing up in the villages.'³⁴ The only thing left for the landless people to do was to hire their labour-power either to their relatively well-to-do kinsmen in the native reserves or, as common practice, to the white farmers.

Landlessness was worsened by natural population increase. According to Ignatius Muchangwe, then a researcher in the Department of Agriculture, the African population in the Mazabuka district increased by nearly 40 per cent between 1952 and 1962.³⁵

The acuteness of the land shortage in the Mazabuka district partly explains why the area never experienced serious labour shortages on the white farms after the mid-1950s compared with the Choma district. In the Mazabuka district, in addition to non-local labour, a large pool of landless labour was available from the mid-1950s. In the Choma district, land was never a serious problem in the native reserves or villages.

J. Lawrence, the District Officer for Mazabuka, made this point clear in 1950: 'Land tenure has not yet become a problem in Mapanza's area, where there is still ample land for cultivation.'³⁶ Because of the availability of land in the native reserves, the Choma farmers experienced serious labour shortages. Labour on the Choma farms was mainly drawn from other districts, provinces, and territories. In 1949, it was noted in a tour report of the Choma farmers: 'Foreigners outnumbered local labour by almost three to one, for which there are various reasons. The local is prone to disappear to his lands nearby just when he is most needed.'³⁷

AGRARIAN CAPITAL, THE COLONIAL STATE AND FARM LABOUR

Labour stabilization had several advantages. These included the efficient use of farm machinery with minimal break-downs, the elimination of constant training and re-training, and increased productivity in general. Within the farm, there were chances of a worker rising from a casual employee to a driver or a brick-layer through on-the-job training. But it was also common

for a son of a tractor driver to take over from his father.³⁸

Even though agrarian capital and the colonial state realised the importance of labour stabilization on the commercial farms, a lot remained to be desired particularly in relation to workers' housing. The colonial state appears to have followed the "Mainstream Perspective" in farm housing. According to this perspective, the production and provision of housing has to be profit-oriented and left to the private sector.³⁹ Farmers were expected to build workers' housing from their profits.

Some farmers, especially those in the tobacco growing district of Choma were not only able to build permanent houses for their labour but were also able to provide free electricity to senior farm workers and to provide street lighting in the compounds.⁴⁰ In the predominantly maize growing Mazabuka district, housing was generally poor and permanent houses were non-existent on most farms. One of the reasons for this disparity in the standard of housing is that tobacco, during much of the colonial period, was a very profitable export crop compared with maize, a low-priced and controlled national staple food crop. Another

reason was that as new-comers, the tobacco farmers were prepared to offer better facilities in order to attract more labour. They were also more likely to observe official housing regulations.

From the late 1940s and early 1950s onwards, permanent housing was provided to stabilize farm workers. These included capitaos (supervisors), drivers, carpenters, bricklayers, cooks, mechanics, and unskilled long-serving workers. Normally, three metres by three metres burnt brick, iron or asbestos roofed, cement plastered two-roomed structures were recommended as standard permanent housing on the farms.⁴¹ Casual or seasonal workers continued to occupy pole-and-mud huts.

However, among the so-called casual or seasonal workers there were some who regarded themselves as permanent workers. They felt that they were also entitled to permanent housing. Joback Mweemba, a farm worker, had this to say: 'What happened is that some workers return home as soon as they have harvested about June. They returned to the farms in October. Even though they had been working for several years they were

still regarded as casual employees and were denied permanent housing.'⁴²

The selective provision of housing on the farms appears to have conformed with the "Mainstream Perspective" argument that only those sections of labour which yield the best returns, in this case the permanent workers, deserved permanent housing. Poor farm housing or its non-existence was mainly attributed to low profitability. Some farmers argued that they were not able to provide permanent housing because of low profits resulting from unfavourable pricing and marketing policies.

In 1963, Mr. Mitchley, a representative of agrarian capital in the Legislative Council, moved a motion proposing the provision of a housing loan to the farmers that would have enabled them to build permanent houses for their labour. According to Mr. Mitchley, permanent housing on commercial farms was very important because it provided 'the maximum of stability...in the rural areas.'⁴³

Whilst appreciating the need for rural labour stability through permanent housing, the then Minister of Finance, Mr. Gardner, dismissed the motion on the ground

that some of the farmers had given 'reasonable priority to better housing.'⁴⁴ The farmers' hopes for a housing loan were dashed into oblivion. The provision of such a loan would have meant state participation in farm housing as was the case in urban housing.

CLASS STRUGGLES ON THE COMMERCIAL FARMS

Proletarianization entails a degree of class consciousness and the resultant class struggles. However, because farm labour remained largely isolated or fragmented, it is very difficult to measure the degree of class consciousness or the extent of class struggles.

The most potent instrument of class action used by the farm workers was farm-to-farm migration. There was considerable movement of labour from one farm to another.⁴⁵ According to Sibanyama Mudenda: 'The local Tonga used a specific intelligence network...as regards the so-called good and bad or brutal farmers. Such oral information could be circulated around all villages surrounding farms so that the cruel and [low paying farmers] were isolated and avoided.'⁴⁶ The farmers who treated their labour fairly never experienced any labour shortages.

Another weapon used by the farm workers and even villagers, were bush-fires. Bush-fires were abhorred by the farmers because of their destructive impact. Even though some of the bush-fires were accidental, most of them, particularly in the 1950s, were deliberately started by embittered farm workers.⁴⁷ In some instances, livestock on the farms was poisoned. For instance, in 1952, forty herds of cattle on Dimba Farm in Mazabuka, owned by Mrs. L.C. Ilsley, were lost through poisoning, allegedly by some discontented workers.⁴⁸

At another level, some farm workers fully supported the struggle against colonialism. They joined the African National Congress (ANC) and started agitating against colonial rule. Under ANC instructions, many workers withdrew their labour-power from the white farmers whom they regarded as instruments of colonialism. In 1953, G.J. Labuschagne, the District Assistant for Mazabuka district, noted in this connection: 'Mr. Pitch's labour force has decreased considerably since about July this year.... There is one agitator amongst his recruited men who is causing a lot of uneasiness.'⁴⁹ The role of the agitator in question was to spread propaganda among the

farm workers that Mr. Pitch was not a good employer and that they should join the ANC. Recruited labour obviously tended to be more active politically compared with local labour.

Even though the National Union of Plantation and Agricultural Workers (NUPAW) was formed in 1962 to secure the organization of plantation and agricultural workers for improved working and living conditions, it remained ineffective in the last years of colonial rule.⁵⁰ However, the mere fact that the NUPAW was formed indicated that a rural proletariat, no matter how ill-organized, was in existence.

In this chapter, I have argued that technological changes in commercial agriculture after 1945 hastened the formation of a rural proletariat in the Southern Province of Zambia. This process was at first facilitated by rural-to-rural migration and later by landlessness resulting from the development of the enclosure system and natural population increase in the native reserves. I have also argued that even though both the colonial state and agrarian capital recognized the importance of the stabilization of farm labour, the former did nothing

particularly in relation to housing. I have also shown that, as a mark of proletarianization, agricultural labour exhibited a marked degree of class consciousness and action. However, the farm workers' union remained ineffective at the close of the colonial era.

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CHAPTER THREE

THE POST-COLONIAL STATE, AGRARIAN CAPITAL AND LABOUR ON COMMERCIAL FARMS, 1964-1974

This chapter examines post-colonial agricultural developments and the process of labour stabilization on the commercial farms between 1964 and 1974. I argue that increased investment in commercial agriculture and the acceleration of landlessness in customary areas (formerly native reserves) further strengthened the process of labour stabilization. Post-colonial agricultural labour policy is also examined. I argue that the post-colonial state was more concerned with creating the material conditions for production and not with improving farm labour's working and living conditions. This was shown by the exemption of commercial farmers from providing standard houses to workers on the farms between 1965 and 1970.

