



Recent Developments
in
Rhodesia's Tribal Trust Lands

RHODESIA

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN RHODESIA'S TRIBAL TRUST LANDS

The old concept of paternalism is dead. It was necessary in the early days of the country's history for the African tribes made their first contact with civilization when the first Europeans arrived. They were ruled by fear and suspicion and their introduction to modern medicine, to schooling and to the raising of standards could only have been achieved by paternalism.

This approach tended to suppress the old tribal authority and, in recent years, has hindered the advancement of the African people. They have been content to sit back and allow Government as their "father" to provide all their requirements.

With the casting aside of paternalism the tribal authorities have been revived. Under the chiefs these authorities now control the tribal areas through established councils. They are concerned with everything that affects the lives of the people in those areas—everything from the maintenance of order to the provision of such amenities as schools, clinics and public transport. They play a leading part in the development of the area whether it be the allocation of land, the provision of water, the protection of natural resources or the collection of taxes.

Agricultural development of the Tribal Trust Lands in recent years has been remarkable, particularly since 1965. The ill-fated Land Husbandry Act of 1951 attempted to obtain agricultural reform by legislation but it soon became apparent that the African could not be induced by law to de-stock his over-large cattle herds and so conserve the veld and yield better beasts. Prosecution caused resentment and did nothing to teach the tribesman that contour ridges could prevent his soil from being washed away and would so increase his crop yield.

But a change took place when the Land Husbandry Act was repealed and the chiefs and tribal authorities were able to show the people the need for improvement.

The Tribal Trust Land Act of 1969 (now incorporated in the Land Tenure Act) replaced the Land Husbandry Act and revived the concept of Tribal Land Authorities in all parts of the tribal

areas being responsible for matters concerning the land, including its allocation and its use.

All allocations of land are now made by these authorities and they also have the power to make regulations under which good farming practices or local rules for good land use may be enforced. It is now recognized by legislation that the people in tribal areas are responsible for the land they use. This involves considerable training of the tribal authorities and the tribesmen themselves so that they can adapt their methods and customs to new social and economic conditions required by improved land use systems.

The chiefs and their elders now ensure that arable and grazing areas are conserved and that the advice of trained African agricultural demonstrators is followed.

It is accepted that motivation of the people to want better standards of agricultural production is a world-wide problem in subsistence societies and that legislation cannot precede public opinion. That is why the work of the agricultural demonstrators is of vital importance.

For the same reason there is a continuous process of education of the tribesmen by means of Good Farming competitions, Young Farmers' Clubs, Women's Clubs and film shows, as well as an improvement in trading efficiency which exerts economic pressure.

The increase in agricultural production, particularly cattle, by means of economic pressure has not been overlooked. Steps have been taken to improve the efficiency of the traders, thus creating a need for more cash amongst the tribesmen for purchases from trading stores. This has even been carried to the extent where regular fashion shows are held in tribal areas with African models showing cotton garments produced wholly in Rhodesia. Much of the cotton is, in fact, grown by tribesmen in the tribal areas.

This has led to an improved growth in the African Co-operative movement from one African society in 1956 to 306 today, with 30 000 members and a paid-up share capital of R.\$73 500. African Co-operatives now handle a total turnover in excess of R.\$2 million.

On the equally important sociological side there has also been great development in recent years. This has been achieved through

the concept of community development which was given top priority by Government in 1965.

Community development is the "non-directive approach used in attempting to achieve development purposes with people". It is employed by agencies who want to get people accustomed to thinking, deciding and acting in relation to what they, the people, want. This is the antithesis to paternalism but it has worked well in Rhodesia because it has been implemented through the tribal structure.

Community development leads to local government and the establishment of councils.

The formation of African councils started in 1938 and by 1965 there were only 46 in existence, with few of them functioning efficiently. There are now 105 councils with secretaries responsible for collecting up to R.\$50 000 in rates in their area.

The optimum is estimated at 250 and when this is achieved the whole of the tribal areas of Rhodesia, including African Purchase Areas, will be administered by councils.

