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# Contestation over Resources: The Farmer–Miner Dispute in Colonial Zimbabwe, 1903–1939

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## ABSTRACT

The formative years of settler occupation in colonial Zimbabwe were characterised by conflict at various levels of the economic and governmental structures. While historians have explored some of these conflicts, the history and environmental implications of the long-standing dispute between miners and farmers over timber, water, grazing rights and land damage caused by mining operations on farms on the Gold Belt, have received astonishingly little attention from either historians or other social scientists. Focusing on the period, 1903–1939, the study argues that when farmers raised concerns about miners' activities, this was not about 'precautionary stewardship' of the environment designed to stop entrepreneurial practices harmful to the environment. This was a struggle over the ownership of the means of production by two competing forms of capitalism – a characteristic intra-class as well as intra-racial conflict. This dispute simultaneously represents an ecological narrative of settler colonisation and entrenchment in colonial Zimbabwe.

## KEYWORDS

Disputed territories, colonial Zimbabwean history, mining, agriculture in settler societies, resources

## INTRODUCTION

Most studies on the so-called 'disputed territories' in white settler societies in southern Africa have focused on how these landscapes became sites of struggle mainly between black and white over ownership and control of resources such as land.<sup>1</sup> For example, historians such as Carruthers and Ranger have individually examined the extent to which national parks (Kalahari Gemsbok and Matopos, respectively) have been 'sites of vigorous contests' over land between black and white over possession, representation and control.<sup>2</sup> Yet, less examined, if at all, are struggles within white settler societies themselves or between white and white over resources from the moment of colonial occupation and beyond. Specifically, the history of the long-standing dispute between miners and farmers over timber, water, grazing rights and land damage caused by mining operations on farms on the Gold Belt in colonial Zimbabwe (Southern Rhodesia), has received astonishingly little attention from either historians or other social scientists. What has been the meaning and significance of resources such as land, timber, grazing and water to different white settler economic classes in those environments where they dislodged indigenous Africans?

This article answers this question by exploring this long-drawn out controversy and examines how it partly gave rise to a formal state-sanctioned conservation regime in Southern Rhodesia. Its central proposition is that competition over access to land, timber, grazing and water, and over the control of that access, characterised the relations between these two sets of capitalist classes. The article also argues that the controversy between farmers and miners in colonial Zimbabwe was not about a conflict between environmental concerns and economic development interests, as occurred in post-World War Two United States, for example.<sup>3</sup> We hardly begin to witness the origins of an environmental movement as a result of this conflict. When farmers raised concerns about the wanton destruction of the surface of their farms, or excessive felling of trees, this was not an expression of what David Lowenthal, commenting on a different case, has called, 'precautionary stewardship' of the environment designed to stop 'entrepreneurial practices harmful to soils, vegetation, wildlife, even climate'.<sup>4</sup> Both farmers and miners were equally destroyers of indigenous forests in colonial Zimbabwe. While miners cut down extensive forests for timber required for mine props and for fuel, farmers, in order to cultivate the most fertile soil, equally 'had to do heavy stumping and clearing of indigenous trees'.<sup>5</sup> Tobacco farmers also required timber for processing flue-cured tobacco.<sup>6</sup> In fact, just before the beginning of World War One, some gambling farmers in Southern Rhodesia became notorious for 'mining the soil and plundering its assets'<sup>7</sup> for over a generation as settlers sought to 'get-rich-quick'.<sup>8</sup> This was, therefore, a struggle over the ownership of the means of production by two competing types of capitalism, a characteristic intra-class as well as intra-racial conflict – a struggle in which indigenous Africans were decidedly excluded as the two

parties contested over the spoils of colonisation. Thus, it was about capitalist greed. This dispute represents an ecological narrative of settler colonisation and entrenchment in Southern Rhodesia.

This article builds upon prior scholarship, albeit limited in scope, on the miner–farmer dispute. In addition to a few scattered and passing comments in the works of Hone, Murray and Phimister, the farmer–miner dispute received a relatively more concentrated focus in Lee’s doctoral thesis.<sup>9</sup> However, Lee’s work on the dispute has remained hidden due to the unpublished state of her thesis. Even more importantly, it is limited both in its depth and coverage of the dispute and its temporal scope, as it goes only up to 1923, the year when settlers attained ‘Responsible Government’. Lee did not devote an entire chapter to the dispute, but treated it as merely one of many dimensions of the evolving complex relations between the various institutions forged in the nascent stages of colonial development.<sup>10</sup> Poignantly silent in her analysis, as in the other works, are the long-term environmental and ecological implications of the farmer–miner struggle over access to, distribution, and control over natural resources and space. Finally, Kwashirai is the only historian recently to have explored the farmer–miner dispute at some considerable length.<sup>11</sup> Focusing on the Mazoe District of colonial Zimbabwe, he used the farmer–miner controversy to exemplify the settler society’s lack of commitment to attend to the incipient crisis of deforestation and soil erosion as well as the importance of profound changes in both individual and collective mindsets towards the preservation of natural resources. Unlike Kwashirai’s extremely relevant and pertinent study which concentrates on just one district, my article examines the farmer–miner dispute writ large, covers a wider geographical scope and frames the wrangle over resources as an intra-class and intra-racial clash.

This study also draws on the important insights of American scholarship which has explored disputes that resonate with issues at the centre of the farmer–miner controversy in colonial Zimbabwe. For example, Kelley’s essay, ‘Mining on Trial’ discusses the conflict between farmers and miners that ensued after the latter group went and settled in the valleys of California and established an agrarian empire. While the ‘older economic interests’ were chagrined by this ‘rapid rise of farm power’ and struggled to defend their position, farmers also fought against the impact of hydraulic gold mining in the northern Sierra Nevada Valley.<sup>12</sup> Similarly, Wirth’s book *Smelter Smoke in North America: the Politics of Transborder Pollution* examines the US–Canada Trail smelter conflict along the Washington State–British Columbia boundary, 1927–1941.<sup>13</sup> This dispute embroiled United States farmers against the Consolidated Smelter and Mining Company’s (CSM) milling complex in Trail, British Columbia. The company emitted fumes of sulphur dioxide which damaged the farmers’ cropland in Northport, Washington. Both parties were locked in a long judicial combat which culminated in a legal precedent which laid down the principle ‘the polluter pays’. As in Wirth’s trans-boundary dispute case study, Aiken

argues that farmers with lands downstream from the Bunker Hill Smelter were one vocal group that vehemently grumbled about how lead debris, smoke and fumes emanating from the Bunker Hill damaged their property and endangered their livestock.<sup>14</sup> Morse's book, *The Nature of Gold: An Environmental History of the Klondike Gold Rush* vividly exposes the deleterious consequences (for animals, people and the land) incurred in the wake of the gold rush.<sup>15</sup> Finally, Montrie's book on opposition to coal surface-mining graphically demonstrates how citizens all across the region waged an inexorable decades-long struggle to protect their farms and communities from the depredations of strip-mining.<sup>16</sup> These works provide a firm base upon which to anchor my study.