POST-COLONIAL AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENTS

In 1964, there were between 1,200 and 1,300 commercial farmers in Zambia most of whom were non-Zambian by birth.¹ After 1964, the number of white farmers declined rapidly. By 1966, there were 700 white farmers in the country.²

By 1974, the number had fallen to 590. Out of these 170 were based in the Southern Province.³

Economic reasons such as insecurity emanating from the shortage of agricultural inputs, unfavourable producer prices, lack of access to government loans, and poor property valuation have been advanced to explain the exodus of white commercial farmers from the country.⁴ Even though economic reasons were evidently important, political ones were also significant. Some white farmers, particularly those of South African origin and the politically active ones, could not accept to be ruled by an African government. As N.A. Beckett, a Choma farmer, put it: 'Most of them (White farmers) felt they could not be ruled by "Kaffirs".'⁵

The white farmers who left the country were replaced by indigenous African commercial farmers and by private and public agricultural companies. In the 1970s, African commercial farmers owned 9 per cent of stateland (formerly crownland) compared with 41 per cent owned by non-Africans and another 15 per cent owned largely by expatriate firms.⁶ The entry of Africans into stateland complicated the process of labour stabilization on the commercial farms. Most of the farms which fell vacant, particularly in

Monze district, as a result of the exodus of white farmers were the least productive ones. These were the farms which African commercial farmers occupied. Since African farmers were mainly under-capitalized, they largely depended on kinship and casual labour. As a result, they were unable to effect improvements on these farms.⁷ Their existence appears to have reversed the process of labour stabilization in certain respects.

The white farmers who remained, as C.S. Lombard and A.H.C. Tweedie have noted 'greatly increased their scale of operation and productivity.'⁸ As Table 1 shows, the gross value of output on the commercial farms increased steadily between 1965 and 1966, the estimated gross value of output of agricultural and pastoral production rose to £13.8 million compared with £11.2 million in 1964-1965 and £10.9 million for 1963-1964.⁹ By 1974, the gross value of output of agricultural and pastoral production had risen to K62.2 million.¹⁰ In 1974, maize, tobacco, and livestock were still by far the principal products of commercial agriculture.

TABLE I

GROSS VALUE OF OUTPUT, 1961-1966, FOR COMMERCIAL FARMS

(£ MILLION)

	1961	1962	1963	1964	1965	1966
Tobacco	2.2	2.7	3.1	3.2	2.5	2.5
Maize	3.7	2.9	2.5	4.0	5.4	7.0
Groundnuts	0.7	0.9	1.0	0.1	0.5	0.7
Cotton	-	-	-	0.1	0.2	0.2
Potatoes	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
Other Crops	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3
Total Crops	7.1	7.0	7.2	8.0	8.9	10.8
Cattle Slaughtered	1.3	1.3	1.6	1.6	1.5	1.3
Pigs Slaughtered	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2
Dairy Produce	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.7	0.7	0.9
Poultry and Eggs	0.3	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.7
Other farm produce	-	-	-	-	-	0.1
Change to size of herds	0.4	-	0.1	-	0.3	0.3
Total Livestock	2.8	2.5	2.7	2.9	2.3	3.0
Total Crop and Livestock	9.9	9.5	9.9	10.9	11.2	13.8
Index of Gross Value of Output	90.91	87.16	90.91	100.0	102.75	126.60

Source: ROZ, Agricultural and Pastoral Production 1966
(Lusaka:CSO, May 1967), 1.

Another noticeable feature after 1964 was increased investment in farm machinery and farm vehicles. This in turn increased the size of the skilled labour force. In 1967, for instance, out of 2,060 licenced and unlicenced tractors in Zambia, 949 or 46 per cent were in the Southern Province.¹¹ For the country as a whole investments in farm machinery alone made up over 46 per cent of total agricultural investments on the commercial farms during the same period.¹² Investment in farm vehicles was also stepped up. By 1967, there were 567 licenced and unlicenced vehicles on the commercial farms in Southern Province out of which 117 were trucks, 215 vanettes, and 235 cars and station wagons.¹³ By 1974, the average number of tractors per commercial farmer in the Southern Province was four.¹⁴ At the same time, the old-fashioned paraffin-powered and even the diesel-powered tractors were being replaced with new and more efficient models. Even combine harvesters were beginning to make their appearance on the farming scene.¹⁵

Increased investment in farm machinery and farm vehicles increased the demand for skilled manpower on the commercial farmers more than ever before. For

example, on a farm with six tractors, six drivers were required. In addition to this, an equal number of assistants was needed. At times, tractor drivers could also be trained to drive trucks and vanettes.¹⁶

LANDLESSNESS AND POST-COLONIAL LABOUR STABILIZATION

The post-colonial period witnessed the increased permanent participation of the local plateau Tonga into wage labour on the commercial farms. This was due to the problem of landlessness in the customary areas or villages. The post-colonial state did nothing to reverse the development of the enclosure system in these areas. The middle and some rich peasants who could not get land on the settlement schemes continued fencing large areas of land in the customary areas. At times peasants who had land on the settlement schemes also held on to land in the customary areas.¹⁷

The perpetuation of the enclosure system into the post-colonial period caused a severe land shortage in the villages. By 1968, all customary lands in the Mazabuka district had become over-crowded with people. In Mwanachingwala area in Mazabuka district, only 42 per cent

of the land was arable. The remainder was all dambo area.¹⁸

In the Nansenga area in Chief Naluama's area in Mazabuka district only 22 per cent of land was arable. As a result of this over 50 per cent of able bodied men were away in wage employment, principally on the commercial farm within the Southern Province.¹⁹

Previously, it was possible for a local plateau Tonga in wage employment to have 'one foot in the "job" and the other "at home".'²⁰ But the development and the consolidation of the enclosure system eventually made this difficult and in some cases impossible.

Andrew Hiloonde, a former farm worker said: 'At the village there is no land left. All cultivable land was taken up by my brothers and other people. I want to retire but I have nowhere to go. I hope the government will come to my assistance.'²¹ J.E. Pieterse, a Mazabuka farmer, also noted, in a questionnaire response: 'These people (farm workers) were close to their relatives. I have many workers who were born on this farm. They lost contact with their villages.'²² Some workers died on the farms. Those who could not find small plots of land in the villages opted to stay in

shanty compounds in the townships along the line-of-rail.²³

Increased landlessness and rural poverty in general were instrumental in changing the attitude of the local Tonga towards farm employment. After 1964, the local Tonga were regarded as stable and reliable farm workers. This was expressed by Terrance Jones, a Monze farmer, in the following words: 'In the past, Tonga workers used to be unreliable. But the situation has changed tremendously since 1964. Now they are more stable and reliable compared with, say, Bemba labour. In fact, I would say the Bemba are more unreliable now.'²⁴ For many local Tonga, farm work was an escape from rural poverty and hunger. Andrew Hiloonde, a farm worker in the early 1970s, said: 'Life on the farms was far much better than in the villages. On the farms, meat and milk were always plentiful. There was also a chance for one to live in an iron or asbestos-roofed house. The only problem were the low wages. I left farm work principally because of the low wages, but generally life was good.'²⁵

Information on farm wages is scanty and unreliable. But wages on commercial farmers were generally lower

compared with other sectors. Lower wages were compensated for by payments in kind and the provision of gardens. (See Appendix V(a) and (b) on Average Earnings From Employment and on Average African Wages).

