

THE IMPACT OF THE PETAUKE CO-OPERATIVE MARKETING  
UNION (P.C.M.U.) ON THE PEASANT ECONOMY IN THE  
PETAUKE DISTRICT OF EASTERN PROVINCE IN NORTHERN  
RHODESIA, 1947-1964: A CASE STUDY

by

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For my Mother Rabecca Nyakaifwa and her  
Grandchildren Kapeza, Chonde and Eddie.  
Happy memories

To

My Wife Malita and My only Brother Isaac

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## ABSTRACT

This is a study of the socio-economic impact of the Petauke Co-operative Marketing Union (PCMU) on the peasant economy in Petauke District from 1947 to 1964. The approach adopted in this study is a dynamic one. The impact of PCMU on the peasants is examined through a focus upon the organizational structure, business activities and policies of the co-operative movement.

The study begins with a brief examination of the pre-colonial economy, traditional political system and ecological setting in order to show that socio-economic change in Petauke District has a long history. The pre-colonial economy of the district was largely based on agriculture and trade. The discussion of socio-economic change associated with the development of the co-operatives in Petauke District is examined against a background of the evolution of a co-operatives policy in Northern Rhodesia to 1947. The co-operatives were properly established in Northern Rhodesia under the Co-operative Ordinance of 1948. In Petauke District the movement passed through three main phases. The first phase was from 1946 to 1952 when the first co-operative societies

were recognized under the ordinance of 1948. During this period, a weak foundation was laid for the formation of the PCMU which dominated the second phase, 1952 to 1958. The PCMU was a union of co-operative societies in Petauke and Katete Districts. In the final phase, 1958 to 1964, the PCMU wound up its activities in Katete and became a member of the Eastern Province Co-operative Marketing Association. The nationalist protest adversely affected the performance of the union in Petauke District.

The study shows that the co-operative movement in Petauke was an effort by the colonial government to assert control over peasant agricultural production. Thus, co-operative societies tended to emphasize agricultural production of cash crops bought by PCMU. The PCMU became a middleman organization between the district and markets outside the district. The study also shows that PCMU and its co-operative societies were agents of social differentiation and social inequality within the peasantry in Petauke. The PCMU also became a channel through which both peasants and colonial administrators used to sound opinion of each other on socio-economic and political matters.

## ABBREVIATIONS

ACMU	Alimi Co-operative Marketing Union
CRC	Chipata Record Centre
ECU	Eastern Co-operative Union
EPAAPB	Eastern Province African Agricultural Produce Board
EPAFIF	Eastern Province African Farming Improvement Fund
EPCMA	Eastern Province Co-operative Marketing Association
GMB	Grain Marketing Board
KCMU	Katete Co-operative Marketing Union
NAZ	National Archives of Zambia
NERFCS	North-Eastern Rhodesia Farmers' Co-operative Society
NR	Northern Rhodesia
NWRFCS	North-Western Rhodesia Farmers' Co-operative Society
PAPCS	Petauke African Producers' Co-operative Society
PATGCS	Petauke African Tobacco Growers' Co-operative Society
PCMU	Petauke Co-operative Marketing Union
PFS	Peasant Farming Scheme
PPA	Petauke Producers' Association

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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## INTRODUCTION

The colonial administration of Northern Rhodesia had broad objectives in establishing co-operatives among Africans after the Second World War. The policy on co-operatives aimed at promoting economic development among Africans and raising their standard of living. The co-operative movement primarily focused on rural areas.<sup>1</sup> The assumption was that the co-operative movement would help improve methods of farming, raise production and expand the scale of marketed commodities among African rural dwellers. These goals have changed little in independent Zambia.<sup>2</sup> In essence, the fundamental difference in the approach to co-operatives of the colonial government and that of the independent government of Zambia is that the latter has rationalized the relevance of co-operatives to the contemporary economy on the basis of the nature and the organization of labour and production of Zambian pre-colonial societies.<sup>3</sup>

In studying the co-operative movement in 1984, two other differences in the colonial and post-colonial governments' policy on co-operatives can be deduced from the fact that colonial co-operative policy (1947-1964) lasted almost as long as that of the post-colonial government (1964-1984). In the post-1964 era, the Zambian government has tirelessly encouraged the formation

of co-operatives as a way of achieving the goals of the philosophy of Humanism promulgated in 1967 as the framework for achieving the social, political and economic aspirations of the country. The Zambian government has attempted to evolve a co-operative policy through a variety of institutions; and frustration has been as varied. In spite of several setbacks, the Zambian government has seriously committed itself to the co-operative movement as a strategy for rural development. This general direction of policy on co-operatives is found in many economic programmes of independent African countries.

The continuity in policy on the co-operatives in Zambia and the importance attached to the co-operatives throughout the African continent demonstrate a broad significance of the present study. However, I am more specifically and narrowly concerned with examining the rationale for establishing co-operatives and assessing their activities during the last phase of the colonial period through a single but probably one of the few most successful co-operative societies in Northern Rhodesia. I focus upon the Petauke Co-operative Marketing Union in Petauke District of the Eastern Province of Zambia in an attempt to understand the nature of socio-economic activities of co-operatives upon African peasants during the colonial period and the early phase of the co-operative movement amongst Africans in Northern Rhodesia. Further, in looking

at the activities of the PCMU it is possible to see whether the co-operative movement during the colonial period was a viable economic venture that benefited Africans in the rural areas, or whether it was a mechanism for exploiting rural based labour that was not employed in the mining and other sectors of the Northern Rhodesia economy which relied on wage labour. There is one other reason for studying the PCMU. The Petauke District was the second most important agricultural district in Eastern Province which was also a major focus of colonial agricultural policy during the period 1947 to 1964.<sup>4</sup> Therefore, a study of the PCMU is essentially a discussion of an aspect of agricultural policy as an instrument for rural change at district level.

The evolution and activities of the co-operative movement in Petauke has not received much attention from scholars. George Kay undertook one of the earliest studies that paid attention to developments in Petauke District during the colonial period.<sup>5</sup> Kay's study is important, but its focus on resettlement in the province as a whole makes it less useful in understanding the co-operative movement in Petauke because major resettlement programmes were in Chipata District. He has discussed co-operatives in Petauke as an aspect of general agricultural policy, yet the co-operative movement was probably the single most important

development programme in the district into which all other development schemes were incorporated and therefore, deserves a study in its own right. Another important secondary study of the district is Joseph Mtisi's examination of the social impact of taxation and labour migration to 1953.<sup>6</sup> Mtisi made an important contribution to understanding adverse social change resulting from colonial labour and taxation policies. But Mtisi is concerned with the period prior to the focus of the present study, and as noted earlier, it can be argued that the co-operatives were a remedy to the social malaise Mtisi has vividly analysed. In a sense, therefore, this study is an extension of Mtisi's and an assessment of the extent to which the co-operative movement was successful or otherwise in redressing what R. Palmer and N. Parsons have described as rural poverty.<sup>7</sup> In their discussion of the causal factors of rural poverty, a number of studies edited by Palmer and Parsons make a major contribution to our understanding and analysis of changes in colonial agricultural policies and peasant economies in Central-Southern Africa. It is in the same direction that I hope to make a contribution by focusing on a local level institution for social change in the colonial period.

I have also benefited from studies that have paid more attention to the co-operative movement than the general studies cited above. S.A. Quick and C.S. Lombard have examined the development and problems of the

co-operative movement in Zambia.<sup>8</sup> These broad surveys have mainly concerned themselves with general aspects of the co-operatives in the colonial era. Lombard's study, though important, has the defect of being largely commissioned to resolve specific problems perceived as seriously undermining the growth of co-operatives after independence in Zambia within the structure of government agricultural policy. It, however, has useful baseline data. Quick's study has more relevance to the findings and conclusions of the present study. Like Quick, I see the co-operatives as a strategy for increasing agricultural and social control over the peasant economy. I develop and illustrate this point by examining the system of appointing co-operative officers and supervision of policy implementation. In doing this, I have adopted a broader perspective than either the colonial government or Lombard. I have adopted a historical approach in discussing broad socio-economic aspects of co-operatives. Konrad Engelmann postulated advantages of such an approach when he noted that:

In most developing countries, historical, political, economic and social problems are so entangled that considering them separately is difficult, if not unrealistic. Neither governmental motives nor regional needs can be adequately examined from only one perspective. This is particularly true in organizing co-operative movements... The mental effects of the political and historical fates endured by developing nations must be recognized as fully as possible. They are often the key to an understanding of social-economic phenomena.<sup>9</sup>

The colonial administration of Northern Rhodesia started the co-operative movement among Africans with objectives related to vague strategies but emphasized collection of foodstuffs from peasants for the local market that had been expanded due to the increasing urbanization in Northern Rhodesia when the copper mining industry grew rapidly after the Second World War.

The main argument in this study is that the co-operative movement was an attempt by the colonial administration to assert greater control over peasant agricultural production. Co-operatives were used as middlemen between the peasants and the commodity markets in Northern Rhodesia and overseas. The co-operatives bought agricultural produce from the rural African cultivators and sold the same produce at the local and overseas market under close supervision of the colonial administration. The co-operatives were used to encourage Africans to grow more cash crops such as maize, tobacco and groundnuts.<sup>10</sup> The study looks at one of the first producer and marketing unions, the PCMU, which was formed in Northern Rhodesia after the Second World War in order to find out the nature of the colonial government's control of African peasants and whether the peasants benefited from these co-operative ventures.

Although these co-operatives were formed only after the Second World War, the history of co-operatives in Northern Rhodesia started in 1914. The first

European controlled co-operative society was registered by the Registrar of the Northern Rhodesia High Court.<sup>11</sup> After this, a number of European societies were established in the 1920s. The societies were mainly for settler agricultural purposes. This was in response to local market expansion due to the rapid development of the copper mining industry after 1923 and urbanization.<sup>12</sup> This forced many white settlers to organize themselves into co-operative societies. For instance, in 1928, the Tobacco Co-operative Society was established to monitor the buying and selling of tobacco for the white settler farmers. By 1948, there were over fourteen registered European societies.

The Africans only came to dominate the co-operative movement, in numerical terms, from 1948 onwards when a new co-operative ordinance was passed.<sup>13</sup> There was a systematic organization of the co-operative policy between 1946 and 1952 in Petauke. Two societies emerged in 1946, namely, the Petauke African Tobacco Growers Co-operative Society (PATGCS) and the Petauke African Producers Co-operative Society (PAPCS). The former started as a result of a tobacco experimental scheme that had begun at Minga along Mvuvye stream in 1938.<sup>14</sup> These societies dealt with tobacco and groundnuts respectively. Later many co-operative societies were formed in the district. Problems of organizing societies separately led to the formation of the Petauke Producers

Association (PPA) late in 1946. The PPA was dissolved in 1949 and a new central marketing organization, the Petauke Co-operative Marketing Union (PCMU) was formed. In chapter one, I discuss a general background to the formation of co-operatives in Northern Rhodesia with emphasis on Petauke District. In chapter two I discuss the organization, activities and expansion of the PCMU beyond Petauke to Katete between 1952 and 1957; showing how it reached its height of success. Lastly, chapter three concludes a discussion of changes in the PCMU between 1957 and 1964 as an affiliate of the Eastern Province Co-operative Marketing Association (EPCMA) and assesses the impact of PCMU on the socio-economic conditions of the peasants in the Petauke District as an organ of a province-wide co-operative structure.

The discussion of changing activities of the PCMU between 1947 and 1964 makes no major theoretical or conceptual contribution. There is, however, an awareness of certain key concepts which have been the subject of repeated academic debates. Peasant is probably the most important concept in this study. Like many major writers on African agricultural history, such as Palmer and Parsons, Colin Bundy and Martin Klein, I find the definition of the African peasantry by J.S. Saul and R. Woods to be a satisfactory guide. Saul and Woods pointed out that:

Peasants are those whose ultimate security and subsistence lies in their having certain rights in land and in the labour of family members on the land, but who are involved, through rights and obligations, in a wider economic system which includes the participation of non-peasants.<sup>15</sup>

This definition fits the African agricultural cultivators in Petauke District between 1947 and 1964 and the purpose of the study is to discuss change among the peasants within the context of government co-operative policy. Other terms of major concern that have been used in the study are primary societies and co-operative movement. By primary society, I mean the constituent units of the marketing union that operated buying stations in the remote places in the district. They grouped a number of producers in various geographical localities of Petauke District and other areas of Northern Rhodesia where co-operatives were formed. A co-operative movement is a voluntary and social attempt of organizing services among individuals with common objectives of achieving improvement in production and social benefits. Rita Hinden, an activist in the Fabian Colonial Bureau, defined a co-operative as voluntary effort of individual members in order to manage the economy of their respective societies in order to share benefits of their co-operative effort in buying and selling a range of commodities produced individually.<sup>16</sup> This is the way the Northern Rhodesian colonial administration perceived the co-operative movement.