## PERIODISATION AND FOCUS OF STUDY

The study covers the period extending from 1903 when: (a) concessions were granted to the hitherto unrecognised category of miners – otherwise known as 'small workers' or 'tributors'; (b) a consolidated Mines and Minerals Ordinance was introduced; and (c) the Gold Belt areas, once the preserve of large mining companies only, were not only opened up to small workers but were also thrown open to farming under title, thus marking the establishment of agriculture as an indispensable pillar of the colonial economy. The study ends in 1939 when the Report of the Commission to Enquire into the Preservation of Natural Resources of the Colony of Southern Rhodesia [chaired by Sir Robert McIlwaine] was released and tabled.<sup>17</sup> It is a convenient cut-off point because the recommendations of this Commission resulted in the passage of the Natural Resources Act of 1941, thus firmly putting in place natural resources conservation machinery. Within this broad temporal framework, the article very briefly traces the origins of agriculture between 1890 and 1902. Against this background the study shifts to an exploration of the collision course between agricultural and mining interests and examines the significant signposts, particularly the 1925 and 1933 conferences held between the two sectors to try to resolve the conflict.

The article focuses mainly on the 'Gold Belt' as this was, by and large, the terrain of conflict and engagement between the mining and farming industries. This was the area imagined by the British South Africa Company (BSAC) to be richly endowed with gold deposits. Although geographically ill-defined even by the Company, for the purposes of this study, I adopt Murray's delineation of the Gold Belt. Murray suggested that the Gold Belt roughly stretched from Bindura and more particularly Chegutu (formerly Hartley), through Kadoma (Gatooma), Kwekwe (Que Que), Mvuma (Enkeldoorn), Gweru (Gwelo), down south to Filabusi and Gwanda.<sup>18</sup> The study also extends its focus to areas beyond the Gold Belt where base minerals were mined, i.e. in the Midlands province. Specifically, Shabani, Belingwe, and Mashaba are the areas in which asbestos was to be found, and Selukwe was richly-endowed with both chromium (chrome) and

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gold deposits. Not only was the Gold Belt rich in minerals, it also had abundant forest resources. A contemporary South African traveller, S.J. Du Toit attested to the splendour of the Gold Belt thus giving us a sense of the evocative setting in which and over which farmer–miner hostilities were to unfold over four decades. Describing the 25-mile range stretching from ‘the village of Gwelo to the Selukwe gold-fields’ in 1897, for example, Du Toit noted:

The whole region is densely wooded, especially with the wild loquat, which generally grows as thick as our pine forests; it bears a very palatable fruit; its wood is excellent for fuel and for timber, which is of great advantage to the gold-fields. For here is a gold-bearing region fifty miles long and twenty-five miles broad ... The prospects of these fields are exceptionally good, on account of the extensiveness and the richness of the reefs, and especially on account of the mining facilities; here is a supply of fuel and timber for years (the wood of the wild loquat has been found in the old mines, sufficient proof of its durability, and also on account of its favourable situation).<sup>19</sup>

Thus, claims, counterclaims and struggles to shore up diametrically opposed ownership, production and consumption patterns became the crux of resource politics between white miners and farmers on the Gold Belt during the first few decades of white settler occupation.

## ABSENCE OF AFRICANS FROM THE FARMER–MINER STRUGGLES

It needs to be stated from the outset that Africans did not feature prominently in these farmer–miner struggles. For the most part, Africans merely entered into the conflict as ‘culprits’ – accused by white farmers of disrupting farming operations by ‘removing fences’ – or of being ‘pilferers of crops’,<sup>20</sup> or as mere labourers for both industries, or as functionaries in guiding prospectors to disused sites of ‘ancient workings’ of mining ‘for a small reward’.<sup>21</sup> As the historian Rolin proclaimed, ‘[t]he farmer sees him (the African) as a pilferer and cattle-thief’.<sup>22</sup> In the entire controversy, the only matter on which the two antagonistic industries elected to agree was that Africans should not be given mining licences, to prevent them from competing with miners or from contributing to environmental degradation on farmlands.<sup>23</sup> For example, Abrahamson of the Rhodesia Mining Federation stressed the need for an amendment of the Mining Law, ‘to prevent the issue of licences to natives’.<sup>24</sup> Thus, as Mason pointed out: ‘In Southern Rhodesia, almost to a man, the farmers and miners who meant to make the country their home believed that the social gap between themselves and the African ought to be maintained; they might wish to be kind masters – most of them did – but social equality of any kind was something too remote to consider’.<sup>25</sup>

But this exclusion is also largely explained by the historical fact that Africans were driven out of most fertile lands and resource-endowed areas such as the Gold Belt and areas along the Bulawayo-Harare-Mutare railway line, and dumped in less fertile and perennially dry reserves such as Shangani, Gwaai and Tsholotsho, as early as 1893, after the defeat of the Ndebele by the BSAC. This set in motion further land alienation, especially after the suppression of the 1896–97 joint Shona-Ndebele *Chimurenga/Umvukela*.<sup>26</sup> More productive land was designated as white land, while Africans were forcibly settled on unproductive lands. The Southern Rhodesia Order in Native Reserves Order in Council of 1898 legalised the dispossession of Africans of their land. By 1914, the African population of 752,000 possessed only 21,390,080 acres of land compared to the 19,032,320 acres that had already been seized and allocated to 23,730 of the white settlers.<sup>27</sup> Further expropriation of land under the Land Apportionment Act of 1930 moved Africans to environments less attractive to European settlers. Africans numbering 1.1 million were allocated only 22 per cent of their land, while 51 per cent was allocated to a minority of 50,000 whites. The remaining percentage comprised forest areas, unassigned areas and Native Purchase Areas.<sup>28</sup> Land was placed in a hierarchy based on fertility and amount of rainfall an area received, and agricultural productivity. Five regions were demarcated. Regions 1 to 3, which receive more rain and are comparatively the most fertile, were allocated to white commercial farmers. Regions 4 and 5, both dry and unsuitable for crop cultivation, were the areas where reserves for African settlement were carved out. Once Africans were out of the way, it was left to classes within the settler community to contest the allocation of the spoils amassed from African land dispossession.

#### ORIGINS OF SETTLER AGRICULTURE AND THE ROOTS OF ITS CONFLICT WITH MINING: 1890–1902

The farmer–miner dispute had its origins in the manner in which early settler capitalist development in colonial Zimbabwe was established and structured. The mining industry commanded a prime status over agriculture during the first two decades of colonial occupation in Southern Rhodesia. Lured to Southern Rhodesia by the prospect of finding the ‘Second Rand’ in and beyond the Gold Belt, the BSAC wasted no time in setting up the mining sector by creating the requisite enabling legislative, administrative and political setting for the quick realisation of profits and also to meet expenditure incurred in the process of administering the colony.<sup>29</sup> However, it was not long before the BSAC admitted that no greater Witwatersrand lay under the sub-soil of Rhodesia – it was no gold-bearing country – and that ‘its proper economic basis must after all be farming’.<sup>30</sup> This, however, did not immediately change the fortunes of the farming sector, for the BSAC was reluctant to be weaned completely from

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mining because of its attractive financial returns. Hence it continued to enjoy preferential treatment.