Increased landlessness in the customary lands, coupled with natural population increased, made farm work an acceptable form of permanent employment among the local Tonga. Thus, by 1974, a dependable reservoir of local Tonga labour was created, there-by strengthening the process of rural proletarianization. However, the tobacco farmers continued to experience labour shortages partly because as a labour-intensive crop, tobacco 'does not lend itself to mechanization.'²⁶ Some Choma farmers, during the period under consideration, relied heavily on labour recruited from Choma township and transported to and from the farms everyday.²⁷

POST-COLONIAL AGRICULTURAL LABOUR POLICY, 1964-1974

After 1964, the post-colonial Zambian state had clearly defined agricultural labour policy or objectives which were aimed at improving the condition of rural labour. It was recognized that agricultural workers were largely neglected during the colonial period. In 1966, the then Minister of Labour and Social Development, Munukayumbwa Sipalo, said:

The most careful consideration had been given to certain objections raised by interested parties but it is clear that workers in the agricultural industry are to enjoy some of the benefits at present enjoyed by workers in other industries and affirmation of the proposals made by the Wages and Conditions of Employment Board was a logical step in keeping with Government's policy of encouraging the improvements of the workers' conditions of employment.²⁸

Furthermore, the labour policy of the United National Independence Party (UNIP) was outlined as follows: 'To increase the productivity of labour, better housing (as opposed to training) and better amenities...and to have a minimum wage adjustable to suit varying conditions of the cost of living.'²⁹ The Employment Act of 1965

which repealed and replaced the colonial Employment of Natives Ordinance provided for, among other things, a housing allowance to all employees where the employer had failed to provide "adequate housing".³⁰

In spite of its stated policy or objectives, the post-colonial state of Zambia did very little to broaden and consolidate the stabilization of farm labour between 1964 and 1974. The state was more concerned with creating the material conditions for production rather than implementing its objectives on the improvement of conditions of the farm workers. It was, for instance, not concerned with guaranteeing better living and working conditions for agricultural labour. This was evidenced by the exemption of agricultural labour from the 'section of the Employment Act which insists either that housing be built to a certain standard, or that the statutory housing allowance (at present K5.50 per month) be paid in lieu.'³¹ Even though the exemption period expired on 30 September, 1970, the precedent of the farmers ignoring the question of housing and housing allowance had been set. Agrarian capital hailed the Ministry of Labour for the exemption and for having 'been most

understanding of the special conditions which affect commercial agriculture.'³²

Agrarian capital argued that the exemption to provide standard housing or housing allowance to farm labour was dictated by the seasonality of labour and the unpredictable weather conditions. In reality, however, agrarian capital was only interested in maximizing profits and minimizing costs by not providing standard housing and housing allowance to farm labour. Certainly, during the post-colonial period, the argument by agrarian capital that 'a considerable proportion of labour is seasonal' was untenable.³³ By 1973, for instance, only 25 per cent of agricultural workers were seasonal workers.³⁴

In 1971, the Zambian Government passed the Industrial Relations Act. The provisions of the Act for the size of the undertaking in which Works Councils were to be established and the categories of employees who were eligible for membership were a severe blow to agricultural labour. What this meant in reality was that even though 75 per cent of agricultural workers were permanent workers and, together with the domestic service, made up 20 per cent of Zambia's total wage labour force in

1973, they were excluded from the Industrial Relations Act of 1971.³⁵ James Banda, a former farm worker in Choma, commented: 'We heard about the Act. It was a blow to us farm workers. But the farmers were happy.'³⁶

The Works Councils were aimed at benefiting both workers, management, and trade unions 'in the interests of industrial peace, improved working conditions, greater efficiency and productivity.'³⁷ Most of the farmers did not realise that the formation of Works Councils would have gone a long way in improving employer-employee relations. Farmers who employed over 100 workers, the minimum number of "eligible employees" who could form Works Councils, were able to avoid the provision of the Industrial Relations Act on the pretence that they employed less than 100 "eligible employees" or permanent workers.³⁸ Agrarian capital opposed organized labour because this would have led to increased agitation for improved working and living conditions and there-by increasing variable or running costs at the expense of profitability. (See also Appendix IV).

Between 1965 and 1974, the NUPAW was more active at Nakambala Sugar Estates in Mazabuka where it opened a branch in 1965.³⁹ On the commercial farms, the NUPAW had

numerous organizational problems which made it ineffective between 1964 and 1974. In 1965, for example, it was noted that the Organizing Secretary of the NUPAW in the Southern Province 'was apparently afraid to visit most of his members in the Mukwela area because his members had realised that he was only interested in collecting monthly dues and had not helped any of them when they had complaints against their employers.'⁴⁰ The farmers' association, the Commercial Farmers Bureau (CFB), regarded the NUPAW 'as the least well organized of any trade union in the country...virtually incapable of conducting its affairs with even modest efficiency.'⁴¹

The NUPAW was so ineffective that many farm workers did not know anything about it before 1974. The farmers made sure that their workers were kept ignorant about the existence and activities of the NUPAW. A farm worker who did not want to be identified said: 'Here, we came to know about the NUPAW fairly recently. Our employer did not want us to discuss any union matters. Even now we are not allowed to join the NUPAW.'⁴²

At times, agrarian capital looked to the state to provide certain services and skills to farm labour which

were presumably beyond its scope. In 1969, it was noted in the issue of Zambian Commercial Farming, the commercial farmers' mouth-piece:

We hear quite a lot about various training schemes in operation concerning the training of farmers....So far there has been no mention, as far as we are aware, of training for agricultural labour....It is unfortunate that the industry which produces the nation's food supplies should have the least attention paid to it as far as training of its operatives is concerned. The farmer himself, obviously, has to provide a certainly amount of instruction. The principle of training within industry is an excellent one, but impossible to implement in the case of comparatively small units employing a limited number of operatives such as agriculture in Zambia.⁴³

Clearly, by the late 1960s, the agricultural sector was also hit by a shortage of semi-skilled and skilled manpower. As R.A.J. Roberts and Charles Elliot noted:

'Labour cannot be said to be a constraint in the sense of being in short supply. However, the sector shares, perhaps to a greater degree than any other in the general shortage of skilled labour.'⁴⁴ However, the attempts by agrarian capital to convince the state to train agricultural labourers were unsuccessful. Because of the competition for skilled labour between

agriculture and other sectors, N.A. Beckett, a Choma farmer, said: 'In most cases we take the left-overs.'⁴⁵

Another area where agrarian capital sought state support, though unsuccessfully, was over the producer prices. In 1964, the post-colonial Zambian State inherited an agricultural pricing and marketing system which was designed to hold down food prices, particularly those for maize and other major products, in the interests of the urban dwellers.⁴⁶ For instance, the producer price for Grade "D" and "E" maize was K2.80 and K3.50 respectively in 1974 and only rose to K3.50 and K4.50 respectively in 1975.⁴⁷ In the 1978/1979 season the producer price for Grade "A" maize was K9.00 per ninety kilogram bag.⁴⁸

The perpetuation of the colonial pricing and marketing system accentuated the already imbalanced terms of trade between the country and the town. In the 1970 issue of Zambian Commercial Farming the farmers complained bitterly: 'No section of the community must be sacrificed for another and when this conflict arises, as it has in Zambia, the farmers and rural dwellers

invariably loses out and ends up by subsidizing the non-agricultural worker. This is proved by the widening gap between the incomes of the urban and rural population.⁴⁹ But the post-colonial state could not then take political risks by de-controlling the price of maize, a national staple food crop, in order to raise rural incomes.

In this chapter, I have argued that increased investments in farm machinery and farm vehicles after 1964 further strengthened the proletarianization of rural labour on the commercial farms by creating additional demand for permanent skilled labour. The consolidation of the enclosure system after 1964 and natural population increase in the customary lands accentuated the problem of landlessness. This in turn led to increased participation of the landless local Tonga into wage labour on the commercial farms on a permanent basis. I have also argued that the post-colonial state was more concerned with creating the material conditions for production to take place and not with guaranteeing the improvement of labour's working and living conditions. The collusion of the interests of agrarian capital and of the post-colonial state were evidenced by the exemption

of farmers from providing standard housing to workers and the exclusion of agricultural labour from the provisions of the Industrial Relations Act for the formation of Works Councils. At times, however, agrarian capital sought state assistance, always unsuccessfully, particularly for the training of farm labour and for increased producer prices of farm produce, especially maize.