Data for this study has come from diverse sources and has been collected through many different ways. I used the materials in the National Archives of Zambia. I have looked at correspondence between the Colonial Office and Northern Rhodesia Government and within the colonial administration of Northern Rhodesia. I focused on secretariat series that contain District tour reports, District note-books, District and provincial reports and departmental reports on agriculture and co-operatives. I also used the Chipata Record Centre. This centre is an extension of the National Archives of Zambia. It is one of many centres the National Archives of Zambia has established at Provincial Headquarters under the general direction of the policy of decentralization which was formally promulgated in 1980. I found valuable records and early reports of the PCMU and the co-operative movement in general in the province. The major limitation of the record centre is that its material is not properly organized and most of the documents which seem to have been useful to the present study were destroyed due to limited space for keeping them.

I also conducted interviews with officers and other people who have been associated with the co-operative in Chipata and Petauke Districts. Here I should mention one setback in obtaining data from some founding officers who are no longer closely associated with the co-operative. I made several fruitless appointments, and wrote several letters to these people but did not get replies from them.

However, interviews with John Sankhulani, the Eastern Co-operative Union General Manager, and the Eastern Co-operative Union Stock Controller at Petauke, A.J. Mwale and others who are still closely associated with the co-operatives helped tremendously. Mwale was first employed by the PCMU in 1949 and has not worked elsewhere since that date. Sankhulani was employed in 1953 and has risen to General Manager of the Eastern Co-operative Union Limited which has been one of the most stable and economically viable co-operative Unions in Zambia since its formation. George Kay's original study on changing patterns in the settlement of the Eastern Province and other regional studies have contributed a great deal in placing oral data in perspective.<sup>18</sup> From Kay, Eastern Co-operative Union and PCMU records I obtained some illustrative statistical data. This data has gaps because of irregularities in the original collection of statistics and changes in organizing and presenting them in original documents. However, the limited data available gives a general indication of the changes in the activities, achievements and failures of the co-operative movement in the Petauke District.

Finally, it is my sincere hope and conviction that an investigation and evaluation of the accumulated experiences during the initial phase in the development of the co-operative movement among the Africans would

provide a useful framework of reference for understanding the Zambian government policy on co-operatives in particular, and possibly for African independent governments in general, since they have continued to demonstrate a commitment to the co-operatives as a strategy for rural and agricultural improvement.

FOOTNOTES

1. National Archives of Zambia (NAZ) SEC1/252, Reports on Co-operatives prospects in Northern Rhodesia 1946-1947: SEC1/254, Bills passed in the Legislative Council on co-operative societies 1949: Also see J.L. Boyd Wilson, A pamphlet of a co-operative Digest 1, 1948 (Lusaka: Government Printer 1948) pp 1-6: C.S. Lombard, The growth of co-operatives in Zambia 1914-1971, Zambian papers No. 6 (Manchester: Manchester University Press 1971). p.9.
2. K.D. Kaunda, Speech at Chifubu Rally, 17th January 1965 (Lusaka: Zambia Information Services, Press Background No. 3/65: K.D. Kaunda, Speech to the First National Convention on the Four Year Plan 1967 (Lusaka: Government Printer 1967): K.D. Kaunda, Speech to the 1970 Co-operative Conference, 12th January 1970 (Lusaka: Zambia Information Services, Press Background No. 5/70.
3. K.D. Kaunda, Humanism in Zambia and A Guide to its Implementation Parts I and II (Lusaka: Zambia Information Services 1968 and 1974); See also Third National Development Plan (Lusaka: Government of Zambia, 1975) pp. 169-170: M. Lungu, "Co-operative efficiency in Zambia", In C.G. Widstrand (ed), African Co-operatives and efficiency, (Uppsala: The Scandinavian Institute of African Studies, 1972), p. 209: In 1965 Zambia created the credit organization of Zambia in order to give loans to co-operative societies. This attempt did not succeed. In 1983 the President created the Ministry of Co-operatives in order to revamp co-operative societies. All Rural Reconstruction Centres have been turned into Rural Co-operative Societies by the Government. This shows the seriousness the Zambian Government has on the co-operative movement as a way of enhancing rural development.

4. G. Kay, Changing Patterns of Settlement and Land use in the Eastern Province of Northern Rhodesia (Hull: University of Hull Publications, 1965). pp 60-61: W. Allan, Studies in African Land usage in Northern Rhodesia, Rhodes-Livingstone Paper No. 15 (London: O.U.P., 1949) pp. 130-137. See also R.N. Coster, Peasant Farming in the Petauke and Katete Areas of Eastern Province of Northern Rhodesia, Agriculture Bulletin No. 15 (Lusaka: Government Printer 1958), pp. 15-52.
5. Kay, Changing Patterns of Settlement, pp. 1-2
6. J.P. Mtisi, "The Economic Impact of Colonial Rule on Eastern Zambia, 1900-1953: The experience of Chipata and Petauke," Ph.D. Thesis, University of Ibadan, (1979), pp. 44-296.
7. R. Palmer and N. Parsons, "The Roots of Rural Poverty Historical background", In R. Palmer and N. Pars (eds)., The Roots of Rural Poverty in Central and Southern Africa (London: H.E.B. 1977), pp. 1-6.
8. S.A. Quick, Humanism or Technocracy? Zambia's Farming Co-operatives 1965-1972, Zambian Papers No. 12 (Manchester: Manchester University Press 1978) p. 8: C.S. Lombard, The growth of co-operatives in Zambia 1914-1971, Zambian Paper No. 6 (Manchester: Manchester University Press 1971) pp. 1-30.
9. E. Konrad, Building Co-operative Movements in developing countries: The Sociological and Psychological aspects, (New York: Frederick. A Praeger Publishers, 1968), p.4.
10. NAZ SEC1/32, Notes on Northern Rhodesia prospects and marketing Reports 1937-1947: SEC1/33, Imports and Exports of Tobacco in Eastern and Western (Copperbelt) Provinces 1950-1954: SEC1/7 Report on Agricultural policy 1947-1948: KSY2/1 Petauke District notebook 1901-1963: SEC1/273, Formation of maize pool in Eastern Province 1950-53.
11. N.R. Registrar of co-operative societies Annual Report for the year 1947, pp. 1-6: Co-operative Societies Ordinance, Chapter 217 of the Laws of Northern Rhodesia (Lusaka: Government Printer 1961).

12. R.E. Baldwin, Economic Development and Export Growth A study of Northern Rhodesia, 1920-1960 (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press 1966), pp. 140-144.
13. NAZ SEC1/254, Bills passed in the Legco on co-operative societies 1949: N.R. Registrar of co-operative societies Annual Report for the year 1948. pp.9-10. Also see NAZ SEC1/252, Report on co-operative prospects in N.R. and Ordinance 1946-1947.
14. N.R. Registrar of Co-operative Societies, 1947, p. 5. See A.M. Kanduza, "The Tobacco Industry of Northern Rhodesia 1912-1938", International Journal of African Historical Studies, 16, 2 (1983), pp. 201, 213-14.
15. J.S. Saul and R. Woods. "African Peasantry", In T. Shanin (ed.), Peasants and Peasant Societies (Harmondsworth, 1977), p. 105: See also G. Arrighi and J.S. Saul. Essays on the Political Economy of Africa (Nairobi: E.A.P.H. Ltd., 1974) p. 407: J.S. Saul, "African Peasants and Revolutionary Change", Review of African Political Economy 1 (1974) pp. 48-68: T.O. Ranger, "Reflections on Peasant Research in Central and Southern Africa", Journal of Southern African Studies, 5, 1 (October 1978) pp. 99-133: F. Cooper, "Peasants, Capitalists and Historians", Journal of Southern African Studies, 7, 2 (1981) pp. 281-314: See Introduction in Palmer and Parsons, "The Roots of Rural Poverty in Southern Africa", 1977, pp. 1-26: C. Bundy, The Rise and Fall of the South African Peasantry (London: Heinemann Educational Books, 1979) pp. 4-12.
16. NAZ SEC2/191 to SEC2/192, Newsletters, No. 1-11 1948 to 1956; Rita Hinden, Co-operation in Colonies, A Report to the Fabian Colonial Bureau (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1945), p. 187.
17. I can not name the people in writing for fear of foreclosing their possible future co-operation.
18. See D.J. Dodge, Agricultural policy and Performance in Zambia, History, Prospects and proposals for change, (Berkeley: University of California Press 1977), J.A. Hellen, Rural Economic Development in Zambia 1890-1964 (Munich: P.A.S. 1968) R.E. Baldwin, Economic Development and Export Growth, p. 140.

## CHAPTER ONE

### THE GENESIS AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE CO-OPERATIVE MOVEMENT 1914-1964

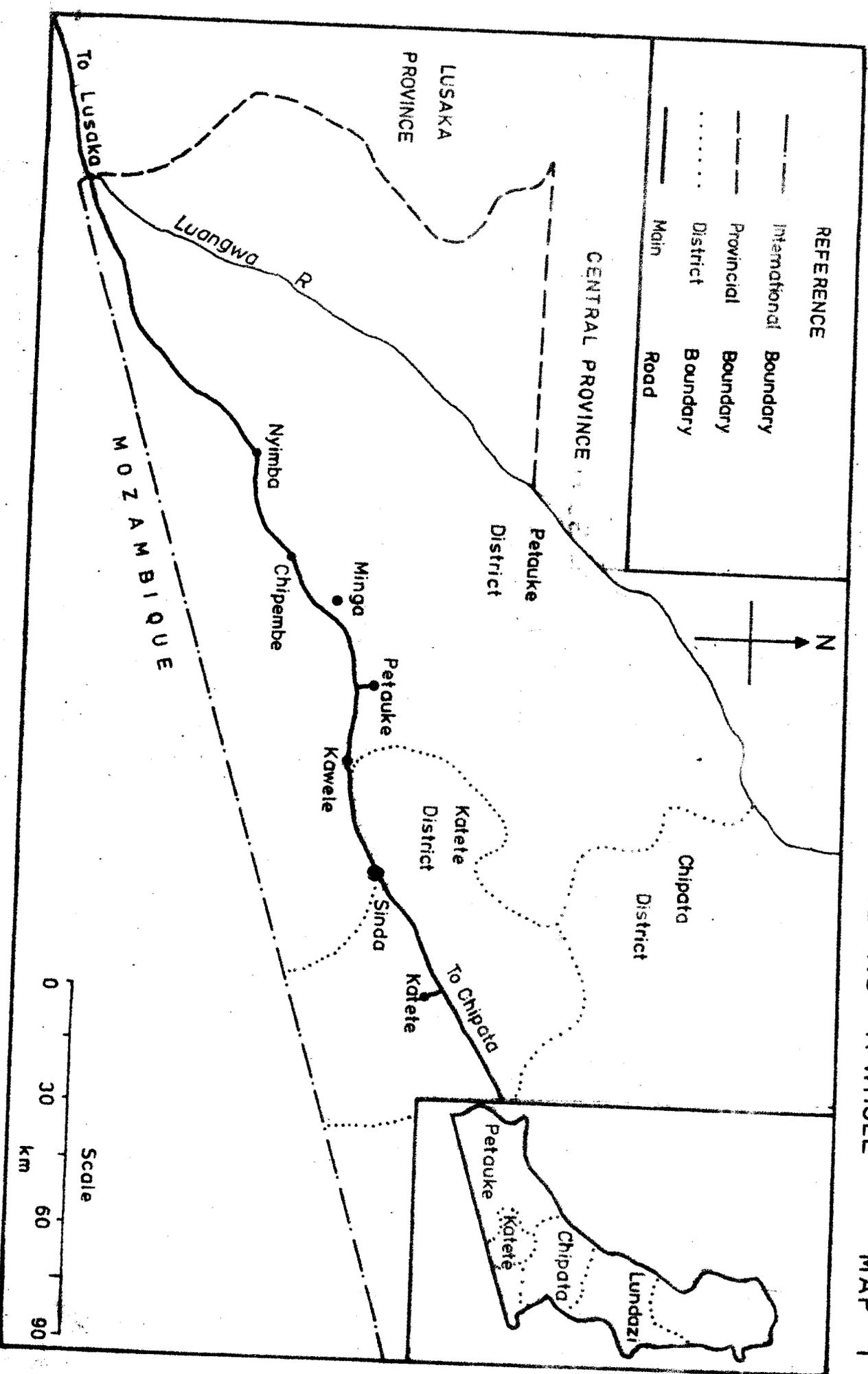
Producer co-operative and marketing societies dealing in tobacco and groundnuts began to be formed in Petauke District in 1946. Many African cultivators in the district were turned into peasants. In this chapter, I examine the development of Petauke Co-operative Marketing Union and its affiliated societies in the context of the evolution of Northern Rhodesia Government policy on the co-operative movement in the colony. I begin by outlining, briefly, the ecology, indigenous political system in the district and the nature of the pre-colonial economy in order to show that socio-economic change associated with the co-operative movement has a long history and a broader context than the colonial government's development policy. The larger part of the chapter is devoted to a discussion of the evolution of co-operative institutions in Petauke District; this being situated in the wider framework of similar developments in the Eastern Province and Northern Rhodesia in general.