Before 1897, white settler agriculture in Southern Rhodesia was virtually non-existent. It began as a 'scratch affair, its main attraction being the low price of land'.<sup>31</sup> Indeed, 'farms were claimed, located, granted, and surveyed, but few of them were farmed'.<sup>32</sup> Of the less than 250 individual settlers who together owned six million acres, few welcomed the 'hardships of farming'.<sup>33</sup> The majority, of course, were happier to simply eke out a living without necessarily turning to extensive cultivation. While some pursued the elusive fortune to be found in gold, others resigned to cutting down timber and selling it as firewood or using their oxen and wagons for transport riding.<sup>34</sup> It is, perhaps, not surprising, therefore, that once they became established, the privileges enjoyed by miners over wood became one of the sources of conflict, given its importance as a source of livelihood. Despite the outbreak of rinderpest and the *Chimurenga/Umvukela*, which almost led to collapse of the emerging agricultural industry, it was, paradoxically, these very obstacles to the potential success of agriculture which provided the impetus to agricultural transformation between 1897 and 1903.<sup>35</sup>

The BSAC increasingly became responsive to the needs of, and indeed encouraged the development of, commercial agriculture. Simultaneously, it also granted far-reaching concessions to the mining sector. Following the legislative concessions of 1903–4, a hitherto unrecognised entity, the individual 'small worker' or 'producer' as opposed to large mining companies had 'rapidly become an important, and in some ways, typical structural component of the mining industry'.<sup>36</sup> From 1903, 'began the era of the "small workers", and it is thanks to them that the mining industry has been given new impetus', proclaimed Henri Rolin in 1913.<sup>37</sup>

It must be emphasised that both the individual small worker and the individual small farmer emerged at the same time, albeit with inequitable rights to space and resources on the Gold Belt. This point is significant because it was not large mining capital versus large agricultural capital that locked horns in this protracted conflict. It was largely the small worker against the small farmer. This is not to suggest that both forms of large capital were totally marginal to the dispute. Both usually surfaced in support of the respective small capitals as and when it suited their own interests, which, however, were often different from those of the latter. Therefore, differentiation of the two types of capital is of the essence, for neither mining nor agricultural interests comprised a monolithic entity.

Mining companies and small workers had different issues over which they came into conflict with the agricultural sector. These issues also differed in degree, substance and importance. Indeed, both the large mining companies and the Company hailed the development of agriculture because it added value to their expansive land holdings as well as providing a market. But mining companies always feared the likelihood that a government that was sensitive to white farmers' needs would tax the mining sector in order to fund the develop-



ment of agriculture. As such, large mining capital was antagonistic and rather cautious of yielding too much to commercial agriculture. However, the success and productivity of large mines was not predicated on exclusive rights such as those to free wood and grazing. The issue was far more significant for small workers such that ‘much of the bitterly-fought “miner–farmer” contest really only concerned them and the agricultural sector’.<sup>38</sup> Large mining companies and small workers went on the defensive when farmers’ demands to end what they conceived as ‘disabilities’ appeared to be eroding their vested rights.<sup>39</sup> It is to this evolving contest that I now turn.

#### THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE FARMER–MINER CONFLICT: 1903–1922

The mining industry was, among other forms of support, bolstered by a labyrinth of laws which gave prospectors and miners an assortment of rights to assist them in the discovery and development of mineral deposits. The Mines and Minerals Ordinance (1895), for example, bestowed upon prospectors and miners ‘preferential access to water, wood and grazing; ... right of entry on to farmland; and still greater privileges on land falling inside the vaguely-defined gold-belt’.<sup>40</sup> In order to prevent the interruption of prospecting and mining operations, particularly by farmers, a ‘universal prohibition against the selection of land on the Gold Belt’ was put in place.<sup>41</sup> In other words, no land on the Gold Belt could be bought or sold, as the Chartered Company feared that farming would seriously interfere with mining.<sup>42</sup> Convinced beyond any reasonable doubt that the law ‘expressly subordinated agricultural to mining interests’, farmers did not just sheepishly resent prospectors’ and miners’ protected positions but went on the offensive and challenged them together with the law which cushioned them.<sup>43</sup>

Although the farmer–miner conflict became more pronounced from 1903 onwards, flashes of the dispute were already visible in early 1899 – a time during which agriculture was undergoing painful transformation.<sup>44</sup> Periodicals such as the monthly *Matabeleland Times and Mining Journal* and the *Rhodesian Mining Journal*, though overtly committed to covering mining issues, as the titles suggest, could hardly ignore the initial farmers’ rumblings about the unfairness of the mining laws. In February 1899, the Matabeleland Printing and Publishing Company, proprietors of the *Matabeleland Times and Mining Journal* (MTMJ), launched a weekly called the *Rhodesian Mining Journal* (RMJ). In courting its readership, the proprietors stressed where the paper’s biases lay from the outset. The MTMJ of 25 February 1899 stated in unambiguous terms that Southern Rhodesia was a state that was to be built on the foundations of its mineral resources. However, mindful of not offending the sensibilities of the increasingly restless farmers, the owners of the print media were quick to assuage the fears of the farming sector. The MTMJ immediately censured

the Mining Law as farcical, ‘unintelligible’ and requiring simplification. The proprietors’ piercing comments were undoubtedly directed at the BSAC, which doggedly supported the mining industry, however offensive to farmers. Thus, the owners of the new weekly urged that the farmer–miner relations required application of common sense and probity.<sup>45</sup> Launching the *Weekly* on 4 March 1899, the editorship vowed to promote discussion and debate by the public in the paper’s columns, of the ‘many disputes’ which ‘have arisen, and more are likely to arise in the near future between the Chartered Company (BSAC – sic) and the claimholder and the owner of the land, and also between the claimholder and the landowner. There are already all sorts of vexed questions with regard to the rights to wood and water’.<sup>46</sup>

The monthly *Matabele Times* also maintained a sharp line of criticism of the ‘unintelligible’ Mining Law. The editorial commentary on one of the first few recorded litigation cases of ‘farmer versus miner’ is instructive. In 1898, Hartopp and Company brought a case against Dollar and the Selukwe Gold Mining Company Company, Ltd to the Bulawayo High Court. The plaintiffs were claimholders and sued for damages relating to timber cut from the claims by the Dollars to provide fuel to the Selukwe Company. The Judge settled the case in favour of the contractor who had cut the timber after paying the legalised compensation of £170. The journal was quick to launch a thinly veiled attack on the outcome of the case and charged that it was a travesty of justice. It highlighted some of the problems that the farmer had to contend with and went on to question Clause 60 of the Mines and Minerals Ordinance (1898), which ‘gives to the claimholder the exclusive right to all surface within the boundaries of his location’.<sup>47</sup> It also raised a couple of issues that would pervade the farmer–miner controversy for the entire four decades under study. First, the *Matabele Times* wanted to know whether this ‘exclusive right to the surface’ necessarily transferred ‘the ownership in the timber from the farmer to the claimholder’. The paper attacked the principle whereby a prospector could register a block of claims on an already occupied private farm and from that point, the timber on the specific farm ceased to belong to the farmer even though he had occupied it well before the arrival of the prospector.<sup>48</sup> Thus, in these journals, the farmers had found an ally which buoyed up their claims for a revision of the Mining Law to protect them as well.