In addition to councils, there are numerous community boards established throughout the country. These are committees set up for a specific project and they usually disband once the project is complete. The successful operation of a community board often leads to the formation of a council.

Throughout the tribal areas African Community Advisers, both men and women, are constantly travelling through their districts stimulating interest among the tribesmen. The Community Advisers are on the staff of the District Commissioner and are trained at Domboshawa, a Government training centre near Salisbury.

It is at Domboshawa also that council secretaries are given a one-year course before they are employed and it is at this same centre that elected councillors are given training in their duties.

Councils are accepting more and more responsibility in fields such as health, education, water supplies, the construction of roads and bridges, dipping services for cattle, re-afforestation and social services and amenities.

Revenues for councils have increased from R.\$325 000 in 1964 to R.\$2 000 000 in 1970.

There have been tremendous advances in primary development in the past few years.

The year 1932 saw the establishment of the first irrigation scheme at Nyanyadzi, in the Sabi Valley, south of Umtali. By the end of 1944 there were six schemes, all of them in the Sabi Valley.

Today there are 55 with 28 in Matabeleland, 10 in Manicaland, nine in the Midlands, five in Victoria and three in Mashonaland. All have been established in low rainfall areas.

There are now about 5 600 hectares under irrigation in the tribal areas and during the past three years R.\$5 087 437 has been spent on new projects.

The main crops grown are maize and wheat in the winter months but in recent years there has been a large increase in the amount of cotton grown by Africans in their irrigated lands.

At one of the schemes at Chilonga, plotters averaged 2 840 kilos of cotton per hectare and then sold at approximately R.\$390 per hectare. On this scheme there are 75 plotters, irrigating 120 hectares.

Other crops grown are groundnuts, beans, burley tobacco, citrus fruit, soya-beans, bambara nuts, sorghums, sweet potatoes, rapoko, sunn-hemp, rice, munga and all the common vegetables. At many irrigated schemes cattle fattening is carried out and some also fatten pigs and sheep.

The advance in dry-land agriculture has been phenomenal.

There has been an increase in cattle sales from 68 670 head, fetching R.\$2 197 260 in 1963 to 101 961 head, fetching R.\$4 634 040 in 1970.

The production of burley tobacco by Africans has increased and improved in quality since 1965, when there were only a few hundred African growers. Today there are well over a thousand producing a far greater and better yield. It was an African who won the first prize for burley tobacco at the Salisbury Agricultural Show last year in the face of strong competition from European farmers.

The expansion in cotton production in tribal areas is the most spectacular of all. Very little was grown by Africans in 1965 but this year their crop is estimated at over 12 000 kilos. This figure exceeds the total production by both European and African growers in 1965. As a cash injection in the Tribal Trust Land economy it is worth R.\$3 000 000.

Soil conservation in the Tribal Trust Land has not been neglected and thousands of kilometres of contours and a very high percentage of cultivated land is now mechanically protected.

In addition the conservation of grazing areas is undertaken and a large number of grazing management schemes have been started.

The road network is an aspect of primary development in the tribal areas which has been given high priority in recent years for it is appreciated that general development is almost impossible without good lines of communication.

Expenditure for roads in 1949 was R.\$61 000. In 1969 R.\$1 660 000 was made available by Government for primary development purposes. The priorities were on roads, bridges, water supplies and irrigation schemes. A total of 820 kilometres of road was completed and 902 stream cuttings and culverts built. Thirteen bridges were erected, with a further six under construction. Over 40 major high-level bridges have been built in Tribal Trust Lands in the past five years at a cost of R.\$1 642 580.

For the provision of water during 1969, 49 boreholes and 16 wells were sunk, 63 dams and weirs constructed and three pipe schemes laid.

All this development has been achieved despite sanctions and in an atmosphere of excellent co-operation and participation by the Tribal Land Authorities and the African people themselves. In fact the atmosphere in the Tribal Trust Lands of Rhodesia today has never been better.