Petauke is one of the six districts of the Eastern Province of Zambia. It is bounded by Lusaka Province to the West, Central Province to the North and North-West, Chipata District to the North-East, Katete District to the east and the Peoples' Republic of Mozambique to the

south (See Maps 1 and 2). The district has three physical regions. The first is the Luangwa Valley which is a hot and arid trough lying at about 600m above sea level. The second region is the escarpment with a series of broken and discontinuous hills covered almost entirely by trees. Here there is little human settlement and activity. The third region is the plateau, well known for its fertile soils and relatively dense population.<sup>1</sup> The district has a variety of soils ranging from upper valley to plateau sandveld soils. The district also receives adequate average annual rainfall ranging from 24.97 ins. to 54.36 ins. (1534mm to 3560mm).<sup>2</sup>

In the recent past, the district has largely been inhabited by the Nsenga-speaking people. They came from Lubaland in the modern Shaba (Katanga) Province of Zaire. The Nsenga migrated to the eastern part of present-day Zambia at the same time as the Malawi people during the fourteenth or fifteenth century.<sup>3</sup> The largest political unit among the Nsenga is a chiefdom. During the early phase of European colonization, more than twelve chiefs were recognized by the colonial government in the Petauke District. The most important ones were Kalindawalo, who was the Nsenga Paramount Chief, Nyanje, Mwanjawathu, Ndake, Sandwe, Nyamphande, Nyalugwe, Luembe, Mwape and Mumbi.<sup>4</sup> Chief Mumbi played a prominent role in the establishment of marketing co-operative societies in the district. He was one of the first traditional rulers in the district to join the Petauke Producers Association (PPA) when it was formed in 1946. The PPA was an umbrella district

# PETAUKE DISTRICT IN RELATION TO EASTERN PROVINCE AS A WHOLE MAP 1



**SOURCE:**

R.N. Coster, Peasant Farming in the Petauke and Katete areas of the Eastern Province

marketing organization of several co-operative societies sponsored by the district colonial officials. Chief Mumbi was also the first African Chairman of the PCMU, the successor of PPA, following a demand from African members of the co-operative board that the marketing organization should have an African leadership.<sup>5</sup>

The political and ecological aspects discussed above affected the Nsenga economy. The Nsenga economy was based on land. In the pre-colonial times all free adults had access to land except for bonded slaves. The chief was the custodian of the peoples' land. In pre-colonial days the people mainly engaged in cultivation and other economic activities. Those with political power engaged in trade that involved an exchange of slaves, ivory, cotton and iron goods.<sup>6</sup> The trade was local, regional and long-distance. In the local trade people exchanged agricultural produce and other goods. In the regional trade people of different regions traded in goods not found in their respective areas. For instance, people of the Sandwe's area bartered ivory for iron tools with people of chief Nyanje's areas. The long-distance trade involved the Nsenga rulers and other prominent individuals who exchanged goods such as slaves and ivory for goods such as cloth and beads brought into Nsengaland by the Arabs, Portuguese and the Chikunda from the east coast of Africa through Mozambique.

Petauke had a long history of involvement in long-distance trade. This in general facilitated the incorporation of the district in the world economy during the colonial period. In recognition of this, a District Commissioner at Petauke recommended, in 1946, the introduction of a co-operative society in the district because he thought that the people had an aptitude for trading.<sup>7</sup> The most important basis for that suggestion, however, was the active tobacco and groundnut farming which had been encouraged to reduce the rate of labour migration from the district.<sup>8</sup> Petauke subsequently became an important focus of development plans of the colony because of such positive thinking in the colonial administration. In the Ten Year Development Plan, 1947-1957, Petauke was selected as one of the major areas of focus of the post-war development programme in Northern Rhodesia.<sup>9</sup> The district appeared to have the necessary background to act as a showpiece for other areas in the province and colony and was therefore selected for launching the first co-operative movement in the Eastern Province. The African agricultural economy in Petauke District needed a properly organized marketing system. It was due to these factors that co-operative marketing societies began in the district.

These societies were properly organized after 1947, following the formulation of a co-operative policy in Northern Rhodesia in that year. By the end of the colonial period, these co-operative societies had helped to consolidate the marketing system in the country for both settler and African produced agricultural commodities. The Colonial Office deliberately encouraged the formulation of co-operative policy in colonies following recommendations in the Final Act of the Hot Springs Conference held in Virginia, United States of America, in 1943, urging all colonizing powers to examine legal arrangements for encouraging and promoting co-operative societies for consumers and producers. The Hot Springs Conference was convened by a steering Committee reviewing the League of Nations and preparing for transforming it into the United Nations. The theme of the conference was economic development in the colonies. This recommendation related closely to some of the intentions of the Colonial Development and Welfare Act of 1940 which Britain had passed to guide economic change in her colonies.<sup>11</sup> The aim of the Welfare Act was to enhance the economic advancement of colonial peoples through financial grants and loans from Britain for development projects in the colonies.

This broad response to widespread and serious poverty in British colonies was a challenge which the colonial administration in Northern Rhodesia took up enthusiastically when organizing producer and marketing

co-operative societies. The background to the encouragement of co-operatives in the colonies lay in food and raw materials shortage during the Second World War and anticipated high demand after the war. During both periods, it was realised that British industries would be kept in production through increased production in, and supply from, the colonies. Therefore, the policy on co-operatives in the colonies during the 1940s was primarily aimed at increasing the production of food and raw materials. In the context of local Northern Rhodesian conditions, the co-operatives offered an opportunity to the colonial administration to enforce the adoption of new farming methods and soil conservation measures to prevent further loss in soil fertility.<sup>12</sup>

The formation of co-operatives also, unintentionally though, redressed economic and racial discrimination in Northern Rhodesia because from 1914 to 1947, agricultural co-operatives only existed for white farmers. The settler producers had been protected and supported by the 1914 Co-operative Societies Ordinance.<sup>13</sup> In spite of such official support, the settlers alone could not meet the colony's expanding food requirements and further contribute to post-war world demand. The territory had been perennially in short supply of basic food stuffs, mainly due to the rapid expansion of the copper mining industry in the early 1940s which had attracted tens of thousands of Africans from the rural areas. The wages

of these Africans were partly paid in ration because the **mine** owners wanted to reduce the cost of production by not paying workers high wages. So it can be said that the primary objective of introducing agricultural-producers' co-operative marketing societies among Africans was to collect food reserves for the expanding mining industry which was the major source of colonial government revenue. The demand for food was further compounded by the rapid expansion of urban centres along the line of rail in the 1940s and 1950s.<sup>14</sup> It was therefore generally felt that the co-operative movement among Africans would encourage agricultural production to supplement settler food production.

A proper assessment of this requires background knowledge on the evolution and nature of the co-operative movement prior to 1947. The first co-operative organization in Northern Rhodesia was the North-Western Rhodesia Farmers' Co-operative Society (NWRFCOS). It was entirely European in membership and was registered by the Registrar of the High Court of Northern Rhodesia on the 16th October, 1914. Subsequently, a number of European co-operative societies mushroomed in almost all places where European settler population engaged in farming. In 1924, the Northern Rhodesia Agricultural Society was formed. Its main aim was to encourage better farming, marketing and animal husbandry among the European farmers in the country. In 1928, the Tobacco Co-operative Society was established.<sup>15</sup> From 1928 to 1945 many European

co-operative societies were established in Fort Jameson (Chipata since 1969), Abercorn (Mbala since 1964) and other places in the country where Europeans had engaged in various business activities (see table 1).

TABLE 1

CO-OPERATIVE ORGANIZATIONS IN NORTHERN RHODESIA  
1914-1964

TYPE	OBJECT	DATE OF REGISTRATION	MEMBERSHIP	AUTHORISED CAPITAL	PAID UP SHARE CAPITAL
North-Western Rhodesia Farmers' Co-operative Society (European)	Agricultural and live stock-marketing	16-10-14	272	£ 50,000	£ 17,832
N.R. Agricultural Society (European)	Encouragement of better farming and animal husbandry	1924	200	3,000	452
N.R. Tobacco Co-operative Society (European)	Tobacco Sales	16-5-28	28	5,000	1,500
Livestock Co-operative Society of N.R. (European)	Livestock Sales	23-9-31	87	25,000	435
Co-operative Creameries of N.R. (European)	Dairy Produce, Manufacture and sales	27-7-34	175	20,100	5,878
N.R. Turkish Tobacco Co-operative Society (European)	Turkish tobacco sales	22-11-45	176	Maximum of £800 per member	4,326

TYPE	OBJECT	DATE OF REGISTRATION	MEMBERSHIP	AUTHORISED CAPITAL	PAID UP SHARE CAPITAL
Petauke Producers Association (African)	Tobacco and Groundnuts sales	Formed in 1946 but registered in 1948	1,000	£ 6,501	£ 3,557
Consumer and Supply Co-operative Society (European)	Supplying Consumer goods	1950	3,081	74,534	124,000
Consumer and Supply Co-operative Society (African)	Supplying consumer goods	1950	3,716	8,388	6,000
Producers' Marketing Co-operatives (African)	Buying rural produce where grain Marketing Board did not operate	1952	22,390	95,512	32,884
Thrift and Loan Co-operative Society (African)	Giving loans to African Civil Servants, very common in the Police Force	1954	11,369	1,836	205,467
Farming Co-operative Society	Encouraging farmers to move from Subsistence production to cash economy and introduce modern mechanised farming in farm co-operative settlement.	1965	4,581	Not available	4,987

SOURCE: Northern Rhodesia, Annual Reports of the Registrar of Co-operative Societies, 1947, p. 10:

Northern Rhodesia, Annual Reports of the Registrar of Co-operatives, 1950-1960: Also see C.S.

Lombard, The Growth of Co-operatives in Zambia 1914-1971, (1971), pp. 7-28; M. Lungu, "Co-operative efficiency in Zambia," In C.G. Widstrand (ed.), African Co-operatives and Efficiency, (1972), p.209

The development and activities of European co-operative societies in the country influenced efforts to organise co-operative societies among Africans in rural areas. These efforts had been begun in the early 1920s by missionaries of various denominations, particularly the Anglicans at Mapanza mission in Southern Province and the Seventh Day Adventists (SDA) church in Keemba Hill in Monze led by Pastor Samuel Chilumbi.<sup>16</sup> These initial attempts bore little fruit because it was difficult to sustain interest of members who usually resigned from various African farmers' associations after a short spell of membership. The missionaries also lacked staff trained in how to run co-operatives and who could properly sustain membership and interest. On the government side, some District Commissioners and their District Agricultural Officers took a personal initiative to form experimental producer and marketing co-operative societies in their respective districts. Between 1932 and 1946 the district administrators intensified their independent and uncoordinated efforts to form co-operatives; as a result a number of societies were established at Lundazi, Fort Jameson, Namwala, Kawambwa, Mporokoso, Balovale (now Zambezi) and Petauke.<sup>17</sup> With the exception of Petauke in the Eastern Province and Namwala in the Southern Province, none of these efforts met with any great and lasting success owing to the lack of trained supervisory staff and continuity in

membership. Further, since the co-operative societies were sponsored by enthusiastic individuals such as District Commissioners and missionaries, the societies were inclined to cease operations on the departure of those sponsors unless their successors or members were also interested in the co-operative movement.