It is beyond question that farmers and miners equally understood the importance of timber, water and grazing to any farming operation. Without these essentials, Southern Rhodesia would have been less attractive to the immigrant farmer. Before the use of coal and electricity for fuel purposes became widespread, producers of flue-cured tobacco in Marandellas required wood for processing tobacco, and timber for the construction of barns for processing and grading the ‘gold leaf’.<sup>49</sup> Similarly, arable farmers and stockbreeders required large tracts of land for grazing their cattle. Thus, with agriculture fast becoming one of the dominant sectors of colonial Zimbabwe’s economy, depriving farmers of these

crucial resources, yet safeguarding them for one economic group, was bound to generate an aversion to the Mining Law and engender a relentless struggle for the equitable allocation of these scarce resources.

The rapid pace at which mining was consuming wood and timber may well have heightened farmers' calls to the BSAC to revise the legislation, as they were losing out in the grabbing of the resources. In the first few years that farming was beginning to establish itself as a formidable and indispensable sector of the Southern Rhodesian economy, the Secretary for Agriculture was already reporting that 'an enormous quantity of indigenous timber was felled for mining, building, fencing, and fuel purposes during the year 1903–4'.<sup>50</sup> He warned that 'this deforestation is continuing, and must necessarily increase, large tracts of country will, in a few year's time, be quite denuded of timber, and the disastrous results which have followed deforestation elsewhere must be experienced here'.<sup>51</sup> The pulverisation of forests was so widespread that Gann also concluded that '[t]he native woodland at first suffered considerable destruction through the operations of European miners in search of fuel'.<sup>52</sup>

However, as much as miners were engaged in the exploitation of the landscape, farmers were not innocent. As the number of farmers working the land, growing tobacco, maize and cotton increased between 1903 and 1914, the landscape was progressively transformed when bush and forests were destroyed to make way for arable land, as Gann once again observed: 'In time the Rhodesian countryside began to change its appearance as immigrants altered the very landscape'.<sup>53</sup>

The much-vaunted visit of the Directors of the BSAC from London in 1907<sup>54</sup> to 'clear up' some of the deepening differences between miner and farmer with regard to questions over timber, grazing and water rights, hardly made any significant inroads into solving the dispute. If anything, the Directors temporarily assuaged the farmers' increasing dissatisfaction without necessarily introducing any far-reaching amendments in the Mines and Mining Ordinance of 1903, for the dispute lingered on after they had left. Once duly constituted into a formal organisation, the Rhodesian Agricultural Union (RAU) – created from nine separate farmers' organisations in 1904 – attacked the existing mining legislation and criticised all policies and practices the organisation believed hamstrung farmers' operations. Refusing to be taken for granted, in 1905 the RAU ridiculed the BSAC's miserly concession over the terms of compensation offered to farmers for water used by miners.<sup>55</sup> The 1906 RAU Congress roundly declared: 'The existing titles to land and water are worthless'.<sup>56</sup> Acting on a BSAC promise for a land titles reform based on an accord between the two industries after the Directors' visit, the RAU arranged a special meeting to discuss the terms and Gold Belt title alterations desired by farmers. Farmers demanded a uniform title to land eliminating the reservations with respect to wood, water and grazing.<sup>57</sup> The RAU resolutions became the basis for discussion at an inter-industry conference held in Bulawayo in March 1908. But small workers, 'for whom unfettered access to water, wood and grazing could make the difference between profit and loss',<sup>58</sup>

vehemently challenged all the concessions to farmers. Consequently the conference was concluded with a compromise between the two antagonistic industries. The conference passed a resolution affirming its conviction in the principle that the ownership of wood, water, and grazing was intrinsic in all titles related to land issues. Thus, the amendments of the Mines and Minerals Ordinance, No. 15 of 1908, were expressly made to render effect to the pledges of the Directors and the resolutions of the conference. But this amendment did not reflect what was expected; instead 'existing mining claims were reaffirmed in their rights', contrary to the new form of Permit of Occupation which was expected to cede to the landowner rights to timber, grazing and water. However, miners, with the support of the Mines Department, and regardless of the views of the Directors and resolutions of the conference, got an exceedingly better deal in response to their demands as hundreds of the old forms of title were issued. This was also in total disregard of the Government's intention that land applications would only be approved and issued with complete title where 'the Mines Department considered that ownership would not interfere with mining'.<sup>59</sup>

Farmers were incensed by the outcome of this conference so that the farmer-miner dispute continued and spilled over into the public domain.<sup>60</sup> Between 1910 and 1911 the question of the respective rights of farmers and miners dominated the discussion columns of the *Rhodesia Herald* and *Bulawayo Chronicle*. The rapid development of the gold mining industry in 1908 and 1909 as well as the large areas that had been pegged off by the 'genuine prospector' and the 'speculative pegger' aroused farmers to the need to protect their interests as landowners.<sup>61</sup>

In 1910, suggestions that yet another conference was going to be held in order to resolve differences between miners, and address the problems that made farmers operations difficult, generated a lot of discussions between the two sectors as well as their sympathisers. A pervading criticism in the newspapers was that the Mining Laws were too anachronistic to be of any value to the emerging agricultural industry. It was the archaic nature of the laws that engendered the farmer-miner hostilities. Those who sympathised with farmers charged that the mining laws of Southern Rhodesia were written when agriculture was virtually non-existent and hence the requirements of the farming population were hardly taken into account. Agriculture had advanced to a stage where farmers' needs had to be re-aligned with those of the mining sector rather than maintaining the 'immensely preponderating rights that now, when the country is really being settled by genuine farmers who desire to live out of the land, many of them are placed in the greatest difficulty', argued the *Herald's* agricultural correspondent.<sup>62</sup>