CHAPTER THREE - NOTES:

1. C.S. Lombard and A.H.C. Tweedie, Agriculture in Zambia Since Independence (Lusaka:Neczam, 1974), p.55.
2. ROZ, First National Development Plan, 1966-1970 (Lusaka:Office of National Development and Planning, July, 1966), 21. According to C.L. Baylies, 'The State and Class Formation in Zambia', Ph.D. Thesis (University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1978), 758, most of the unproductive farms were in the Monze district.
3. ROZ, Agricultural and Pastoral Production:Commercial Farms, 1973-1974 (Lusaka:CSO, March 1982), 46-7
4. Baylies, 'The State and Class Formation', 529-30; ROZ, Report of a Seminar on rural Development held in Lusaka:A New Strategy for Rural Development in Zambia, 23-25 March, 1970 (Lusaka:Ministry of Rural Development, 1970), 10-1; and Zambian Commercial Farming, 4,1 (1969), 12-3.
5. Interview, N.A. Beckett, Farmer, Choma, February 20 1969.
6. C.L. Baylies and M. Szeftel, 'The Rise of a Zambian Capitalist Class in the 1970s', Journal of Southern African Studies, 8, 2(April 1982), 191; and C. Baylies, 'The Emergence of Indigeneous Capitalist Agriculture: The Case of Southern Province', Rural Africana, 4,5, (Spring-Fall 1979).
7. Interview, F. Simwanza, Banker, Monze, January, 13 1989. See Also successive Commercial Farmers Bureau (CFB), Membership Lists. Some people who bought farms were speculators.
8. Lombard and Tweedie, Agriculture in Zambia, p.55
9. ROZ, Agricultural and Pastoral Production, 1966, (Lusaka:CSO, 1967), Introduction.
10. ROZ, Agricultural and Pastoral Production, 1973-1974,

11. ROZ, Agricultural and Pastoral Production, 1967
(Lusaka:CSO, 1968), 62.
12. ROZ, Agricultural and Pastoral Production, 1967, 8
13. ROZ, Agricultural and Pastoral Production, 1967, 62
14. ROZ, Agricultural Machinery:This is what it costs to
run (Lusaka:Department of Agriculture, 1975), 16.
15. Interview, Street.
16. Interview, Conrad Haabola, Farm Truck Driver and
Mechanic, Mazabuka, February 2, 1989.
17. Interview, Kazingwe.
18. ROZ, Mwanachingwala Catchment Conservation Plan
Mazabuka District by J.C.A. Stokes, 1968, 1-10.
19. ROZ, Nansenga Catchment Conservation Plan, Mazabuka
District, by J.C.A. Stokes, 1967, 1.
20. Muchangwe, Tonga Land, 6 .
21. Interview, Andrew Hiloonde, Ex-Farm Worker, Mazabuka,
January 17, 1989.
22. Questionnaire response from J.E. Pieterse, Farmer,
Mazabuka and R.H. Ng'andu, Farmer, Mazabuka.
23. Interview, Gilbert Chikamba, Farm Worker, Monze,
January 12, 1989.
24. Interview, Terrance Jones, Farmers, Monze, February
9, 1989.
25. Interview, Hiloonde.
26. ROZ, Department of Labour Annual Report for 1968, 3.
27. Interview, Anonymous, Farm worker, Choma, February 20,
1989.

28. ROZ, Monthly Economic Bulletin for August, 1966 (Lusaka:Ministry of Agriculture), 30.
29. United Nation Independence Party Policy, 1964, 53.
30. ROZ, Government Gazette Acts:Index to Supplements Containing Acts for the Year 1965 (Lusaka:Government Printer, 1965), 449-76.
31. Zambian Commercial Farming, 5, 8(August 1970), 3
32. Zambian Commercial Farming, 5, 8(August 1970), 3.
33. Zambian Commercial Farming, 5, 8(August, 1970), 3.
34. Source not to be quoted.
35. Source not to be quoted.
36. Interview, James Banda, Ex-Farm Worker, Choma, February 21, 1989.
37. ROZ, Industrial Relations Handbook (Kabwe:Prepared by the President's Citizenship College, May 1976), 24.
38. Interview, Silwimba.
39. ROZ, Department of Labour Report for June 1965, 5.
40. ROZ, Department of Labour Report for November 1965, 5.
41. Quoted in ILO, Agricultural Organization and Development by x. Flores (Geneva:ILO, 1971), 392.
42. Interview, Anonymous, Farm Worker, Mazabuka, February 2, 1989.
43. Zambian Commercial Farming, 4 7(July 1969), 15.
44. R.A.J. Roberts and C. Elliot, 'Constraints on Agriculture', C. Elliot (ed.), Constraints on the Economic Development of Zambia (London:Oxford University Press, 1971), p.282.

45. Interview, Beckett.
46. G. Hallet, The Economics of Agricultural Policy (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1981), pp. 7-10, makes this point very clear. See also: Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO), Report to the Government of Zambia on Agricultural Marketing and Pricing Policies (Rome: FAO, 1974); and FAO, Agricultural Marketing Boards: Their Establishment and Operation (Rome: FAO, 1966).
46. Chipungu, The State, Technology and Peasant Differentiation, p. 151.
47. Farming in Zambia, 12, 2(May 1979), 28
48. Zambian Commercial Farming, 5, 3(March 1970), 15.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE IMPACT OF AGRICULTURAL STRUCTURAL CHANGES ON LABOUR STABILIZATION, 1975-1980

The period between 1975 and 1980 witnessed important structural readjustments in commercial agriculture. I argue that crop diversification, particularly the adoption of wheat, and the introduction of irrigation consolidated the process of labour stabilization on the commercial farms in that these developments further depended upon skilled and unskilled permanent labour. Labour stabilization was given an impetus by the increased participation of better capitalized private and parastatal companies in agriculture. During the same period, the NUPAW intensified its activities particularly on company-owned farms.

THE IMPACT OF DIVERSIFICATION AND IRRIGATION ON LABOUR STABILIZATION

After 1975, there was a distinct shift in agricultural and pastoral production particularly on the white-owned commercial farms. The shift in production was in response to the economic crisis and the unattractive

producer prices particularly for maize. This was expressed by W.N. Nang'amba, the Assistant Executive of the CFB:

The shift in production is a result of the problem of producer prices. Maize, for instance, is not an economic crop for commercial farmers....For example, it would cost a commercial farmer K180.00 to produce a ninety kilogram bag of maize and a peasant farmer only K130.00. This is an indirect way of saying to the commercial farmer: "Go into soyabeans, ranching, poultry, wheat, and so on...." The pricing factor plays a big role in the whole issue.¹

Largely in response to the unattractive producer prices, particularly for maize, and to the generally unfavourable economic and climatic conditions, many white commercial farmers in the Southern Province abandoned the production of commercial maize for seed maize, Irish potatoes, soyabeans and irrigation crops.² For example, the production of seed maize was still in its infancy in 1969.³ But by 1976 the production of seed maize had risen to 176,540 fifty kilogram bags in the Southern Province.⁴ Similarly, the production of wheat increased considerably. In 1973 and 1974, virtually no wheat was grown on the commercial farms.⁵

But after 1975 the demand for wheat increased improved. This acted as a stimulus to farmers to go into the production of wheat. By 1980, the Southern Province accounted for over 4 per cent of the total marketed wheat in Zambia after Lusaka and the Copperbelt Provinces which accounted for 75 per cent and 9 per cent respectively.⁶ The production of Irish potatoes, which had been negligible in the Southern Province before 1975, had risen to 49,047 pockets by 1980.⁷ In the same province, the value of sales of vegetables increased from K96,840 in 1976⁸ to K242,509 in 1978.⁹

The diversification of crop production and the introduction of irrigation had a far-reaching impact on the stabilization of farm labour. Diversification entailed that a relatively large unskilled permanent labour force was needed since production ceased to be seasonal. Because of increased re-investment in commercial agriculture after 1975, there was further demand for semi-skilled and skilled labour to operate and repair combine harvesters, trucks, and tractors. By 1980, the average number of tractors per commercial farmer in the Southern Province was five and the majority

of farmers, particularly in the Mazabuka district, had trucks.¹⁰ Trucks were used to take farm produce such as Irish potatoes and livestock to the urban markets and also to carry inputs such as fertilizers and stock-feeds.