However, these efforts attracted official interest culminating in a lengthy discussion by the East African Governors' Conference held in Nairobi, Kenya, in 1932, on the possibilities of forming co-operative societies among Africans. The idea came up at the conference following a report in which Sir Alan Pim earnestly requested the governments of East and Central Africa to train co-operative staff, to introduce and organize native co-operative societies. Pim had been a chairman of a commission that prepared a report in which the Zanzibar administration was urged to appoint a co-operative Registrar and pass a law legalizing co-operative societies in 1932.<sup>18</sup> Pim was later in 1938 appointed chairman of the commission that the Colonial Office empowered to enquire into the financial and economic position of Northern Rhodesia. After deliberations on the issue, the conference concluded that there was little demand at that time for co-operative societies among Africans and that any action to

inaugurate them would be premature.<sup>19</sup> No further developments relevant to Northern Rhodesia took place until towards the end of the Second World War.

Late in 1944, the Colonial Office informed the Governor of Northern Rhodesia that W. Campbell, formerly Registrar of Co-operative Societies in Ceylon (now Sri Lanka), would tour Kenya in order to study and report upon the possibilities of co-operative development amongst the Africans of that colony. The Colonial Office mentioned that he would be allowed to visit other territories if they wanted his advice. The opportunity was welcomed and Campbell visited Northern Rhodesia in August and September, 1945.<sup>20</sup> In a report, published early in 1946, Campbell indicated that there were good prospects for the development of co-operative societies in Northern Rhodesia. He further pointed out, however, that the existing ordinance of 1914 was inappropriate for the registration of societies with African membership and that, therefore, a new ordinance was necessary. He recommended the working out of the provisions of an ordinance that would guide and develop existing and potential associations into co-operative societies, and the immediate appointment of a registrar together with subordinate staff. Campbell further recommended that the registrar would undergo a course of study before

survey problems and potentialities relating to the development of the co-operative movement. One of the first visits the Registrar made was to Petauke District in the Eastern Province where two associations for the marketing of tobacco and groundnuts which had been established in 1946 (see table 1) were being re-organised on a co-operative basis. The Registrar also made several trips to the Copperbelt towns, where a strong demand for consumer stores existed among both the European and African communities. The Registrar also made investigation into the prospects of co-operation among the Tonga maize farmers in the Monze area and the market gardeners of the Ndola Resettlement Area. The Registrar made another study tour to Johannesburg in South Africa in order to discuss with wholesale firms possibilities of supplying consumer goods to societies that would be formed in Northern Rhodesia.<sup>23</sup>

The visit to South Africa by the Registrar signifies that the introduction of co-operative societies in Northern Rhodesia would widen the marketing horizon for the manufactured goods of South Africa. It seems that through this, the Northern Rhodesia Government would meet one objective of the Ten Year Development Plan of 1947, namely, to assist the African population in selected

areas to develop and to increase their industrial and agricultural skills.<sup>24</sup> This was to be achieved, partly, through co-operative societies. From the outset societies were geared to operate in collaboration with the South African capitalist firms. Wilson's visit to South Africa was also a specific illustration of the desire by the Northern Rhodesia Government to manage the ten year development programme within the context of the Southern African regional economy. Northern Rhodesia had for a long time been shaped by events in Southern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) and South Africa and any major economic innovation in the colony was bound to take cognisance of that fact if it were to succeed. In the background to the 1947 Ten Year Development Plan, there was active discussion in the Northern Rhodesia administration between 1943 and 1945 about the importance of seeing future development in Northern Rhodesia as complementary to that in the regional centres, namely, Southern Rhodesia and South Africa.<sup>25</sup> This would further strengthen the ties of Northern Rhodesia's rural areas, such as Petauke, with the regional and world capitalist economy.

In fact, the creation of co-operative societies in Northern Rhodesia made the colony a dumping ground for the South African and Southern Rhodesian goods.

Allistair Young has shown that in the 1940s Northern Rhodesia had been a market for manufactured goods from Southern Rhodesia and South Africa.<sup>26</sup> To a small extent, the Northern Rhodesian market had helped Southern Rhodesia to develop both primary and secondary industries. This made the Southern Rhodesian businessmen prosperous and attracted international and regional investment to Southern Rhodesia. This had raised fears among the white settlers in Northern Rhodesia as early as the late 1930s when the Colonial Office was considering plans to amalgamate the two countries. The sentiment of economic fear was explicitly put forward in June 1938, when C.M. Landless said:

Under amalgamation, this territory would be used as a dumping ground by merchants and manufacturers established in the larger centres of population in Southern Rhodesia such as Bulawayo and Salisbury. These industries would consume agricultural products grown in Southern Rhodesia and Northern Rhodesia, farmers would not benefit in the slightest degree by the manufacturing or merchandising of produce desired for consumption in their own territory - In short, my argument is, apart from the native question, that Southern Rhodesia is at present milking Northern Rhodesia and that under amalgamation the process will be intensified.<sup>27</sup>

However, with the introduction of co-operative societies in 1948, the intensity of dumping Southern Rhodesian and South African manufactured goods increased. The co-operative societies' stores in the rural and urban areas of Northern Rhodesia imported heavily from South Africa and Southern

Rhodesia.

Though full political amalgamation failed in the 1930s and early 1940s, Northern Rhodesia's economic ties with the South became consolidated in the 1940s and early 1950s. For instance, when the PCMU was in full operation, it purchased most of its agricultural implements from companies in Southern Rhodesia and South Africa. When the Department of Agriculture in Northern Rhodesia bought tobacco from the peasants in Petauke, the tobacco was sold at either Salisbury auction floors in Southern Rhodesia, or South Africa via Limbe auction floors in Nyasaland (now Malawi). This type of trade only left Northern Rhodesia with an extractive type of industry. The role of co-operative marketing societies in Northern Rhodesia was that of encouraging raw material production in Northern Rhodesia for manufacturing industries in the sub-metropolises (South Africa and Southern Rhodesia) and the metropole. This was not a healthy economic development for Northern Rhodesia because, as A.G. Frank has argued in discussing the theory of underdevelopment, such an economic arrangement leads to exploitation of the third world countries.<sup>28</sup>

That notwithstanding, the Registrar of co-operatives made further trips in Northern Rhodesia during 1947. He attended several District Commissioners'

conferences at Kasama in May, Mongu in July and Fort Jameson in September. At these conferences he discussed prospects for co-operation and described the methods which he proposed would stimulate and promote the co-operative movement. He also attended provincial council conferences at Luanshya and Broken Hill (now Kabwe) in July at which he spoke and requested delegates to discuss the question with the people they represented.

Furthermore, propaganda was mounted from the Registrar's office through lectures and radio broadcasts in order to stimulate interest in the co-operative movement throughout Northern Rhodesia. Lectures were given to residents of Chilenje African Township in Lusaka on 29th June, 1947. On 4th July, 1947 a lecture was delivered to the Litunga and his Kuta (Lozi traditional council) at Limulunga. In addition, articles appeared in newspapers, especially Mutende. The colonial government sponsored this newspaper in order to propagate its views, and to provide a forum for educated African ideas and opinions.<sup>29</sup> For example an article, the "Registration of Co-operatives in Northern Rhodesia" appeared in Mutende of July, 1947 and discussed the success of the Petauke Producers' Association.<sup>30</sup> In the article the Registrar outlined how the African peasants were able to sell their agricultural produce through the Petauke Producers'

Association. Among the administrative and agricultural officers a great interest throughout the country was aroused on the possibilities of co-operation. The copper mining companies also actively encouraged the co-operative movement from the consumer point of view as they recognized its value at the time of rising costs and shortage of supplies in which traders had benefited from what was called "a sellers' market"<sup>31</sup> during and after the Second World War.

On the basis of the evidence gathered from the tours and radio propaganda and information dissemination, the Registrar drafted an ordinance based on the model which the Colonial Office had sent out in 1946. The draft ordinance was presented to a session of the Legislative Council (Legco) held during September 1947. There were two major exceptions to the ordinance. In view of this, the ordinance was referred to a select committee of the Legco which presented its report at the November sitting where the ordinance was eventually passed. The first exception was that mention was needed on the non-integration of European societies with those of the Africans. The second exception was that the ordinance was not related to the Department of Agriculture. The government wanted a clause to force co-operative societies that would be formed to collaborate with the Department of Agriculture in enforcing the regulations on soil

conservation and good farming methods. The ordinance became law on 10th February 1948. Immediately after the passage of the ordinance, the Registrar began to draft rules to govern co-operative societies, which the Governor approved later in 1948.<sup>32</sup> The ordinance and the rules were quickly applied to seven producer and marketing societies which had informally been registered at the end of 1947 (see table 1). The start was a resounding success, and Lombard commented that:

In 1947, the seven producer societies were all European controlled. The societies rose in number from seven to fourteen at the end of 1948. The only promising and viable African society though not officially registered in 1947 was the Petauke Producers Association. At the end of 1948 African societies shot up from one to twenty-three.<sup>33</sup>

The Petauke Producers Association was formed in 1946 for the purpose of marketing burley tobacco. Two primary societies were affiliated to the PPA, namely the Petauke African Tobacco Growers Co-operative Society (PATGCS) and the Petauke African Producers Co-operative Society (PAPCS). The societies affiliated to the PPA were also formed in 1946. The membership of the PATGCS was drawn from tobacco growers at Minga, Vizimumba and Chilwa in Chiefs' Mumbi's and Nduke's areas. The district officials in the Department of Agriculture initiated the formation of the PATGCS in order to improve the marketing of burley tobacco that had been grown at Mvuvye since 1938.<sup>34</sup> The Department

of Agriculture also formed the PAPCS in order to improve the marketing system for maize and groundnuts. The PATGCS and the PAPCS were re-organized as co-operative societies under the Co-operative Ordinance of 1948. They had a combined turnover of £35,000.<sup>35</sup> The need for a better organized marketing system for peasant grown agricultural produce in Petauke had been felt since the late 1930s when the burley scheme at Mvuvye was started in 1938. Production of groundnuts also received special attention because of the post-war demand for oils. It was soon realized that joint effort would simplify the organization and reduce the cost of marketing. The Department of Agriculture organized marketing but the producers bore the cost of transport and handling. The formation of the association meant that it would bear the cost of marketing and reduce the burden on individual members and reduce organizational difficulties for the Department of Agriculture.

During the 1950s, producer, marketing and consumer co-operative societies sprang up throughout Northern Rhodesia. In the Eastern Province, the increase in the number of producer and marketing co-operative societies was a reflection of agricultural growth in the province. In 1952, there were thirty co-operative societies in Petauke District alone. It

was then decided that members would derive increased benefits from a proper coordination of these scattered societies into a centralized organization. Therefore, in 1952, the Petauke Co-operative Marketing Union was established. It was the first co-operative union in the province. It marketed produce in the Petauke and Katete Districts. Katete alone had twelve co-operative societies in 1956. At the end of the year the Katete societies broke away from the PCMU to form their own Katete Co-operative Marketing Union (KCMU). They formed their union because members of Katete societies felt that PCMU did not serve them well. The other reason for Katete to form a separate union was that colonial administrators wanted such an organization to be used in containing political hostility from Katete peasants especially in Chiefs Kawaza and Kathumba areas. Many African peasants had joined the African National Congress between 1952-1956 because it championed their complaints about low prices, poor marketing and enforcement of agricultural methods associated with the Peasant Farming Scheme (PFS).<sup>36</sup>

In Fort Jameson District, District Co-operative Societies were formed in the Kunda Valley and Mugubundu areas in 1948 and 1952 respectively. However, they did not fare well because of competition from the European

North-Eastern Rhodesia Co-operative Society, which received support from the colonial government and acted as a government agent for the control of the local maize pool created in 1949 in the province. The purpose of this arrangement was to have control of maize marketing in the province and to sell maize at uniform price.<sup>37</sup> This organization was well established and had a high reputation in the district among Africans too. In 1952, however, the two primary societies formed the Alimi Co-operative Marketing Union (ACMU) at Fort Jameson. The union coordinated the activities of the societies and initiated the establishment of co-operative societies in many parts of Fort Jameson and Lundazi Districts where no co-operatives had existed.<sup>38</sup>

The amalgamation of primary societies at district level was the basis of a further province-wide merger by co-operative unions in 1958. The three unions, PCMU, KCMU and ACMU established a loose federation of unions called Eastern Province Co-operative Marketing Association (EPCMA) in 1958.<sup>39</sup> The purpose of this loose federation was to improve the marketing of groundnuts and maize from the province to national and overseas markets. It also took over the functions of the Eastern Province African Agricultural Produce Board (EPAAPB) formed in 1949.