Just what was the state of public opinion on the farmer-miner debate? A few letters to the editor of the *Herald* indicate ordinary white settlers taking sides with either the farmer or the prospector, often emphasising the importance of one over the other. Interestingly, some took a non-partisan line often leaning towards the suggestion that both industries were of crucial importance to the colonial

economy. The ambivalence of one 'anonymous' writer is symptomatic of this view. Although he was perceptibly on the prospectors' side, as the tone of his letter seemed to suggest, he was also sympathetic to the farmers' predicament. He wrote: 'Personally, I know nothing of farming and in any question between farmers and prospectors, I will confess my predilections are in favour of the latter, but being, I hope, a fair-minded man I recognise that in certain cases the farmers have a real grievance, although I think this has been exaggerated when applied to farming as a whole'.<sup>63</sup> The writer took on the *Herald's* agricultural correspondent for suggesting that the 'genuine seeker' for gold reefs was a 'rare type', but went on to state that it was this class against whom farmers had a real grievance. He was at odds with the correspondent's view, which seemed to intimate that restrictions had to be imposed on 'this rare genuine type of prospector', on whom the survival of the mining industry of Southern Rhodesia hinged. Without prevarication, the same writer unflinchingly asserted that where the speculative prospector was concerned he fully sympathised with the farmer. But, he reminded the correspondent that 'there is also such a person as the speculative landowner, as instanced by the scores of farms that have been located in the past, solely, or principally, for the native timber that was on them, and also farmers who have ploughed land bearing abandoned workings in order to prevent prospecting'.<sup>64</sup> It would seem that this was the kind of insight, of bringing the two industries on an equal footing or finding ways to make them complement each other that the colonial state lacked. What then was the state's stance on this dispute?

#### THE STATE ATTITUDE TO IMPLICATIONS OF DISPUTE ON SETTLEMENT IN RHODESIA

There were fears within the colonial administration that the conflict between farmers and miners could scare away investment as well as potential immigrants to the colony at a time when it needed to attract more settlers to occupy various economic and administrative positions. Perhaps much to the chagrin of the colonial state, there were people outside the colony watching closely the treatment meted out to farmers by the BSAC and wishing to make this known to would-be emigrants. A case in point is that of R. Cross, a prominent farmer and stock-raiser of the Queenstown District of the Cape Colony, who in April 1907 attended the Agricultural Show in Bulawayo as a judge. Upon his return to Queenstown, Cross launched a diatribe published in the *Queenstown Daily Press* and headlined *Straight Talk from a Leading Expert*, against how farming operations and the whole question of land tenure were hemmed in by restrictive legislation privileging the prospector. Cross dissuaded fellow South African farmers from going up north across the Limpopo River, 'Do not think of it under the present conditions', warned Cross.<sup>65</sup> Cross rehashed the well-

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known ‘disabilities’ that farmers were exposed to on their farms, such as water, grazing and timber rights. He emphasised just how the farmer could easily be ‘treated as a trespasser’ by a prospector or owners of mineral claims: ‘I have heard of a case within ten miles of Bulawayo where the bulk of a farmer’s land was pegged in claims and he not only got nothing, but was debarred from the use of the pegged part in any shape or form.’<sup>66</sup> Cross ended his ‘Straight Talk’ memorandum with some salutary and yet sober advice for the BSAC:

I am not in any way interested in Rhodesia or likely to be, but if the Chartered Company does not take steps to give more favourable and secure titles to the land, which will induce people to take up the vast stretches of unoccupied land, Rhodesia will remain a wilderness. To make a country you must have population, and the soil worked, and this too, before gold mining ... As the Directors of the Chartered Company are about to visit Rhodesia, I should strongly advise them to give a hearing to the farmer’s grievances, and give them more secure titles, and so place them on a firm foundation in order to improve and develop the land’.<sup>67</sup>

It was precisely the potentially damaging effects of such ‘straight talks’ on the colony’s drive for immigration and settlement that the BSAC government sought to counteract. Despite the gravity of the farmer–miner controversy, the sixth edition of the *Handbook for the use of Prospective Settlers on the Land* (1910?) trivialised the conflict by underrating its possible impact on those contemplating to migrate to the colony. The language in the handbook, issued ironically by the Minister of Agriculture and Lands, was couched in temperate terms that underscored the importance of mines to farms:

What might at first appear to be a disparagement of the land rights of the owner is not in practice found to be any very great hardship, as the law prohibits prospecting and pegging on cultivated lands or near homesteads and buildings. It must be remembered that the establishment of a progressive mine in the neighbourhood of one’s farm tends to enhance the value of the remaining land, and provides a market at the farmer’s door for a good deal of his produce. Again, the provisions of the present mining law have been in operation now for nearly 20 years, and however strange they may read to those acquainted with a different state of affairs, the progress of the farming industry in Southern Rhodesia proves that they are not intolerable in practice.<sup>68</sup>

TOWARDS A RESOLUTION OF THE FARMER–MINER  
CONTROVERSY

A conference held in 1914 between the visiting directors of the BSAC and various representatives of the mining and agricultural sectors ended in some

concessions to demands made by farmers. These minor concessions did not dent large mining companies profoundly as they did small workers, who became the most vocal against the concessions as they threatened to knock their narrow profit margins.<sup>69</sup> In the Legislative Council Mr Begbie, a representative of the small workers, charged that farmers were ‘asking for everything’ and advised against impediments being instituted in the way of prospectors on whom the colony relied for new mineral discoveries.<sup>70</sup> Small workers persistently defended their rights against farmers. In 1924 Gold Belt titles, as well as related rights to wood and water, fell under the government’s spotlight. The Rhodesian Small Workers’ and Tributors Association vehemently protested to the Legislative Assembly against any amendment affecting Gold Belt Titles. In this protest small workers and tributors could depend on the support of large mining capital. Thus, an alliance of ‘mine owners, small workers, miners and persons directly interested in the mining industry’, collectively petitioned Sir Charles Coghlan, the Premier of Southern Rhodesia, against loss of protection accorded to them under the old Gold Belt title:

We cannot do otherwise than enter a strong protest against the elimination or weakening of the clauses in Gold Belt title reserving wood and water for mining purposes and reserving trading rights, and we do this solely because we feel that this change has been made without sufficient consideration of the welfare and security for the mining industry, without that legislative sanction which we think such a complete change of old-established policy calls for and without giving to our representatives the opportunity of discussing the change before it had been finally decided upon.<sup>71</sup>

Even though the Chamber of Mines’ vested interests were not in any way under threat, it rushed to the aid of the small workers and responded sharply to proposals by the RAU to alter the Gold Belt title, and the RAU’s demand for the ‘deletion of Clause 15 which reserves indigenous timber to the miner’.<sup>72</sup> In support of the small workers’ and tributors’ protests, the Chamber produced a pamphlet emphasising the *Importance of the Mines to Farmers*.<sup>73</sup> In collusion with the Ministry of Mines, the Chamber of Mines also strategically issued the same pamphlet as part of a psychological ambush intended to undermine the increasingly strengthening position of farmers as the date of the proposed main conference (April 1925) to resolve the farmer–miner differences was approaching: ‘In view of the forthcoming miners-farmers conference ... it is felt by the Mining Industry that farmers perhaps do not fully realise to what extent they are dependent upon the premier industry, and how its careful preservation will ensure for many years to come the circulation of large sums of money throughout the country, and maintenance of the internal produce and cattle markets’.<sup>74</sup> But, as Phimister has argued, the colonial state was not ‘neutral in the various conflicts within the mining industry and between it and commercial agriculture’.<sup>75</sup>

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For the period 1890–1922, it was BSAC policy to favour large capital, albeit with certain reservations. However, the most-favoured-status for large capital was to change with the granting of responsible government to settlers in 1923. As Palmer made clear, ‘the new settler government, which took over from the BSA Company in 1923, did all it could to encourage the further development of European agriculture’.<sup>76</sup> Responsible government proactively put agriculture on a firmer footing by providing it with incentives and loans, cutting out African competition by ushering in what has been termed the ‘era of commodity control’,<sup>77</sup> but for most of the time it stayed clear of the farmer–miner controversy. The state went only as far backing the farmer–miner to resolve the friction between them, hence the conference held in April 1925.