Diversification was most marked in the Mazabuka district where wheat, Irish potatoes, and vegetables gained prominence. These crops could be grown both in the rain season and in the dry season under irrigation. The production of these crops increased the demand for unskilled permanent labour on the commercial farms. For instance, for irrigated wheat production, many workers (irrigators) were needed to arrange pipes in the fields.¹¹ According to B.R.C. Landless, a Mazabuka farmer, at least twelve workers per hectare were required to arrange pipes in the wheat field.¹² Even though the harvesting of wheat was done by combine harvesters, this created further demand for both skilled and unskilled labour. For a combine harvester such as the Messey Ferguson 520, two drivers were required to cover 800 hectares or more per year. In addition, one tractor and two grain trailers were needed per hectare harvested. On top of this, ten unskilled men were needed to bag and store the grain.¹³

In the late 1970s, many commercial farmers also went into beef production which they had abandoned after 1964 due to unattractive prices. The return to beef production was very dramatic. In the Southern Province, the value of sales of beef on the commercial farms rose from K154,210 in 1975/1976¹⁴ to a record K6,235,118 by 1978.¹⁵ Ranching or stock-breeding is an activity that is carried throughout the year. The unskilled permanent labour requirement in pastoral production is, therefore, obvious. In fact, all the thirty commercial farmers who responded to the questionnaire indicated that in pastoral production, the unskilled permanent labour force component is greater than in crop production. This is so because in pastoral production the size of the labour force is smaller and the delegation of duties and supervision are easier compared with crop production.¹⁶

On the labour front, the implications of the shift in production were obvious. The increase in the size of both the skilled and the unskilled permanent labour force created an additional demand for permanent housing and other facilities. In some cases, certificates,

diploma, and degree-holding graduates from agricultural colleges and the University were employed on the commercial farms.¹⁷ (See Appendix III on number of salaried employees).

Another noticeable feature between 1975 and 1980 was the increased availability of unskilled labour (surplus labour) in the rural areas. Many farmers in the Southern Province were turning away labour.¹⁸ Economic deterioration and a prolonged drought in the Southern Province were the main contributing factors for the excess unskilled labour. But skilled labour was still difficult to secure particularly on the individual-owned commercial farms. The tendency for semi-skilled and skilled labour was to leave for urban centres or to company-owned farms in search of "greener pastures". N.A. Beckett, a Choma farmer, retorted ironically: 'I wouldn't blame a poorly paid worker who goes to look for a better-paid job, could you?'¹⁹

The increased involvement of private and parastatal companies in agriculture after 1975 further consolidated the process of labour stabilization on the commercial farms. Many farm workers, particularly the skilled

ones, left the private family commercial farms to work on the company-owned farms where the conditions of service were better. As limited agricultural companies, management on these farms was obliged to observe certain laws pertaining to, say, the provision of permanent housing allowance, leave pay, and so on. In the Southern Province these companies included Chibote Farms Limited, Kapinga Enterprises Limited, Zambezi Ranching Company Limited, Zambia Agricultural Development Limited, and Maize Research Institute Limited.

THE NATIONAL UNION OF PLANTATION AND AGRICULTURAL AND AGRARIAN CAPITAL

Even though the NUPAW was formed in 1962, it was not recognized by the farmers. In 1967, the Zambian Government ratified a total of nineteen ILO conventions. One of these ILO Conventions was the Right of Association (Agriculture) Convention No. 11 passed in 1921.²⁰ But the NUPAW was not recognized by the CFB until 1974. The recognition of the NUPAW by the CFB was a direct result of the fifty-ninth session of the International Labour Conference of 1974. The Zambian Government was represented at this conference and ratified the resolutions of the

Conference which read in part: 'It should be an objective of national policy for rural development to facilitate the establishment and growth, on a voluntary basis, of strong and independent organizations of rural workers as an effective means of ensuring the participation of rural workers.'²¹

Following the recognition agreement between the NUPAW and the CFB in 1974, the unionization of farm labour proceeded at a fairly fast rate. The NUPAW opened several branches particularly on the company-owned commercial farms. Twenty out of thirty commercial farmers who responded to the questionnaire said that they favoured the unionization of farm labour.²² Those who opposed unionization said that they preferred to deal with the Labour Officer and not the NUPAW.²³ But the fact that the majority of the commercial farmers favoured unionization reveals a measure of maturity on the part of the commercial farmers who, before 1974, were totally opposed to unionization. It also meant that the process of unionization could no longer be held back. M. Petric, a farm manager at Maize Research Institute in Mazabuka, summarized the issue of

unionization as follows: 'We can help each other with the Union. We provide employment here and as a result we expect high labour productivity. The Union can do a lot educate its members that wage increases can only come about through increased productivity.'²⁴

In chapter two, I argued that class struggle and action on the commercial farms in the colonial period was expressed through farm-to-farm migration, bush-fires, poisoning of livestock, and absenteeism. In the post-colonial period, especially between 1975 and 1980, class struggle and action was expressed through agitation for better working and living conditions in an organized manner. As a result of this form of struggle, after 1975 farm labour won substantial gains from agrarian capital such as sick leave, leave pay, housing allowance, and social insurance.²⁵ On all the farms where the NUPAW had branches, it made sure that the employers followed the laid down regulations. Among other things, the NUPAW made sure that the Zambia National Provident Fund (ZNPF) contributions were made.²⁶ The ZNPF took over the functions of the Workmen Compensation Insurance, formed in 1946, on the commercial farms. According to

the ZNPF Act of 1966, a "casual employee" was defined as a person in as a person in employment for less than one month.²⁷ This meant that many farm workers qualified for the ZNPF cover.

The NUPAW, however, still had organizational problems even after 1975. In 1975, for instance, the Choma branch of the NUPAW was dissolved by the Union's National Chairman for alleged poor performance during month of February: 'It is understood that the defunct branch executive was not quite conversant with the recognition agreement between the Union and the farmers, and this rendered it ineffective in its performance.'²⁸ Referring to the problems of the NUPAW in Choma district after 1975, N.A. Beckett, a Choma farmer, said: 'We used to hear quite a lot about the Union but it just died out like that.'²⁹ The organizational problems of the NUPAW in the Choma district could be partly attributed to the pre-dominance of private family commercial farms.³⁰ Individual farmers could easily dissuade the workers from joining the NUPAW or even intimidate them by threatening dismissal. Similarly, on the tobacco farms, there were fewer skilled workers to provide the needed Union leadership.

The NUPAW tended to be more active on the farms owned by the private and parastatal companies. The NUPAW had collective agreements with these companies.³¹ On the private family commercial farms, the NUPAW was relatively weak. As the NUPAW General Secretary said: 'On some farms Union leaders were not allowed to enter and to organize workers.'³² One questionnaire respondent who decided to remain anonymous accused the NUPAW officials of only being interested in collecting subscriptions from members. The farmer charged that the officials' salaries were a hundred times more than the farm workers' wages.³³ In any case, the NUPAW had no legal powers to compel all the farmers to unionize their labour. Unionization was supposed to take place on a voluntary basis in accordance with the resolutions of the fifty-ninth session of the International Labour Conference of 1974.³⁴

Between 1975 and 1980, farm labour appreciated the need for unionization. Many workers were very anxious to join the NUPAW. This was expressed by a farm worker who said: 'The Union is what we needed most. We knew that through the Union we could secure better working

and living conditions.'³⁵ Another workers said: 'A Branch of the NUPAW was formed at a neighbouring farm in the late 1970s. We all rushed there to enlist as members. But the farmer here could not allow us to do so. He threatened us with dismissal.'³⁶ Thus, on the private family commercial farms, the intimidation of the workers craving for membership of the NUPAW, and not necessarily the isolation of farm workers, was partly responsible for the slow pace at which farm labour was unionized.