This Board had powers similar to those of the Maize Control Board which had operated along the line of rail since 1935. Before the formation of EPCMA, it was the responsibility of the EPAAPB to distribute the produce in the province and co-operatives acted as its agents.<sup>40</sup> The three unions became completely amalgamated in 1965 when the PCMU, KCMU and ACMU merged into the EPCMA. This amalgamation was vital because it reduced overhead expenses in marketing by avoiding duplication in work and enabled unions managers to put more effort on how well member societies could be operated and organized.

In this chapter, I have discussed the origins and development of the co-operatives in Petauke District within the broad context of similar changes in Northern Rhodesia and Eastern Province in general. The co-operative movement in the district, as in the whole colony, evolved in response to world demand for raw materials during and after the Second World War. In the local Northern Rhodesia situation, the co-operatives also became mechanisms of transforming African rural economies and asserting political control over Africans. The Co-operative Marketing Unions and their affiliated societies helped the Department of Agriculture to encourage people to grow cash crops for export trade.

In the process, Petauke District increased its links with the capitalist economy at territorial, regional and world levels. The specific aspects of this broad process, and the particular manifestations in the Petauke District are further discussed in the next chapter.

FOOTNOTES

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19. N.R. Co-operative Annual Report 1947, p. 3.
20. N.R. Co-operative Annual Report 1947, p. 4.
21. N.R. Co-operative Annual Report 1947, p. 4.
22. N.R. Co-operative Annual Report 1947, p. 5.
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## CHAPTER TWO

### ORGANIZATION AND ACTIVITIES OF THE PCMU 1947-1957

In the previous chapter, I discussed developments leading to the passage of the co-operative ordinance in 1947 and subsequent formation of co-operatives in Northern Rhodesia. Within this colony-wide context, I outlined how co-operatives emerged in Petauke District. I argued that the colonial government rationalized the formation of the co-operatives in terms of the need to meet world demand for raw materials; and as a strategy to develop African agriculture in particular, and to promote rural development in general. Further, the co-operative movement represented a framework through which the government increased control over African agricultural production. In this chapter, I shall outline the organizational structure of the PCMU and discuss the range and nature of activities it encouraged or promoted in Petauke District.

Two societies, Petauke African Tobacco Growers Co-operative Society (PATGCS) and Petauke African Producers Co-operative Society (PAPCS) were formed in 1946, and in the same year were grouped into the Petauke Producers Association (PPA). The district officials in the department of agriculture organized the PPA in an effort to coordinate the activities of

the two societies and to streamline marketing in the district for tobacco and groundnuts. The PPA started with an authorised capital of £6,501, made up of a grant of £2,600 from the Native Development Board (NDB), £957 from profits on the 1945 and 1946 tobacco and groundnut sales, and paid up shares which amounted to £2,944.<sup>1</sup> The PPA and its affiliates in Petauke were organized under the new co-operative ordinance passed in 1948. This ordinance superseded the 1914 ordinance which had only provided for the establishment of Co-operative Societies among white settlers. The new ordinance allowed any race in the country to take part in the co-operative movement.

In 1948, the administrative committee of the PPA comprised the District Commissioner of Petauke as the Chairman, the District Agricultural Officer, Chief Mumbi who was chairman of the groundnuts sub-committee, Chief Mwanjawathu, Headman Benjamin Kanyuka who was chairman of the tobacco sub-committee and Reverend Nyonyo. The association engaged the services of a European manager. The recommendations to employ a manager came from the Registrar of the Department of co-operative societies. The manager had under him a deputy manager, an accountant and an engineer, who were all Europeans. The first manager in 1948 was E. Schargo and his deputy was J.E. Cranshaw.<sup>2</sup> The European

personnel formed the management board of the association and had no African members. The District Commissioner nominated the African members to the board committee. Traditional rulers and rural elites were nominated on the basis of loyalty to colonial administration, hard work, and their influential status in the society.<sup>3</sup> The principle of nominating African representatives underlined the government's wish for close supervision and control over the co-operatives and this did not encourage grassroot support for the co-operatives amongst Africans.

The PPA operated throughout the district, buying all marketable crops from members and non-members. Members had the privilege of receiving a bonus while non-members did not in order to attract potential members through granting of such privileges. The primary producer societies under PPA operated all rural buying stations. The Association transported produce from these to Petauke and Sinda depots, graded, cleaned and fumigated produce, packed and sent it to the consumers on the line of rail and overseas markets. The cost of operations for transport, handling and administrative matters was deducted from the sale of crops. There are no figures to illustrate these expenses for the whole period of this study but in 1953 the calculation for maize only was as shown in Table II.

TABLE II  
COST OF MAIZE MARKETING BY PCMU

DETAILS	OFFICIAL GMB PRICE	PCMU PRICE
Price per bag delivered to GMB Depots.	36s 9d	
Marketing costs incurred by PCMU:		
a) Handling charges		8s 6d
b) Transport costs		13s 0d
c) Other charges		<u>3s 3d</u>
Total expenditure		24s 9d
Producer price at rural buying station		12s 0d

SOURCE: N.A.Z., CRC, MU/1/3, PCMU progress Report on bonuses 1953, pp. 3-5: G. Kay, Changing Patterns of Settlement and Land use in the Eastern Province of Northern Rhodesia, (Hull: University of Hull Publications, 1965), p.63.

Table II gives a picture of how PCMU met marketing costs. It also shows how PCMU determined the producer prices of crops. The marketing co-operatives placed the cost of marketing operations on the producer. The producers would have received a higher payment had their maize been sold within Petauke District rather than along the line of rail or overseas where the price was unattractive for maize from the district, and Eastern Province as a whole. This marketing arrangement for most of the cash crops grown in the Petauke District placed co-

operative members at the mercy of the PCMU. With the administrative structure outlined earlier, the marketing arrangement took away all initiative from co-operative members in matters of reducing operational costs. In consequence, there was much discontent and indignation among the producers, especially in the light of the fact that inadequate explanation was given to members on the nature of marketing economics affecting the co-operatives in the district. This was the major reason for low maize sales in the district during the period under study.<sup>4</sup> High priced commodities in relation to weight, such as tobacco and groundnuts, therefore became the basis for agricultural co-operatives in Petauke District.

Further, it should be noted that Table II does not show the input into production from African peasants. It is, therefore, not easy to be definitive in terms of whether the price was suitable or not. In general terms, it can be suggested that the small amount of maize marketed from Petauke District during the 1950s in comparison to tobacco and groundnuts implies that the price was not particularly encouraging. However, a bonus paid to co-operative members encouraged joining the PPA and later the PCMU. The bonus depended on the total produce each member sold. In general, members were paid on delivery of their crop

to the depots, and would later receive a bonus per unit volume. In 1953, for example, the price of maize per debbi (a four-gallon tin measure) was two shillings and six pence and the bonus was one shilling and nine pence.<sup>5</sup>

The bonus system made peasants join the co-operative societies and most of the members in the societies joined Peasant Farming Schemes (PFS). The co-operative societies paid different prices for the crops that this category of peasants sold. The prices for the members were better than those of non-members. Table III illustrates the differential pricing system for the early period of the co-operative movement in Petauke District and Eastern Province.<sup>6</sup> The price changed in subsequent years but the principle of paying co-operative members and non-members remained unchanged.

TABLE III  
PRICES PAID FOR MEMBERS OF CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETIES  
AND NON-MEMBERS

CASH CROP PER BAG	1948		1949		1950	
	A	B	A	B	A	B
Groundnuts (180lb)	36s	24s	36s	24s	51s 6d	30s
Rice Paddy (200lb)	80s	72s	80s	72s	105s	72s
Beans (200lb)	27s	18s	27s	18s	42s	30s
Maize (200lb)	10s.6d	9s	12s	10s.6d	12s	10s.6d

SOURCE: Provincial Administrative Reports 1948-1950, (Fort Jameson 1951), (Lusaka: Government Printer 1951).

NOTES: A-Price paid to members of co-operative societies, a majority of whom belonged to PFS.

B-Price paid to non-members

The differential pricing system coupled with the bonus system encouraged people to join member co-operatives under the PPA and the PCMU, and to increase acreage allocated to cash crop production in order to raise the marketable amount of produce. The bonus system encouraged increased sales. In this way the association established an economic hold over producers and indirectly forced producers in Petauke to comply with the farming methods which the Department of Agriculture had recommended as necessary for soil conservation and increasing agricultural productivity.

The major aim of the co-operative societies was to encourage commercial agriculture by organizing markets for African produce in the district. In 1946, the PPA purchased 76,000lbs of tobacco grown by 625 growers, and in 1947 this rose to 137,000lbs and 981 respectively. On average, a grower was paid 6d per lb. The association also marketed 4,500 bags of groundnuts in 1947 through the controller of civil supplies in Lusaka. Some groundnuts whose quantity is not known were sold to government departments at Fort Jameson. The local price given to the grower was £1 4s per 180lbs bag. The PPA sold groundnuts

on the line of rail at a net price of £2 14s; excluding transport charges. This arrangement in pricing resulted in a total profit of £3,500 to the association in 1947. The growers were paid bonus amounting to £500.<sup>7</sup> This bonus was mainly paid in the form of salt and other essential perishable goods such as soap. It is not clear why salt was paid as bonus. However, it would appear that shortage of salt in the district, as was the case with other commodities at the end of the Second World War, created a high demand in Petauke District. The co-operative societies took advantage of this shortage, and arbitrarily fixed the rate and form of the bonus system without the consent of members.

These uncertain circumstances demanded an efficient organization. To that end, the PPA was dissolved in 1949. The grounds for dissolving the PPA in 1949 and creating the PCMU in 1952 were outlined in 1952. The manager of PCMU wrote that PPA had consisted of two primary societies that existed only on paper. He pointed out that the societies had no functioning committees, had not held any meetings since their inception and had few of the attributes of true producer co-operative societies.<sup>8</sup> In practice the PPA had dealt entirely with individual growers. The association did not really coordinate the work of the societies because the member societies did not exist. Therefore, the PCMU was primarily

formed to strengthen member societies. Between 1949 and 1952 there was no proper marketing organization, but the Department of Agriculture and some few but active original members of PATGCS and PAPCS ran the affairs of the co-operative movement. Later, as already mentioned, a centralized marketing organization revived in the hope of transforming and consolidating the co-operative movement and the Petauke Co-operative Marketing Union (PCMU) was formed in 1952. The revival of the centralized co-operatives generated a lot of interest and the PCMU began with nineteen primary producer co-operative societies as members of the union (see Table IV). The nature of the administrative structure and personnel in the early years of the co-operative movement, the bonus and pricing system account for the poor performance of co-operative societies in Petauke District between 1948 and 1952.

TABLE VI

## PRIMARY SOCIETIES AFFILIATED TO PCMU 1948-1959

SOCIETY	YEAR FORMED	AREA FOUND
Nyamadzi	1948	Sinda
Nyanje	1953	Sinda
Mwatambazi	1954	Sinda
Nyamphande	1954	Petauke
Mng'omba	1955	Sinda
Vizimumba	1955	Petauke
Lwezi	1955	Petauke
Mnyeche	1955	Petauke
Mwape	1955	Petauke
Mululuzye	1955	Petauke
Mbala	1958	Petauke
Mwanjawathu	1958	Petauke
Manyane	1958	Petauke
Kapoche	1959	Sinda
Lusangazi	1959	Sinda
Chilimanyama	1959	Petauke
Chafulu	1953	Katete
Mzime	1950	Katete
Kafumbwe	1949	Katete

SOURCE: G. Kay, Changing Patterns of Settlement and Land use in the Eastern Province of Northern Rhodesia, (Hull: University of Hull Publication, 1965), p. 56.