## THE FARMER–MINER CONFERENCE OF 1925

The farmer–miner conference was held against the backdrop of a period, which Palmer has called ‘the economic triumph of European agriculture, 1915–1925’.<sup>78</sup> The farmer hitherto regarded as a second-class citizen by the miner, swiftly had so much economic clout that he demanded more recognition and more privileges previously the preserve of the miner alone. Held in Salisbury, the conference was meant to discuss certain amendments to the Mining Law which had been suggested by the RAU.<sup>79</sup> Presided over by Sir Morris Carter, the conference was attended by a motley mix ranging from mining and agricultural ministers; representatives of the Rhodesia and Salisbury Chamber of Mines; small workers; RAU; a government agriculturalist; to the General Manager of the BSAC.

The farmers’ representatives went straight to the crux of the matter that had dogged them for over two decades. They contended that the ‘disabilities’ that affected them were inherited from the past whereby the BSAC regarded Southern Rhodesia as the Second Rand. RAU members insisted that, as a result of this fixation, ‘the value of the land and the possibility of its settlement did not enter into the calculations of the early settlers’.<sup>80</sup> The farmers’ representatives further challenged the BSAC’s preferential treatment of mining by holding land and regarding it as its private property. The farmers challenged the BSAC’s monopolistic hold on land and reminded the Company that it was unjust to maintain such land as its private property while simultaneously using it and its products for the assistance and development of one sector only – the mining industry. Such lop-side assistance, argued RAU, was palpably evident in the passage of the first consolidated Mining Law in 1903 and its protection of prospectors’ rights. This was made possible by a ‘large majority’ of elected members of the Legislative Council representing mining interests, which, in the eyes of the farming sector, gave the BSAC (and mining) an unfair advantage over farmers. In reference to the 1914 amendment of the Mines and Minerals Ordinance, the last time it was revised and secured minor concessions to the farmers, RAU representatives



stressed that not much came their way because the majority of the Legislative Council still favoured mining interests'.<sup>81</sup>

However, with the 'entirely new position' formed by the 1918 Privy Council decision that land ownership was vested in the Crown, the farmers' representatives requested the BSAC to act accordingly by revising the Ordinance so that it could reflect the new status quo. The position obtaining under the Mining Ordinance was, according to Mr. Huntley, a representative of the farming community, 'little short of intolerable. Not only does it seriously affect the position of the settlers already domiciled in the colony, but it tends to make land settlement on any appreciable scale impossible.' Huntley warned further that this Ordinance was having negative effects to the 'very industry it was created to assist', given available evidence demonstrating that 'under the existing Mining Ordinance discoveries of gold by owners of farms are sometimes concealed for fear of the damage which their development under existing conditions would entail'. Stung by such criticism, miners' representatives, especially small workers, hit back at the farmers reminding them that 'for many years the country was carried on entirely through the efforts and the results of the mining industry, and ...but for the mining industry the farmers would be paying a good deal more than 75% of the income tax today'.<sup>82</sup> Thus, small workers steadfastly defended their rights at this conference for they had a lot to lose should farmers' agitations result in some concessions.

Four principal issues dominated the debates between farmers and miners at the conference, namely wood, water, grazing rights, and the destruction of the land surface left in the wake of open mine workings. The destructive effects of base metal mining operations on land belonging to farmers were one of the prickly issues between farmers and miners. Farmers specifically singled out the problem of dyke chrome. The mining of chrome ore, unlike gold for example, resulted in splitting the surface of the land. Although representing the small workers in Gwelo (Gweru), L.I. Davies concurred that this method undoubtedly caused destruction of the surface 'to such an extent that you lose whole farms'.<sup>83</sup> To demonstrate how the operations of base metal mining despoiled the landscape privately owned by farmers, G.A. Dobbin (RAU) gave the following vivid description of a transport rider with 30 wagons and 90 oxen spans who had been transporting chrome to Banket from the western side of Umvukwes 'riding all through the wet season ... and they have destroyed terrific tracts of country. They have two tons on a wagon and a double span and they have been pulling through the mud, and they have practically destroyed farms with it.' According to Dobbin, much of the destruction of the surface was due to the failure by transport riders to stick to a single track: 'When they have made one track, they make another the next day, when it could easily have been got over by timbering the road, and they would have been able to carry double the amount of chrome, and it would have been cheaper'.<sup>84</sup> Thus, for the farmer, as J.A. Edmonds (RAU) explained, 'the source of irritation over this matter is caused

by making a new road every time you shift your chrome'. So damaging and widespread was chrome mining that a government official was later to report that 'on some farms surface workings have been opened out many miles in length, and the damage done to the land has indeed been serious, Camp fences have been undermined, and many areas ruined for pastoral purposes'.<sup>85</sup>

The question over who had prior right of grazing between the prospector and the farmer on his own land was a huge source of dispute between the two industries. This question was intertwined with the question of mining base metal claims and the hauling of the ore to the railhead over occupied land. The later activity entailed the grazing of large numbers of cattle, and in some instances entire farms were reportedly cleared of grazing as a result. Thus farmers argued against the deprivation of grazing land by the miner under the existing law: 'At the present time, the only thing the farmer appears to own is the air; he does not own the grass because the miner can come onto his farm and if there is not sufficient food for the miner's cattle, the farmer has to sell his cattle or buy food for them. That is an impossibility! That case has actually occurred within 20 miles of Salisbury'.<sup>86</sup> The ownership of grass or lack thereof cut to the core of the very economic survival of the farmer. In this regard, the RAU representatives rejected the idea of giving the farmer open access as that would also undermine their very existence as miners. Some farmers dismissed the oft-repeated benefits that would supposedly accrue to them should they have mines on farms. For example, farmer Huntley deprecatingly stated that owing to the fact that prospectors are 'so hard up', farmers end up having to 'give away what we should be bleeding them for as a matter of fact, if you were unjust, but in trying to be just and encouraging them to go ahead, you lose'.<sup>87</sup> Thus, farmers viewed grass as a critical resource and grazing as an activity indispensable to the farming enterprise. Hence, their pursuit of legal protection against the miner, and demand for unfettered control over the resources.