In this chapter, I have argued that the diversification of crop and pastoral production and the introduction of irrigation increased the size of both the skilled and the unskilled permanent labour force on the commercial farms in the Southern Province. The shift in production deepened and consolidated the proletarianization of farm labour. By 1980, rural proletarianization was a clearly irreversible phenomenon. I have also argued that NUPAW, despite organizational problems in the Choma area, stepped up its activities particularly on the company-owned commercial farms. It was on the company-owned farms that rural proletarianization became highly marked.

CHAPTER FOUR - NOTES

1. Interview, W.N. Nang'amba, CFB Official, Lusaka,² November 21, 1989.
2. See CFB, Membership Lists from 1975 to 1980. The lists show a distinct shift in production after 1975.
3. D.H. Gray, 'Seed Production in Zambia', Farming in Zambia, 4, 1(October 1968), 8.
4. ROZ, Agricultural and Pastoral Production, 1975-1976, 18. Zambia, 12, 1(April 1978), 8.
6. ROZ, Agricultural Baseline Data for Planning, Volume 1 (Lusaka:National Commission for Development Planning and University of Zambia, 1983) edited by P.D. Ncube, 507.
7. ROZ, Agricultural Baseline, 502-08.
8. ROZ, Agricultural and Pastoral Production, 1975-1976, 28.
9. ROZ, Agricultural and Pastoral Production, 1977-1978, 18.
10. Interview, Philip Banda, Ex-Farm Worker, Monze, February 9, 1989.
11. H. Aepoli, 'How to Irrigate Wheat', Farming in Zambia, 11, 2(June 1977), 24-7.
12. Interview, BR.C. Landless, Farmers, Mazabuka, February 4, 1989.
13. ROZ, Agricultural Machinery, 19-21.
14. ROZ, Agricultural and Pastoral Production, 1975-1976, 38.
15. ROZ, Agricultural and Pastoral Production, 1977-1978, 22.

16. Also Group Interview involving Vincent Mukanjo, Mark Kakoma, and S. Mwaanga, Managers at Zambezi Ranching Company Limited, Msuma Ranch, Mazabuka, February 2, 1989.
17. Interview, Beckett and Interview, Jones. Also Group Interview, Zambezi Ranching Company - all the three managers I interviewed were from agricultural colleges.
18. Interview, Landless.
19. Interview, Beckett.
20. ROZ, Department of Labour Annual Report for 1967, 5.
21. ILO, Organizations of Rural Workers and Their Role in Economic and Social Development, 59th Session of the International Labour Conference, 1974 (Geneva:ILO, 1975), 32.
22. Thirty out of fifty questionnaires were returned, representing a response rate of 60 per cent. This figure is quite representative compared with the 50 per cent response normally obtained by the Central Statistical Office.
23. Interview, B.W. Taylor, Farmer, Mazabuka, February 2, 1989.
24. Interview, M. Petric, Farm Manager, Mazabuka, February 21, 1989.
25. Interview, Silwimba.
26. Interview, S.H. Mulumbi, Ex-NUPAW Official, Mazabuka, January 19, 1989.
27. ROZ, The Employers' Guide to the Zambia National Provident Fund (Lusaka:Government Printer, 1966), 7.

28. ROZ, Department of Labour Report for February, 1975, 4.
29. Interview, Beckett.
30. See CFB, Membership Lists from 1975 to 1980. In Choma district, only Bonanza Tobacco Company features as a company-owned commercial farm.
31. Interview, Silwimba.
32. Interview, Silwimba.
33. Anonymous Questionnaire Respondent, Mazabuka.
34. ILO, Organizations of Rural Workers, 32.
35. Interview, Anonymous Farm Workers, Monze, January, 12, 1989.
36. Interview, Anonymous Farm Worker, Mazabuka, January 19, 1989.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

In this dissertation, I have argued that pre-1945 forms of labour stabilization gave way to the post-1945 forms based not only on long duration in wage employment but also on the acquisition of technical skills. This qualitative transformation was a result of the post-Second World War technological innovations in commercial agriculture. These innovations were both mechanical and bio-chemical. The process of labour stabilization on the commercial farms was facilitated by rural-to-rural migration, that is, the movement of labour from other rural districts and provinces to the commercial farms along the line-of-rail, and by landlessness and natural population increase in the native reserves. Rural-to-rural migration was instrumental to the development of commercial agriculture particularly at the time when local plateau Tonga labour was reluctant to engage itself in permanent wage employment on the farms.

After 1945, the development of the enclosure system in the native reserves and the population increase

led to land shortage particularly in the Mazabuka district. By the late 1950s, the local Tonga were increasingly selling their labour-power on the commercial farms on permanent basis. Even though the colonial state recognized the importance of rural labour stabilization, it did little or nothing to facilitate this process. This was shown by the colonial state's non-involvement in the production and provision of farm housing. However, during the colonial period, a rural proletariat was already in existence on the commercial farms in the Southern Province. This class lacked access to the means of production, notably land, and to productive property.

In chapter three, I argued that after 1964 there was increased investment in farm machinery and farm vehicles which in turn created additional demand for skilled farm labour. I also argued that the consolidation of the enclosure system and population increase in the customary lands or villages created wide-spread landlessness in the Mazabuka district. As a result there was increased participation of the local Tonga in farm employment in the post-colonial period. Between

1964 and 1974, the post-colonial state largely failed to live up to its stated objectives regarding the improvement of the conditions of service of farm labour. This was evidenced by the exemption of agrarian capital from providing standard workers' housing and housing allowance. Like the colonial state, the post-colonial state was more concerned with creating the material conditions for production to take place and not with improving farm labour's working and living conditions. This was shown by the non-recognition of the NUPAW by the CFB until 1974 despite the post-colonial state's ratification of an ILO convention on the right of association in agriculture earlier in 1967. The fifty-ninth session of the International Labour Conference of 1974 called for the formation of strong rural worker's organization as a pre-condition for rural development.

In the fourth chapter, I have argued that the shift in production which led to the diversification of crop and pastoral production and to the introduction of irrigation, broadened and consolidated the process of labour stabilization on the commercial farms. Under irrigation, for example, a variety of crops could be

grown throughout the year and thereby increasing the demand for a relatively large unskilled permanent labour force. Increased re-investment in commercial agriculture between 1975 and 1980 also increased the demand for skilled farm labour to drive tractors, trucks, and combine harvesters. This period also witnessed the increased involvement of private and parastatal companies in commercial farming. These companies normally offered better conditions of service and were apt to follow labour regulations compared with the family-owned farming enterprises which at times ignored labour policy, practice, and procedure. The period between 1975 and 1980 also witnessed increased activities by the NUPAW following the recognition agreement of 1974. The NUPAW opened several branches in the Southern Province even though it incurred a lot of organizational problems in the Choma district. The NUPAW's power-base in the province was on the company-owned commercial farms such as Maize Research Institute Limited in Mazabuka district. On the family owned farms, the NUPAW was relatively weak.

On the commercial farms in Zambia, particularly in the Southern Province, a class of farm workers which could be termed as a "rural proletariat" was formed in the process of capitalist agricultural production. This class cannot be termed as a "semi-proletariat", at least not after 1945, as Ken Swindell would want us to believe.¹ This class was not only defined by the long duration spent in wage employment but also, and more importantly, by its severance from the means of production, particularly land, and the lack of productive property. Money wages were by far the major factor for its daily upkeep and long-term reproduction. By 1980, the process of rural proletarianization on the commercial farms had been broadened, deepened, and consolidated in the Southern Province of Zambia.