The policies of the PCMU were similar to those of its predecessor. Its primary purpose was to market the produce of the district. It had a greater capability than the PPA because its member unions

covered the whole Petauke District. The effective control of the union affairs rested with the four ex-officio members of the committee. Two of these were officers in the District Commissioner's Office. The other two were the District Agricultural Officer and the Union manager. The PCMU formulated and implemented local pricing policy in Petauke District. From 1952 to 1956 the PCMU bought a four gallon tin (one debbi) of groundnuts at 2s 6d and that of maize at 1s 6d. A bag of 180 lbs. of groundnuts was sold at 15s and that of maize weighing about 200lbs was at 9s. The bonus ranged from 9d to 1s 9d per tin of groundnuts and 4d to 8d per tin of maize.<sup>9</sup> The union purchased all farm produce from members and non-members of the co-operative societies. The union paid low prices to the peasants on the grounds that operational costs were high. Yet the PCMU realized high profits after sales in the line of rail and overseas markets as shown in Table V. Table V shows, in part, the total income differentials for the growers and the PCMU after sales during the 1953-1956 marketing seasons. Although this sample would have been more demonstrative if data was available for the entire period under discussion, it still shows the level of PCMU accumulation of proceeds from its members. The high transport and handling charges forced the

union to pay low prices; this in turn did little to encourage production. The PCMU realized a large income annually because of the high differential between the price it paid and that at which it sold.

TABLE V  
PCMU EARNING DURING 1953-1956

SEASON	1953 - 1954			1955 - 1956		
	PRODUCE	QUANTITY BOUGHT	VALUE TO GROWER	VALUE TO PCMU	QUANTITY BOUGHT	VALUE TO GROWER
Maize	31360 bags	£18900	£44334	10700bags	£88275	£118000
Groundnuts	13030 bags	£ 3200	£ 4706	43356bags	£110450	£150000
Tobacco	190906lbs	£ 6988	£16291	5906lbs	£ 739	N.A.
Rice	63 bags	£ 70	£ 125	2200bags	£ 2640	£ 13916
Others	186 bags	£ 163	£ 391	600bags	£ 900	£ 1500

SOURCE: REP/1/2, PCMU minutes of meeting held at Petauke 10th August, 1955: See also, African Affairs Annual Report 1956, p. 65.

NOTES: N.A. - Not available.

The table could have been extended to cover 1957-1964 period but due to non-availability of the data this has been impossible. I could not find records to show how much PCMU got from its sales in the period 1957-1964, but this describes the general trend for the period.

In 1956, the PCMU had an impressive performance. It sold 250 bags of groundnuts in the Eastern Province at £3 15s a bag at wholesale and £4 1s per bag at retail rate. It also sold 5,980 bags of nuts to the

Grain Marketing Board at £3 10s a bag. PCMU exported to the United Kingdom 6,000 bags of graded groundnuts through London brokers receiving between £6 4s and £7 9s 3d a bag. It also exported through the Eastern Province Agricultural Produce Board (EPAPB) 30,633 bags at £3 0s 10d.<sup>10</sup>

The Union purchased the crops in outlying areas and transported them to the main marketing points in and outside the district. The cost of transporting crops from rural market stations in the district to the grading plants at Petauke and Sinda and then to Lusaka was financed with loans from a local bank of Barclays Bank D.C.O. The movement of the produce to the world market was financed with the loans from Standard Bank Limited, which was a branch of Standard Bank Limited based in the Union of South Africa. The PCMU also received annual government grants that amounted to about £10,000 every year. The Eastern Province African Farming Improvement Fund (EPAFIF), established in 1953 to support P.F.S., also made loans to producers through the co-operative societies. The EPAFIF was administered by a board with the object of encouraging improved farming, and it did so largely by paying bonuses for good farming and by subsidising the purchase of basic farm equipment, improved seed, fertilisers and the construction of approved cattle kraals.<sup>11</sup> It also provided funds

for programmes of soil conservation and the development of water resources. The fund was started in 1953 under the EPAADB. The financial support it periodically gave to PCMU strengthened the financial position of the union and enabled it to carry out its obligations. With all these sources of money and its own profits from sales, the union's financial position was usually sound.

In the period 1953 to 1956 the PCMU increased its business activities. In 1954 the Manager of PCMU through the office of the District Commissioner requested Chiefs and Primary Societies in the district to recommend the most upcoming peasant farmers and reliable traders to be supplied with farming implements and trade goods at wholesale prices and, to a certain extent, on credit. The response was enthusiastic.<sup>12</sup> With the expansion of business PCMU had established a network of road communication amongst the villagers which facilitated the flow of ideas, goods and capital throughout the district. Local people were advised to prepare roads by the Nsenga-Ambo Native Authority and PCMU in order that the co-operative lorries could use them to collect produce. Peasants responded positively; testimony of this is the indication of some of my informants that the demand for co-operative membership was high in the 1950s.<sup>13</sup> Unfortunately, statistics are lacking to demonstrate

this. The PCMU gave seasonal loans and other support services to peasants and these made the union popular. Table VI below shows the amount of credit supplied to members through primary societies in 1956.

TABLE VI

PCMU LOANS TO MEMBERS AS AT 31ST DECEMBER 1956

SOCIETY	TOTAL LOANS OUTSTANDING			NUMBER OF LOANS	AVERAGE LOAN PER LOANEE		
	£	s	d		£	s	d
Nyanje PCS Ltd.	109	6	3	16	6	16	0
Nyamphande PCS Ltd.	244	17	6	13	1	4	0
Mwape PCS Ltd.	1	0	0	1	1	0	0
Mwatambazi PCS Ltd.	88	7	10	9	9	16	5
Nyamia PCS Ltd.	96	18	9	23	4	4	3
Vizimumba PCS Ltd.	35	14	1	5	7	2	10
Mululuzye PCS Ltd.	32	3	11	5	6	8	9
Mnyeche PCS Ltd.	76	19	6	26	2	19	2
Lwezi PCS Ltd.	39	9	10	28	1	8	3
Mbala PCS Ltd.	49	3	10	18	2	14	8
Manyane PCS Ltd.	16	7	6	1	16	7	6
Mwanjawathu PCS Ltd.	2	18	6	1	2	18	6

SOURCE: R.N. Coster, Peasant Farming in the Petauke and Katete Areas of the Eastern Province of Northern Rhodesia (Lusaka: Government Printer 1958), p. 16.

These loans were recovered from sales of produce. The security for repayment was often no more than the

good reputation of the peasant although the size of the loan was sometimes limited to about 75 per cent of the estimated value of the loanee's crops.<sup>14</sup> Loans were therefore usually given to reputed peasant farmers. Bonuses were also given to tobacco growers to induce production of tobacco in Petauke District which had dwindled between 1955 and 1957. A grower who received an initial payment of one shilling per lb. for his tobacco, collected 100 per cent bonus on his produce. Those who received eight pence per lb. as initial payment received 75 per cent and those who got six pence per lb. got a bonus of 25 per cent.<sup>15</sup> This bonus made co-operative societies even more popular and PCMU increased its buying activities. The tobacco bonus system also induced the care for and improvement in the quality of the crop. The PCMU emerged from these business activities as one of the biggest rural marketing organizations in the country during the mid and late 1950s. It did not only expand its business activities in Petauke but also extended to Katete District. The PCMU branch manager, R.W. Greenslade, at Sinda depot in 1956 was transferred to Katete to coordinate business activities there. The peasant received instructions that loans were specifically for durable items such as ploughs and scotch-carts.

In addition to making itself popular through the provision of markets, loans and bonuses the PCMU

provided other services to the people in the district. At the time of formation in 1952, PCMU had its own herd of cattle and opened a butchery where meat was sold at six pence per lb. regardless of the quality and type of meat. Later at its headquarters, a number of departments offering diverse services were established. It had storehouses, grading plants, a carpentershop, a mechanical workshop, an oil-expressing and cattle cake making plant, millhouses, a trading wholesale store and a petrol pump. The wholesale department supplied the societies' retail shops with essential commodities such as sugar, salt, paraffin, candles, soap and clothes. Once a primary society purchased goods from the wholesale store, the union provided transport and a minimal charge was made to the society concerned. PCMU also stocked agricultural implements for supply to primary societies. The agricultural goods supplied included hoes, shovels, axes, ox-pulled ploughs, scotch-carts and trek-chains. The prices of all these agricultural goods were relatively cheaper compared to those found in the Indian stores at Sinda, Kawele and Minga. In 1958, for example, the Manager of PCMU reported that the price of PCMU trek-chains was at 12s 6d compared to 13s 9d at the Indian Stores for the same quality.<sup>16</sup> The price differentials made co-operative societies' Stores popular among the peasants in the district.

Another way PCMU helped the peasants in farming and

increased its business activity was to induce them into growing more cash crops by loaning them seeds. The union devised a system of loaning members of various co-operative societies tobacco and groundnut seeds. Each loanee was given one four gallon paraffin tin (a debbi) full of shelled groundnut seeds. The prosperous members were given one 180 lb bag of groundnut seeds. The loan was usually due for repayment during the following marketing season. Each loanee was expected to repay what he got with an extra tin or bag. This system encouraged **peasants** who had no means of getting seeds to join co-operative societies as members.<sup>17</sup> Those non-members who could not secure membership in the societies borrowed seeds from the members in villages. In this way society members hired the labour of non-members and this delayed work on the farm of a loanee. There was exploitation because the usual practice was that co-operative members required their loanees to repay at a rate double the amount borrowed.<sup>18</sup> This made members of societies sell more groundnuts than non-members. As a result of this practice, groundnut production increased and was a major source of income and a mainstay of the economy of the Petauke and Katete Districts throughout the 1950s. Table VII shows the steady increase of groundnut production and value to the union from 1952 to 1959.

TABLE VII

## MARKETED AND VALUE OF GROUNDNUTS 1952-59

YEAR	BAGS	VALUE IN POUND STERLING
1952-1953	18,155	£ 78,605
1953-1954	33,855	£144,357
1954-1955	34,140	£131,416
1955-1956	43,356	£150,000
1956-1957	43,700	£128,100
1957-1958	15,000*	£ 45,000
1958-1959	20,000	£ 60,000

SOURCE: NAZ, (CRC) REP/1/2 PCMU Annual Reports for the years 1952 to 1956: REP 2A/1/1, PCMU Confidential Annual Reports 1957 to 1959.

NOTES: \* Groundnuts were badly affected by rosette disease which reduced yields as much as 50 per cent in 1958-1959 marketing season.

The PCMU expanded and consolidated its activities tremendously. In 1956 PCMU operated more than thirty producers' societies in Petauke and twelve in Katete. Its structure of operations was later adopted by the Alimi Co-operative Marketing Union (ACMU) in Fort Jameson.<sup>19</sup> This union had been established in 1952 but its organization met a number of obstacles because it operated in an area where there was long-standing buying competition between itself and the European-organized North-Eastern Rhodesia Co-operative Society. Meanwhile, at the close of 1957 a decision was made, on parochial grounds, to take away the Katete Co-operative Societies from the PCMU control and form their own union

in Katete. This split weakened the PCMU because its assets and staff had to be shared with Katete Co-operative Marketing Union (KCMU). It was difficult to justify the break-away economically since the capacity of the PCMU to deliver services had not been fully utilized since its formation.<sup>20</sup>

The reasons that caused the split were, first, conflicting tribal loyalties. Chief Kawaza, a Chewa Chief of Katete District, masterminded the split. Kawaza mounted a campaign among the Chewa chiefs and their subjects in Katete District that PCMU had not done much to develop the Chewa-based Katete co-operative societies. He believed most of the PCMU profits were used in Petauke District. This feeling spread and grew among the peasants of Katete District. He eventually demanded the formation of Katete's own union which he thought would effectively develop the Katete societies.

Secondly, the colonial officials saw the establishment of KCMU as a means to dissuade two most politically active Chiefs in the district, Kawaza and Kathumba, from their anti-government and pro-nationalist stance. These chiefs opposed the Peasant Farming Scheme in their areas. The colonial administration also saw the chiefs as a stumbling block in implementing the new farming methods. As a way of making them see the benefits of the Peasant Farming Scheme and the co-operative societies, the colonial officials thought that a union at Katete would persuade the traditional

leaders to desist from politics hostile to the colonial regime. The colonial officials further pointed out that Chief Kawaza considered the PCMU committee as a "Petauke set up only and European influenced".<sup>21</sup> The colonial officials therefore suggested that a separate Katete marketing union would go a long way towards relieving political tension in Katete District.