Apart from grass, farmers considered wood or timber as equally important to the farming enterprise. Under the mining law, the miner was obliged to cut and transport timber from all land under the Gold Belt title for *bona fide* mining purposes without payment. The miner could also cut and take away timber from land which fell under non-Gold Belt title, but he had to pay to the farmer a fixed amount, varying from 5 shillings to 15 shillings per cord depending on the state of the land.<sup>88</sup> The farmers liked to perceive and define themselves in relation to their environment as people who were inextricably linked to their land in a state of permanence and communed with the landscape better than miners. Huntley, once again, strikingly expressed this view at the 1925 conference, albeit in terms somewhat disparaging to the miner:

We go to a farm and live there. My farm is my home; I know every tree and valley on it. It is my home, but I might get up one morning and find roads cut across it and a man desecrating my trees and valleys, and when you think that

these things are done on a man's home, it is that which makes me so sensitive and serious on the point.<sup>89</sup>

What this declaration demonstrates is that environmental sensitivity during the period under study was largely but not exclusively the preserve of the more highly capitalised sections of settler agriculture. There were a few farmers of independent means who were also at the forefront of 'progressive', agriculture, as Phimister has shown.<sup>90</sup> However, these paled into insignificance when one considers the extent to which farmers like Charles Southey, a founder member of the Mazoe Farmers' Co-operative Society, cultivated their land for years on end without even a semblance of conservation practices, resulting in most lands being wrecked in the process.<sup>91</sup>

Concrete evidence on the extent to which farmers were affected by the actual cutting of timber by miners is not readily available. However, the Assistant Director of Lands' observations indicate that some of this loss was probably only measurable in terms of being deprived of the opportunity of 'selling wood on more advantageous terms to others'.<sup>92</sup> He doubted the existence of several cases in which farmers may have been dispossessed of any timber which they required for their own agricultural ventures. He, however, conceded that the cutting and hauling of timber by miners or their contractors damaged farm roads and caused 'general annoyance to the farmer' as well as creating conditions that encouraged erosion and desiccation of the countryside. He further confirmed the existence of farms on Crown land which had been completely stripped of timber to the extent that they could hardly be set aside for settlement purposes. Large landowners who possessed about 3000 acres of land and above were not likely to have been acutely affected by the felling of timber by miners, although this position was thought to change as the holdings became smaller, and became even more serious with a corresponding increase in the production of flue-cured tobacco.<sup>93</sup>

Demands by farmers that prospectors and miners should compensate the former for the damage done to land surfaces, for failure to close up open shafts in disused mines, for wood cut on their farms and grass fed to their draught animals were flatly rejected by the miners. In one of the instances where the Rhodesia Chamber of Mines spoke in support of the small worker, D.V. Burnett referred to the paradox inherent in the minimisation of hardships for farmers, for this meant automatically creating difficulties for the small worker. Regarding the question of wood, Burnett argued that asking the small worker to pay for the wood cut from farms would squeeze them out of mining operations: 'The small worker requires about 200 or 300 cords of wood for his mine, for his two or five stamp battery, and this would amount to approximately £50 or £70 per month. I should like to ask how many of those small workers are making that amount?'<sup>94</sup> Burnett further warned that farmers were expecting too much from small workers as the majority of them failed to even break even. Burnett was strongly supported by J.G. McDonald, also a representative of large mining

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capital. McDonald reminded farmers that they knew from the beginning that there were restrictions when they took up the titles on the Gold Belt. He argued that it was only after the farmers had pressurised the Government to give them the title that it gave in but made it clear, through mining legislation, that timber was to be reserved to miners. He therefore urged farmers not to insist on their request for compensation for 'the small worker is in a precarious position indeed, while the farming industry today is going on in leaps and bounds. Let it be generous to the small worker of whom 75 per cent are on the verge of ruin.'<sup>95</sup>

Like the mini-conferences that came before it, the April 1925 conference was equally abortive. Despite a thorough discussion of the diverse differences between the two industries as well as 'several concessions to the farmers' being 'acceded to' by the mining industry, the farmers were not satisfied with the result of the deliberations at the conference.<sup>96</sup> In fact, no sooner was the conference poised to begin than a government official expressed doubt as to whether 'any satisfactory understanding will ever be reached', as 'each party tends to magnify the needs and importance of its own position and neither will recede there-from'.<sup>97</sup>

Another conference in 1926 held at the Legislative Assembly Chamber on water, grazing, wood, protection of shafts and trenches, and fencing failed to yield any positive results for the farmers.<sup>98</sup> Farmers resolved to approach the Government with a proposal to appoint a royal commission of inquiry to 'settle the outstanding differences between the mining and farming industries' and address the 'great disabilities landowners are suffering under owing to the incidence of the mining laws of Southern Rhodesia'.<sup>99</sup> But, as always, miners remained tenaciously stuck to their positions and refused to accede to any further demands made by farmers. What irked the Rhodesia Chamber of Mines most was that these demands were being made at a critical time when an economic recession was setting in and 'when gold mining in this Colony, is showing somewhat disquieting signs of decline'.<sup>100</sup> The Chamber of Mines declared that what miners needed at this point was not hurdles in the path of mining operations but assistance in the form of withdrawing the demands. Miners also blamed the farmers for being less than candid:

The mining industry has always been willing to meet the farmers and discuss differences with them, and to make reasonable concessions to them where possible, but it can hardly be expected to give up rights which it has possessed for so long and which are necessary to enable it to carry on its operations in opening up and developing the mineral resources of the country.<sup>101</sup>

To the extent that farmers and miners held different assumptions about development and/or improvement, these rarely entered public debate in the period under study, beyond the point that both sides were competing for resources (water and timber). Indeed, the methods of some tobacco farmers were almost indistinguishable from miners in the 1920s and '30s, as indicated at the begin-

ning. Nevertheless, efforts to resolve the farmer–miner antagonism culminated in a Government-sponsored conference in October 1933.