CHAPTER FIVE - NOTES:

1. K. Swindell, Farm Labour (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), p. 91 and p. 128. Swindell prescribes, like an authoritative medicine-man the use of the concept of "semi-proletariat" for African agricultural labour on the grounds that it is difficult to measure the degree of landlessness for African labour. Our evidence has shown that this prescription is wrong and dangerous. The diagnosis leading to it is not supported by empirical evidence. In the Southern Province, migrant labour, which became proletarianized or was assimilated by the local Tonga, lacked access to means of production, especially land. After the mid-1950s, local Tonga labour was also increasingly being divorced from access to the land due to the development of the enclosure system. By the late 1960s, landlessness in the Mazabuka district had become generalized. Ajulu, 'A Brief Summary of Proletarianization', p. 22, also makes an important point: 'The question is whether we can conceptualise a working class in the classical European sense, or whether in the colonial and post-colonial African context, we have to resort to loose untheoretical categories such as semi-proletariat, trans-classman, etc., categories which seem to identify the working class not in terms of its relation to the means of production, but in terms of its place of origin or residence and the period spent at working places.'

APPENDIX I

QUESTIONNAIRE

Questionnaires are rarely used in historical research by the historians. Questionnaires can be administered to supplement oral interviews among the literate. But the historian has to be cautious when using this source. For instance, in my sample, I could not get information for the colonial period from the younger farmers whose fathers have retired from farming.

For the post-colonial period questionnaires are evidently valuable particularly due to the inaccessibility of archival sources. The younger generation of farmers also know something about events since 1964. Most of them were able to identify the problems of commercial agriculture since 1964 such as the unattractive producer prices for maize.

Response rate was 60 per cent. Out of fifty questionnaires sent, thirty were returned. The sample is quite representative. The Central Statistical Office mainly obtained a response rate of slight over 50 per cent (see, for example, ROZ, Agricultural and Pastoral

Production 1972, Lusaka:CSO, 1976). Commercial farmers in the Southern Province were well known for their low response rate to mailed questionnaires. One farmer told me that he had a heap of questionnaires but had no time to fill them in.

QUESTIONNAIRE SAMPLE

1. (a) Name of farmer and farm _____
- (b) Major products:
 - (i) 1900 - 1945 _____
 - (ii) 1945 - 1964 _____
 - (iii) 1965 - 1975 _____
 - (iv) 1975 - 1980 _____
2. In 1938, G. St. J. Orde Browne reported that the labour market in Northern Rhodesia was in the primitive stage as shown by desertations, absenteeism, and other forms of labour indiscipline.
 - (a) Do you agree that the poor performance of commercial farming between 1900 and 1940 was responsible for this indiscipline?
 _____ State other reasons: _____

 - (b) Do you agree that low wages, poor housing and rations were a result of the generally low-grade unreliable labour force at this time?
 _____ Give reasons for your answer: _____

(c) Do you think labour migrations were responsible for the unreliability of farm labour between 1900 and 1940? _____

If not, state other factors: _____

3. The Committee appointed to enquire into the development of the European farming industry (1946) noted the importance of agriculture for the economic and social structure of Northern Rhodesia and identified financial obstacles to agricultural development such as the lack of long-term and short-term agricultural loans.

(a) Are financial obstacles alone a satisfactory explanation? _____

(b) Would producer prices explain the picture more fully? _____

(c) Comment: _____

4. In 1938, it was reported that Maize Control would ~~push~~ up wages and make labour difficult to find.

- (a) To what extent would you say Maize Control contributed to the labour shortage on the farms? _____
- (b) Why were Africans from other districts and provinces more reliable than the local plateau Tonga in the period 1945 to 1964? _____

- (c) To what extent has this been the case in the period after 1964? _____

- (d) Do you agree that non-locals tended to be more permanent because of lack of opportunities to earn money through the sale of maize or livestock? _____

5. After the Second World War, the state of commercial agriculture improved considerably to meet the new challenges.
- (a) Did the mechanization of agriculture lead to wholesome displacement of labour?
- (i) Yes _____ (ii) No _____
- (b) Would you say that the mechanization of agriculture led to the stabilisation of the

agricultural labour force (that is making the labour force more permanent or stable)?

(i) Yes _____ (ii) No _____

(iii) State the advantages of a stable and efficient labour force under conditions of mechanized agriculture: _____

(c) On your farm, have you found instances of Africans who have lost contact with their villages and whose children are born on the farms and work there also in the period 1945 to 1980?

_____ Comments (If any): _____

(d) Would you say that the allotment of plots of land to farm labourers and the presence of married farm labourers contributed to labour productivity and efficiency. Explain: _____

(e) How true is it to say that housing is very important in order to have a stable labour force?

(i) True _____ False _____ Explain: _____

(f) What is the most important factor in order to have a stable labour force?

(i) Housing and rations _____

(ii) Good employer/employee relations _____

(g) Would you say stores on the farms helped to make the labour more stable? _____

How? _____

(h) Which factor do you think is more important towards the daily up-keep of the farm labour?

Capacity to earn cash wages _____

Capacity to till the land _____

(i) Would you say that the lack of land in African customary areas or native reserves contributed to the making of a more stable farm labour force? _____

- (j) How many workers on your farm became prosperous after working for you and started off their own? _____. Give some details:

6. In 1969, the Zambian Manpower Development division recommended labour-intensive production methods in industry and agriculture.

- (a) What would you favour, labour-intensive methods or capital-intensive methods? _____

Why _____

- (b) In your opinion, what have been the main problems of commercial agriculture between 1964 and 1980?

- (c) What factors do you think contributed most to the decline in large-scale agricultural production after 1964? _____

7. Do you think the demand for a special housing loan in 1963 to construct houses for farm labour was justified? _____
Why? _____

8. Where would you say one is likely to find a more stable labour force?
(a) i. In maize production _____
ii. In tobacco production _____
iv. Others _____
(b) Why? _____

9. To what extent would you say that the activities of African National Congress(ANC) contributed to the shortage of labour on your farm between 1953 and 1964? _____

10. What were the workers' general view of the ANC? _____

11. Would you say that non-locals tended to be more politically active than the locals? _____.

Why do you say so? _____

12. In 1959, it was reported that some farmers viewed labour laws as too complex, theoretical, and unfair to have any application to them.

(a) Which labour laws in the period 1945 to 1964 would you say were complex, theoretical, and unfair? _____

(b) Which labour laws in the period after 1964 do you think were complex, theoretical and unfair? _____

(c) Do you see any differences or similarities between colonial labour laws and policy and post-colonial laws and policy? _____

Cite examples: _____

13. Would you support the idea of your workers joining
the National Union of Plantation and Agricultural
Workers (NUPAW)? _____

Give reasons for your answer: _____

14. Comments (IF ANY) _____

APPENDIX II

**CROWNLAND, NATIVE RESERVE AND NATIVE TRUSTLAND (SQUARE
MILES)**

	MAZABUKA	CHOMA	GWEMBE	KALOMO	NAMWALA
Crownland	1,548	949	143	1,256	17
Native Reserve	1,906	1,430	3,302	6,368	5,053
Native Trust- land	830	438	1,424	4,385	3,328
Total	4,284	2,817	4,868	12,009	8,398

Source: Muchangwe, Tonga Land Utilization, 11.

APPENDIX III

FARM EMPLOYMENT AS AT 30TH SEPTEMBER, 1972 (SOUTHERN PROVINCE)

HOLDINGS ON ACREAGE	AFRICAN		NON-AFRICAN		AFRICAN		NON-AFRICAN	
	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE
0-199	20	2	-	-	70	40	-	-
200-499	40	9	-	-	70	30	-	-
500-999	30	-	-	-	610	6	-	-
1,000-1,999	30	5	5	2	540	80	-	-
2,000-4,999	620	100	10	8	1,080	150	-	-
OVER 5,000	410	40	190	30	2,530	650	190	-
PROVINCIAL TOTAL	1,150	156	205	40	4,900	923	190	2
NATIONAL TOTAL	3,770	310	370	90	13,880	1,960	570	60

Source: ROZ, Agricultural and Pastoral Production, Commercial Farms, 1972 (Lusaka:CSO), 8.