Third, KCMU was established to counteract political propaganda from the African National Congress (ANC). From the early 1950s, the peasants generally believed that the ANC was the mouthpiece through which they would voice grievances on co-operative societies that marketed produce from those peasants who were members of the Peasant Farming Scheme (PFS). Co-operative societies had increased the gap of economic inequality between the peasant in the PFS and those who did not join the schemes because prices were fixed to favour the farmer. For example, between 1948 and 1950 the members of the PFS received 51s 6d for a 180 lb bag of groundnuts while non-members were paid 30s.<sup>22</sup> This difference caused discontent among the peasants and the ANC capitalized on the situation to further its political ends in opposing the colonial policies.

Fourth, the ANC spread rumours throughout the colony that PFS and co-operative societies were a trick to steal money from the Africans.<sup>23</sup> This rumour made peasants in Katete to think that PCMU was stealing their

money from the produce they sold. This situation would have adversely affected the smooth running of the marketing season in 1957-1958. Hence, KCMU was formed in 1957 and used by the colonial administration to disseminate anti-congress propaganda. The colonial officials saw KCMU as a government mouthpiece to put across information concerning development because it was considered that there was inadequate circulation of such news in the Katete District.<sup>24</sup>

The news of the split was received with apprehension in Petauke and PCMU circles. E.S. Chembe, a committee member of PCMU, remarked that the split was wrong because it divided the Chewa and the Nsenga people that had united under PCMU. He further complained that the Eastern Province Co-operative Marketing Association (EPCMA) was formed for unity but the split had undermined the basis of that unity.<sup>25</sup> In spite of the split of KCMU, PCMU continued to operate and control primary societies in Petauke actively. In fact, PCMU became a foundation pillar of KCMU and EPCMA in 1958. PCMU provided finance and personnel to EPCMA. The first manager was J.E. Cranshaw who had been PCMU assistant manager. The first chairman of EPCMA was E.S. Chembe, one of the African committee members of PCMU. The EPCMA will be dealt with in the next chapter. However, it is important to note that the breakaway of Katete co-operative societies from the PCMU was paralleled by the amalgamation of the the three district-based unions in 1958. This structural

link of agricultural production and marketing among Africans in the Eastern Province had started gradually during the late 1940s in the Petauke District.

In this chapter I discussed the evolution, organization and activities of the co-operative movement in the Petauke District. After the first co-operative societies that were formed under the co-operatives ordinance in 1948 had become moribund between 1949 and 1952, the PCMU was established in 1952. In spite of its name, the new organization was active in the Katete and Petauke Districts until 1957 when the former established its local co-operative union. The union was active in both districts, organizing the buying and selling of agricultural commodities from member co-operatives, supplying a variety of support services to agriculture and running wholesale and retail outlets. Through marketing and obtaining merchandise beyond Petauke and Katete Districts, the union acted as a link between a rural enclave economy and the wider world economy. The union undertook no major capital investment, but supervised the movement of a limited range of raw agricultural products. The performance of the PCMU was adversely affected by the system of nominating colonial officials to the top hierarchy of the co-operatives and the failure to promote education on co-operatives among members in order to sustain their active participation in co-operative matters. The full impact of the PCMU will be discussed in the next chapter.

FOOTNOTES

1. National Archives of Zambia (NAZ), Chipata Record Centre (CRC), REP/1/2, PCMU Annual Report for the year ended 31st December, 1952.
2. Interview: A.J. Mwale, Petauke ECU depot, 12/11/83; V.M. Milimbo Sinda ECU depot 5/11/83. Milimbo ECU branch manager at Sinda.
3. Interview: John Sankhulani, General Manager ECU, Chipata 2/11/83; A. Tonga Assistant District Executive Secretary, Chipata District Council, 3/11/83. Tonga worked in the Department of Co-operative Societies for 29 years where he held the post of Provincial Co-operative and Marketing Officer before he got transferred to Chipata District Council in 1982.
4. Interview: A. Tonga, Chipata, 3/11/83; See also G. Kay, Changing Patterns of Settlement and Land use in the Eastern Province of Northern Rhodesia, (Hull: University of Hull Publication, 1965), p. 63.
5. Interview: V.M. Milimbo, Sinda ECU depot, 5/11/83; NAZ, CRCMU/1/3, PCMU Progress Reports on bonuses 1953.
6. S.H. Phiri, "Some aspects of Spatial Interaction and Reaction to Governmental policies in a Border Area: A Study in the Historical and political Geography of Rural Development in the Zambia/Malawi and Zambia/Mozambique Frontier Zone, 1870-1978". Ph.D. Thesis University of Liverpool, 1980, p. 288.
7. Northern Rhodesia (NR) Annual Reports for the Department of Co-operative Societies for year 1947 (Lusaka: Government Printer 1947), p. 4.
8. NAZ, CRC, REP/1/2, PCMU Supervisor's Annual Report for the year 1952.

9. Interview: A.J. Mwale, Petauke 12/11/83 and V.M. Milimbo, Sinda, 5/11/83: See also N.R. African Affairs Annual Report 1953
10. NAZ, CRCMU/1/3, PCMU Confidential minutes of committee meeting, held at Petauke 11th January, 1957.
11. R.N. Coster, Peasant Farming in the Petauke and Katete Areas of the Eastern Province of Northern Rhodesia, Agricultural Bulletin No. 15 (Lusaka: Government Printer 1958), pp. 26-27: Kay, Changing Patterns, p. 90, (In 1962 Petauke District had 59107 cattle).
12. Interview: A.J. Mwale, Petauke, 12/11/83: NAZ, SEC2/646-7, Petauke Tour Reports 1954 and 1956.
13. Group Interview: A.J. Mwale, L. Daka, V.M. Milimbo and P.J. Mbulo at Petauke ECU depot 14/11/83; Daka branch manager of ECU at Petauke and Mbulo ECU Senior Inspector. (Local people were advised to prepare roads by Nsenga Ambo Native Authority and PCMU in order to enable PCMU lorries to use them to collect produce. This was a common practice throughout the district.)
14. R.N. Coster, Peasant Farming, pp. 16-17.
15. N.R. Registrar of the Department of Co-operative Societies Annual Reports for the years 1956-1957. (Lusaka: Government Printer 1957-1958.
16. NAZ, CRC REP/1/2, PCMU minutes of meeting held at Petauke, 17th January, 1958.
17. Interview: Headman Silasi (Alefa Njobvu) Silasi Village, Chief Nyanje, Petauke, 8/11/83. Alefa worked as a market capitao for PCMU from 1949 to 1959; A.J. Mwale, Petauke, 12/11/83.
18. Interview: A.J. Mwale, Petauke, 12/11/83.
19. Interview: J. Sankhulani, General Manager, Chipata ECU Headquarters 2/11/83.

20. J. Hadfield, Aspects of the African Agrarian Economy in Northern Rhodesia, Agricultural Bulletin No. 17 (Lusaka: Government Printer 1960), p. 33.
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### CHAPTER THREE

#### THE PCMU AND THE PEASANT ECONOMY 1957-1964.

In the last chapter, I discussed the organizational structure of the PCMU and its activities among the peasants of the Petauke District from 1947 to 1957. In this chapter I intend to discuss why the PCMU lost its autonomy in 1958 to join the EPCMA and examine the consequences of this development on the peasant economy in Petauke for the period 1958 to 1964. I conclude the discussion with a summary of the whole study by assessing and accounting for the nature of change within the district co-operative movement in Petauke and that of the peasant economy from 1947 to 1964.

In chapter two, I examined the circumstances that ended the activities of the PCMU in Katete District, the establishment of the KCMU and the formation of the EPCMA into which the PCMU was incorporated in 1958. In December 1957, discussions were held aimed at reviewing the capabilities of separate district unions and examining the possibilities of forming a loose provincial federation out of the PCMU, the KCMU and the ACMU. In 1958 the EPCMA was established as a grouping of all district producer and marketing unions in the Eastern Province in order to reduce competition amongst themselves in local and international markets. The EPCMA drew most of its experienced staff and finance from the PCMU.<sup>1</sup> The functions of the EPCMA

were to coordinate and harmonize marketing policies of the three unions, to negotiate bulk purchases and sales, to arrange transportation, insurance and pre-market finances. It was hoped that the vertical integration of district-based unions would facilitate agricultural exports from the Eastern Province, and that it would function more effectively than the district-based unions in organizing marketing within the province.

The PCMU joined the EPCMA for several reasons. First, in 1957 all district-based unions in the province faced a severe marketing problem. They could not sell maize within Northern Rhodesia because the maize market was saturated and the selling of Eastern Province maize was difficult in the railway line markets. In 1957, Eastern Province had produced 83,000 bags of maize, Southern Province had produced 440,000 bags of maize and the whole colony 2,085,000 bags of maize as against total consumption of nearly 2 million bags. A large amount therefore had to be exported. The problem of Eastern Province in selling the maize was largely due to the long distance to the markets. Its low quality compared to that of Southern Province in that particular year also presented a serious obstacle to the marketing of the crop. The marketing of groundnuts to overseas markets also posed another problem. In 1957 Eastern Province produced 64,516 bags of groundnuts. **These** groundnuts competed on the world market with other countries like the Gambia

in West Africa which was producing an annual average of one million bags of groundnuts in the late 1950s and early 1960s.<sup>2</sup> Northern Rhodesia, unlike the Gambia and other world producers, was land-locked and this made it difficult to export and compete favourably on the world market. Overseas markets required cumbersome negotiations and arrangements which competitive district-based unions in the same province and country dealing in similar crops could not easily manage.

During the late 1950s, co-operative unions, particularly the PCMU which was the most active in the province faced political problems. These arose from hostile political criticism mounted by the African nationalist parties. The African National Congress (ANC) and the Zambia African National Congress (ZANC), which preceded United National Independence Party (UNIP), opposed the colonial government's agricultural and co-operative policies. In the wake of these political conflicts, the peasants questioned the low prices which the PCMU fixed for their produce.<sup>3</sup> Thomas Rasmussen commented that "the politics of Eastern Province and of the rural areas of the Southern and Central Provinces, where most of the African cash crop farming was concentrated usually centred on questions of prices

and marketing arrangements for the two most important crops, maize and tobacco."<sup>4</sup> The ANC organized market boycotts to protest the exploitation of co-operative marketing societies. The District Commissioner for Katete complained in the Annual Report on African Affairs in 1960 that "There may be an economic explanation for these fluctuations but they are certainly not understood by the African producer who simply and perhaps not without justification jumps to the conclusion that he is being cheated by the Europeans. The village politician is always eager to seize and exploit such dissatisfaction."<sup>5</sup> The colonial administration therefore supported the amalgamation of the various co-operative unions in order to shelter them from local political criticism or deflect such criticism to a broad-based organ which was far removed from the local district membership.

The peasants claimed that co-operative societies organized by PCMU were a trick of the colonial government to steal money in the form of produce bought from them at low prices. The EPCMA was formed and took over most of the powers of the district unions in an attempt to restrain peasant dissatisfaction and criticism. The loss of capital and manpower to

EPCMA made PCMU economically weak and even more vulnerable to criticism in Petauke District. These political attacks on the co-operative marketing societies, particularly, the UNIP propaganda in the early 1960s almost destroyed PCMU.<sup>6</sup> Most of the influential men in the organization like a board member E.S. Chembe and S. Tembo, a PCMU branch manager for Petauke in early 1960s left to join ANC and UNIP respectively. These men and others left and joined the nationalist parties in order to fight the injustices of the colonial government manifested in Petauke District by the PCMU and their departure appeared to confirm peasant misgivings about the PCMU. There was a leadership vacuum in the marketing organization and increased peasant suspicion about the benefit of co-operative membership. Most of the societies' retail stores and market stations had to close because the co-operative societies and unions became a target of nationalist political attacks. This situation led to the withdrawal of members from co-operative societies and forced many co-operative societies into inactivity during 1963-1964.

In 1963 PCMU bought only 373 bags of maize at 20s per 200 lb bag. This price was 8s more than the usual price of 12s. The price had been increased in order to contain growing criticisms and prevent loss of membership, but without much success. Most of the peasants had boycotted the co-operative societies' markets.

Those peasant producers who had enough money to pay transport costs delivered their produce directly to the Grain Marketing Board (GMB) depots in Lusaka where they got favourable prices for their produce. It was estimated during the 1963-1964 marketing season that 1,282 bags of maize were delivered by peasants to the GMB in Lusaka.<sup>7</sup> This marketing situation resulted in a decline in the production of groundnuts in Petauke District because the peasants regarded co-operative societies as exploitative agents of the colonial government. They also felt strongly that groundnut production took up much of their labour time when the reward was minimal. However, it was only after independence that the EPCMA became transformed and consolidated that unions such as the PCMU that had become moribund regained their previous reputation. The commitment to co-operatives of the independent government seemed to indicate to peasants that the worst aspects of co-operatives were removed together with the colonial era.<sup>8</sup>

An assessment of the achievements and failures of the co-operative movement in Petauke District for the period 1947-1964 will clarify why the PCMU lost its popularity in the district during the last years of colonial rule despite the formation of the EPCMA in 1958 which had partly been intended to deflect

criticism from PCMU. From Table VIII, which shows a time span for the formation of co-operatives in the Eastern Province, it could be inferred that the relatively long history of the co-operative movement in Petauke District meant that the PCMU played a significant part in commercializing peasant economy between 1947 and 1964. In reviewing the activities of the PCMU, it is worth noting that the co-operative movement passed through three major phases in Petauke District and these should guide the assessment. The first phase, 1946-1952, was largely a trial period. Without much education given to Petauke peasants about co-operative principles, the predecessors of PCMU were largely inactive. The commitment of the colonial administration to co-operatives, resulted in the formation of PCMU, which was quite active during the second phase of the co-operative movement in the district from 1952 to 1958. It was active and rapidly extended its activities to Katete District. In the final phase, 1958-1964, the PCMU first lost Katete District as one of its operational areas.

TABLE VIII  
FORMATION OF CO-OPERATIVE MARKETING SOCIETIES  
IN EASTERN PROVINCE

SOCIETIES OR UNION	DATE FORMED
1. Petauke African Tobacco Growers Co-operative Society (PATGCS)	1946
2. Petauke African Producers' Co-operative Society (PAPCS)	1946
3. Petauke Producers Association (PPA)	1946
4. Petauke Producers Association dissolves	1949
5. Petauke Co-operative Marketing Union (PCMU)	1952
6. Alimi Co-operative Marketing Union (ACMU)	1952
7. Katete Co-operative Marketing Union (KCMU)	1958
8. Eastern Province Co-operative Marketing Association (EPCMA)	1958 A loose federation of the three unions in the Province

SOURCE: Annual Reports of respective organizations, 1947-1965.

The co-operatives established communication channels for exchange of views on social and economic matters. Between 1946 and 1952 the co-operatives were responsible for encouraging the adoption of improved agricultural techniques among peasants in Petauke. Beyond this, the co-operative movement did not achieve much during the first phase of its formation. A combination of close supervision under the new farming scheme, and the poor system of representation worked out by the colonial administration and inadequate preparation of the peasants accounted for the inactivity of the predecessors of the PCMU.

In the period 1952 to 1958 the PCMU expanded its work and extended the services to Katete. Changes in village agriculture had been marked in this period due to increased marketing facilities under the agencies of the PCMU in Petauke and Katete Districts. The PCMU was an important channel for money income for individual peasants and primary societies that mushroomed in the districts (see table IV in chapter two). However, it would be a false assessment to suggest that the peasants in the Petauke District received an equal amount of services from the PCMU. This would pre-suppose a general equality in access to and the benefits derived from the facilities which the PCMU provided. As noted in the previous chapters, the membership of a peasant farmer in PCMU and the

requirements of the Peasant Farming Scheme gave the PCMU the responsibility of supervising discriminatory production and pricing policies.<sup>9</sup> By and large, the peasant farmer had far greater access to co-operative loans and thus owned more cattle and ploughs than the ordinary co-operative members who did not join the Peasant Farming Scheme. They also received higher prices than those co-operative members who were not in the Peasant Farming Scheme. Even more disadvantaged were those peasants who neither joined the Peasant Farming Scheme, the PCMU nor its affiliates. Therefore, the PCMU was an agent of social differentiation among the peasants of Petauke.

Those peasant farmers who had accumulated enough money managed to build burnt brick houses with zinc sheet roofs. Some bought bicycles, radios, sewing machines, cattle, guns and put up eating places usually referred to as "tea-rooms".<sup>10</sup> These tea-rooms and village stores got supplies from the PCMU and Indian wholesale stores at Minga, Sinda and Kawele. The money from PCMU to peasants helped them pay school fees for their school going children. However, those who could afford these services were few. The impact of PCMU activities was contradictory in that the commercialization of agriculture in Petauke by PCMU and its affiliated co-operative societies was that certain sections of the peasants paid less attention to edible commodities,

mainly, maize, in order to concentrate on cash crops. These were the peasants who were usually hired by their relatively well-off counterparts.<sup>11</sup> There was increased social inequality within the Petauke peasantry.

It can also be argued, on the basis of the preceding discussion that the PCMU and its societies failed to significantly revolutionize and modernize agriculture in Petauke. The tools used for cultivation were simple. The hoe remained the dominant agricultural implement. The income received could not enable the majority of the peasants to buy big agricultural implements such as tractors, although, a number of Africans owning ox-pulled ploughs in Petauke District rose from 150 in 1948 to 3180 in 1962. But when comparing this to the total population of the peasants in Petauke of 81,647 in 1948 and of about 120,700 in 1962,<sup>12</sup> the population of plough holders was insignificant. The majority of the peasants continued to use the hoe as the instrument of farming, (sample of peasant plough holders see table IX).

TABLE IX

PEASANTS WHO OWNED PLOUGHS 1948-1962

YEAR	1948	1950	1952	1954	1956	1958	1961	1962
NUMBER	150	250	330	NA	1,720	2,810	3,020	3,180

SOURCE: Annual Reports of the Department of African Affairs Report AF. 1. 1963: G. Kay, Changing Patterns of Settlement and Land use in the Eastern Province of N.R., (Hull: U.H.P. 1965), p. 39.

According to the colonial administration, the advantages of introducing and developing these co-operatives were the possibility of increasing agricultural production, improving farming techniques and promoting the social and economic welfare of the rural dwellers. The focus of the African co-operative movement was rural agricultural production and marketing. However, in order to understand the nature of the co-operative societies established during the colonial period we need to go beyond the stated goals and advantages noted earlier and assumed by the colonial administration. In this context, S.E. Migot-Adholla's observations on the rural co-operative situation in East Africa are illuminative and applicable to Northern Rhodesia. According to Migot-Adholla, colonial officials saw co-operatives as institutions that served a useful administrative aim;

The historical antecedents of agricultural co-operatives suggest that co-operation is the creature of social and political control rather than economic competition. The colonial regime was clearly not interested in co-operatives as merely a way of improving the standard of living of rural Africans. The government felt that these institutions could serve a useful administrative purpose in three specific ways: by increasing the marketed agricultural surplus, by enforcing conservation regulations, and by giving the government greater information about, and access to the rural population.<sup>13</sup>

Stephen Quick, who studied co-operatives in Northern Rhodesia made a comment similar to Migot-Adholla's observations. He asserted that these institutions were

designed to improve social control in the colony's rural areas.<sup>14</sup>

By increasing the integration of the peasant cultivators into the market economy, co-operatives subjected the peasants to government increased influence through the pricing structure, enforcement of new farming methods and soil conservation measures. As noted in the introduction to this study, the co-operative movement in Petauke District can be seen as one of the mechanisms through which African peasants became subordinated to broader considerations of the colonial administrations. The rural co-operative societies were a forum for African political opinion but also provided information to the government on political responses of the rural African population to mechanisms of social control. The annual meetings of the co-operative societies were forums where Africans expressed their political opinion related to the co-operatives and farming in general, yet also gave an opportunity to government to know the opinions of the African population on co-operatives. The co-operatives assisted the colonial administrators to evaluate the various responses to the restrictions and administrative regulations introduced by the colonial administration and native authorities related to co-operatives. Much of the producer and marketing

co-operatives politics was centred on the question of prices and marketing arrangements.<sup>15</sup> The dissatisfaction with prices and the marketing system accounted for the problems between Petauke and Katete, and within Petauke itself.

Finally, it is worth emphasizing the contradictory impact of the PCMU in particular and the co-operative movement in general. The colonial administration had originally perceived the co-operative movement as a means for rural development and raising the standard of living of Africans. That the co-operative movement in Petauke did not entirely collapse, and the colonial administration did not abandon its co-operatives policy is evidence that some degree of success was achieved. In spite of the fact that the co-operatives were subordinate buying agents of the GMB and colonial personnel dominated the policy making level of the PCMU up to 1958, the expansion of PCMU activities between 1953 and 1958 suggests that the co-operative movement in Petauke through the PCMU was not a total failure. However, the co-operative movement in Petauke District suffered serious structural or organizational instability. The record of the co-operative movement was not without blemish within the first four years of its introduction in the district. Revival and re-organization through the establishment of the PCMU in 1952 quickly ran into serious problems within a

short period of six years. The instability throughout the country between 1958 and 1964 as the nationalist struggle intensified did not provide the best opportunity for evaluating and strengthening PCMU under the EPCMA. Therefore, the short-comings of the PCMU were largely a consequence of colonial administrative system for the co-operatives and the highly sensitive context in which the co-operative movement evolved.

FOOTNOTES

1. National Archives of Zambia (NAZ) Chipata Record Centre (CRC) REP/2/PCMU Confidential minutes of meeting held at Petauke, 17th January, 1958.
2. Great Britain. Annual Report on Northern Rhodesia 1959: See D.J. Dodge, Agricultural policy and performance in Zambia: History, prospects, and proposals for Change (Berkeley: University of California 1977: See also H.A. Gailey, Historical Dictionary of the Gambia (N.J. Methuen Press, New Jersey, 1975) pp. 57-59.
3. N.R. Annual Reports on African Affairs: Katete District, 1960.
4. T. Rasmussen, "The popular basis of anti-colonial Protest", In W. Tordoff (ed.), Politics in Zambia (Manchester: MUP. 1974), p. 48.
5. NAZ, SEC2/88, Provincial and District Organization, Eastern Province Annual Reports 1954-1955.
6. Interview: J. Sankhulani, Chipata, 2/11/83; A. Tonga, Chipata 3/11/83.
7. N.R. Ministry of Agriculture Provincial Annual Reports 1963: G. Kay, Changing Patterns of Settlement and Land use in the Eastern Province of Northern Rhodesia (Hull: U.H.P. 1965), pp. 68-69.
8. Interview: A. Tonga, Chipata, 3/11/83.
9. N.R. District and Provincial Administrative Annual Reports (Fort Jameson 1948-1950).
10. Interview: L. Daka, Petauke ECU depot 12/11/83. Daka is a branch manager of ECU at Petauke. He was 50 years old at the time of this interview. He joined PCMU in 1959 after working in the then Rhodesia Railways.

11. Interview: V.M. Milimbo, Sinda ECU depot, 5/11/83: L. Cliffe, "Labour migration and peasant differentiation: Zambian experiences", In B. Turok, Development in Zambia, (London: Zed Press, 1979), pp. 156-161: J.C. Momba, "The State, Peasant Differentiation and Class Formation in Zambia: A Case Study of Mazabuka and Monze Districts", Ph.D. Thesis, University of Toronto, 1982, pp. 150-153.
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14. S.A. Quick, Humanism or Technocracy? Zambia's Farming Co-operatives 1965-1972: Zambian Papers No. 12, (Manchester: M.U.P., 1978), p. 8.
15. T. Rasmussen, "The popular basis," pp. 47-48.

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- SEC 1/264, Bills passed in the Legco on co-operative societies 1949.
- SEC 1/54, Experiments of Native Tobacco in Petauke 1934-1941.
- SEC 1/1367, Food shortage general measures 1934-1946.
- SEC 1/273, Formation of Maize pool in Eastern Province; constitution of maize pool committee; buying, transporting of maize in Eastern Province 1950-1953.
- SEC 1/33, Imports and Exports of Tobacco in Eastern **and** Western (now Copperbelt) Provinces 1950-1954.
- SEC 1/78, Minutes of Application of Peasants Farming Scheme to Fort Jameson District Report on Native reserve rehabilitation of the South Chewa reserve 1948-1949.
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- 2L/4, Loc. 2.7.3F, Box No. 223, Lwezi Producers Co-operative Society 1956-1965.

- 2A, Loc. 2.7.3F, Box No. 249, Marketing Unions general 1948-1960.
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