A P P E N D I X V(a)

AFRICAN AVERAGE EARNINGS FROM EMPLOYMENT, 1945

INDUSTRY	NUMBER ENGAGED	AVERAGE ANNUAL EARNINGS (£)
Agriculture (European)	27 000	10.3
Mining	33 000	41.2
Manufacturing	9 500	19.1
Building and Construction	6 000	10.7
Transport	5 400	17.1
Commerce	4 200	23.8
Professional (most mission employees)	9 700	11.7
Government	29 700	18.7
Personal and Domestic Services	17 500	19.4
Other (including all Africans employed by individual Africans)	24 000	6.0
TOTAL	166 000	20.2

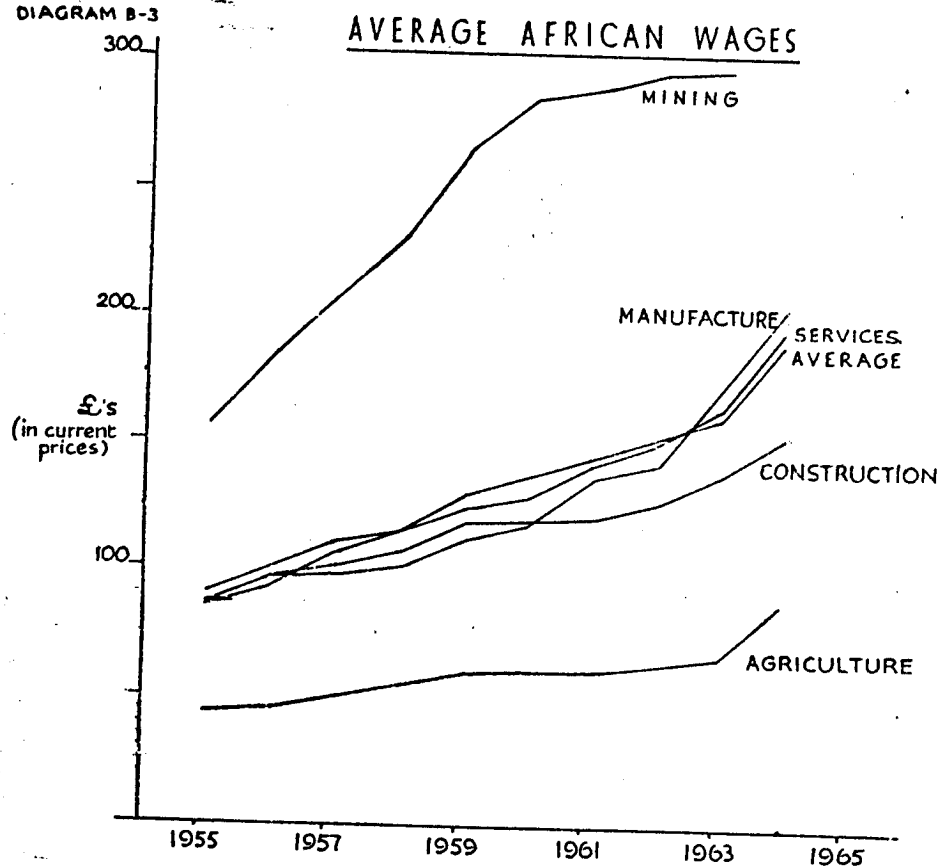
Source: Phyllis Dean, Colonial Social Accounting

(Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1953),

p. 27.

AVERAGE AFRICAN EARNINGS

DIAGRAM B-3



Source: Republic of Zambia, Manpower Report: A Report and Statistical Handbook on Manpower, Training and Zambianization, 1965-1966 (Lusaka: Government Printer, 1966), p. 73.

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Reports.

SEC 2/1056, 1940, Mazabuka Tour Reports.

SEC 2/1058, 1949-1950, Mazabuka Tour
Reports.

SEC 2/1059, 1950-1951, Mazabuka Tour
Reports

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SEC 2/1062, 1953, Mazabuka Tour Reports.

SEC 2/1063, 1954, Mazabuka Tour Reports.

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Volume 1.

1.2 ORAL INTERVIEWS

Below is a complete list of all the people I interviewed. In addition to individual interviews, I also had several group interviews and discussions with farmers, farm

workers, and other interested persons. For fear of victimization, some farm workers decided to remain anonymous.

Atkins, G. Farmer, Monze, February 9, 1989.

Banda, J. Retired Farm Worker, Choma
February 9, 1989.

Bubala, P. Farm Tractor Driver, Mazabuka.
February 2, 1989

Chendamukanwa, F.M. Assistant Labour Officer,
February 2, 1989.

Chikamba, G. Farm Worker, Monze, January
12, 1989

Chiputa, H. Businessman/Farmer, Mazabuka,
February 4, 1989.

Chisebenta, N. Villager, Mazabuka, January 18,
1989.

Chongo, R.A. Bank Employee, Mazabuka. January
18, 1989.

Collect, H.D. (Mrs), Farmer, Mazabuka,
February 2, 1989.

Cornhill, G. Farmer/Businessman, Monze.
February 10, 1989.

Geddie, G.A.P. Farmer, Mazabuka, February 3,
1989.

Green, D. Farmer, Choma, February 23, 1989.

Haaloba, C. Farm Truck Driver/Mechanic,
Mazabuka. February 2, 1989.

Haciwa, R. Farm Worker, Mazabuka, February 4,
1989.

- Hamoonga, P. Ex-Farm Worker, Mazabuka.
January 19, 1989.
- Hiloonde, A. Ex-Farm Worker, Mazabuka.
January 17, 1989.
- Howes, D. Farmer/Businessman, Monze. February
10, 1989.
- Jacobsen, K.F. Farmer, Choma. February 24,
1989.
- Jeffels, S.M. Farmer, Choma. February 9,
1989.
- Jones, T. Farmer, Monze. February 9, 1989.
- Kazingwe, F. Ex-Farm Worker, Monze.
September 29, 1989.
- Landless, B.R.C. Farmer, Mazabuka. February
4, 1989.
- Malambo, J. Farm Tractor Driver, Monze.
January 12, 1989.
- Mbao, L.M. District Labour Officer, Mazabuka.
January 18, 1989.
- Mbewe (Mrs), Farm Supervisor's Wife. Monze
February 9, 1989.
- Miyanda. Watchman, Mazabuka. January 18,
1989.
- Moyo, R.J. Bank Employee, Mazabuka. January
18, 1989.
- Mulumbi, S.H. Former NUPAW Provincial
Organizing Secretary, Mazabuka.
January 19, 1989.

III

- Munang'andu, J. Farmer, Monze, January 1, 1989
- Mutembo, R. Farm Worker, Mazabuka. February 4, 1989.
- Mweemba, J. Farm Worker, Mazabuka. January 20, 1989.
- Mweemba, O. Farm Worker, Monze. February 9, 1989.
- Nang'amba, W.N. CFB Assistant Executive
Director, Lusaka. November 21, 1988.
- Petric, M. Farm Manager, Mazabuka. January 21, 1989.
- Quenet, R. Farmer, Monze. February 9, 1989.
- Shamputa, J. Bank Employee, Mazabuka.
January 18, 1989.
- Shenton, G. Farmer, Mazabuka. February 2, 1989.
- Sibajene. Industrial Relations Manager,
Zambia Sugar Company, Mazabuka.
January 20, 1989.
- Silwimba, S.C. General Secretary, NUPAW, Kabwe.
March 3, 1989.
- Simasiku, R. Farm Worker, Monze. February 9, 1989.
- Simwanza F. Bank Employee, Monze. January 1, 1989.

Siyunda, R. Watchman, Magoye. February 1,
1989.

Street, P.T. Retired Farmer, Mazabuka.
February 4, 1989.

Taylor, B.W. Farmer, Mazabuka. February 2,
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