#### THE MINERS–FARMERS CONFERENCE, 1933

Representatives from across the agricultural and mining spectrum, and the Government, attended the conference. Unlike at the 1925 conference, the question of timber rights mostly dominated the 1933 conference. Presenting arguments reminiscent of those advanced at the 1925 conference, miners' representatives unanimously agreed that the wood rights, which included free wood rights on crown lands, free rights on land held under Gold Belt title and compensation to farm owners, were indispensable to their businesses, and argued for the retention of the timber rights in the existing law. Sir Ernest Montagu, representative of the Salisbury Chamber of Mines, argued that of all issues they had discussed in the past with farmers, wood rights were perhaps the most essential especially to the small worker. The small worker 'could not get on without wood' and if 'the small men were stopped from getting wood it would bring their industry to a close'.<sup>102</sup> Sir Montagu raised the vexed question of compensation for wood cut by the small worker and contended that most of these miners lacked the financial wherewithal to pay for the wood as they 'worked on a small margin [of profit – *sic*]'.<sup>103</sup>

Obviously, miners' perceptions about the significance of wood rights were entirely different from those of the farmers. As far as farmers were concerned, the root of the dispute over timber rights was not the question of payment. What gnawed their minds was the question about who was benefiting from the very process of cutting wood, and the damage done to land surfaces. H.M. Hutchinson, a RAU representative, raised two issues related to wood-cutting that irked the farmer. First was the discriminatory practice whereupon some farmers were 'absolutely cut out of wood on their farms, while others were not cut out at all'. Second, Hutchinson raised the point about the denudation of farms surrounded by mines where these had 'cut out all the wood' and in the process those contracted to cut wood had created roads 'all over the farms'. He opined: 'They did not work so much in the dry weather when there was less food for their oxen but in wet weather when they did great damage and caused soil erosion'.<sup>104</sup> In demanding that the whole concept of Gold Belt titles be terminated as they hardly benefited from the resources, RAU farmers also sought to have included in the amended Mines and Minerals Act, a clause that would permit the landowner to 'cut, sell, or use for any purpose he desired such wood as was reserved for his own use'. However much the farmers denied the imputation that they were more interested in monetary compensation from the small worker than anything else, it is inconceivable that their demands for payment were not driven by their entrepreneurial instincts. After all, as we saw at the beginning, early

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settlers-turned-farmers had survived off the earnings wrung from wood-cutting and selling. Another concession farmers wanted to be added to the amended Act, was a clause which invested powers in the landowner or his agent to 'divide all standing timber equally' on farms where timber was needed for mining purposes. Farmers wanted 50 per cent of the timber reserved for their exclusive use as they deemed it necessary, and the remaining half 'cut by the miner on payment'.<sup>105</sup> As with previous conferences, nothing was resolved. The state, which was better positioned to be the ultimate arbiter, prevaricated for most of the time and left the miners and farmers to sort out their differences. In all the conferences held, the government was content to have an observer status (and accordingly represented by no lesser officials than the mining and agricultural ministers) and did not make arguments for or against the farmer or the miner.

A year after the 1933 farmer–miner conference, the *Report of the Committee of Enquiry into the Economic Position of the Agricultural Industry* (chaired by Mr Max Danziger) was released.<sup>106</sup> The Danziger Report noted that 'the farming community is facing a crisis'. Surprisingly, it steered clear of the farmer–miner dispute and thus did not ascribe part of this 'farming crisis' to the issues at the centre of the controversy. However, it gave the agricultural industry a new lease on life by arguing that while the mining industry was still of 'very great importance', a 'white agricultural population must be the basis on which to build a white Colony', rather than 'establishing a white Colony on mining and on secondary industries'.<sup>107</sup> Throughout the farmer–miner dispute, the farmer repeatedly faulted the miner for cutting and hauling wood and causing soil erosion. While the report did not spare African peasants from liability regarding soil erosion, the Report, somewhat refreshingly, blamed white farmers for similarly causing soil erosion and for carrying on their 'obligations in an extravagant manner'.<sup>108</sup> It brusquely stated: 'In practically all cases farmers have endeavoured to develop their farms too quickly and tried to do in a few years what it has taken generations to do in other countries'.<sup>109</sup>

The impulsion to formally institute a conservation regime came about only when colonial authorities became startled at the rapidity of environmental degradation. Moves towards conservation began in earnest with the appointment, in 1939, of the *Commission to Enquire into the Deterioration and Preservation of the Natural Resources of Southern Rhodesia* (chaired by Mr. Justice McIlwaine).<sup>110</sup> The McIlwaine Commission, just as the Danziger Committee before it, was equally scathing in its accusation of the white farmer's role in causing soil erosion. In its report, the Commission noted that in spite of the steady expansion of the mining industry, and increasing access to export markets, particularly for maize, tobacco and cattle, all of which enhanced agriculture, in general 'for a considerable time questions of erosion and other abuse of the land do not seem to have received much attention'. The Commission also singled out farmers' increasing use of the plough, egged on by a lucrative market for maize, for precipitating soil erosion, as 'ever-increasing areas of rich, virgin

land' were subjected to this new technology, with deleterious environmental consequences: 'In an effort to maintain or increase their output, some farmers ploughed up natural hollows, hillsides and narrow valleys between hills and, in a very short time, many acres of valuable pasture and woodland were converted into a donga-scarred waste'.<sup>111</sup>

The white tobacco farmer was as ruinous to the soil as his maize growing counterpart. The commission rapped tobacco farmers' lethargic stance on anti-erosion measures, ascribed by witnesses to the growers' practice of rotation after two successive crops. Moreover, the tobacco growers' 'ridge and furrow system' was singled out as one that increased the collection of water in depressions, whereupon a downhill gradient had to be made in order to promote drainage. The Commission concluded with a loaded commentary on how Southern Rhodesian settler farmers in general had actively caused 'much destruction and dissipation of the Colony's most important asset – the soil' all in the 'comparatively short period of European occupation and owing to the conditions created thereby'.<sup>112</sup>

Concerning the respective rights of farmers and miners the Commission argued, if hypothetically, that the farmer – even presuming that he enjoyed 'absolute' rights to wood and timber – had much the same potential to damage the environment as the miner, for 'he might sell it to the miner or exploit it in other ways with the same results as exist at present'.<sup>113</sup> Attempting to strike a balanced view in its observations, the Commission also focused on the destructive effects of mining activities on the colony's forests as they had done with farmers. Non-partisan to the end, and maintaining a discreet approach so as not to be seen to be judgemental on the merits of the farmer–miner case, the Commission noted that notwithstanding the importance of the mining industry to the colony, the time had arrived when the rights enjoyed by miners had to be changed in ways that did not just favour them but had to be consonant with 'the interests of the whole community'.<sup>114</sup> But the Commission was keen on demonstrating how much wood and timber the mining industry was consuming. Based on figures from the Conservator of Forests, the Commission estimated the quantity of wood consumed by the mining industry to be about 200,000 cords a year for generating power.<sup>115</sup> This figure was estimated to represent the destruction of trees on land corresponding to 40,000 acres per annum. Pointing to the difficult regenerative capacity of indigenous forests, the Conservator estimated that the trees cut would take approximately 50 to 60 years to return to their former grandeur. Furthermore, the absence of a substitute for wood for roasting plants at some mines caused increased cutting of trees. To this end, the Commission expressed its misgivings when it noted that 'in one locality on the railway line, farm after farm is being stripped of trees for lime burning'.<sup>116</sup>

The Commission also censured the practice where miners resorted to the 'wasteful method' of chopping down large trees with the objective of making use of only the branches and abandoning the trunks, thus rendering them useless.

Further to this, in arranging contracts for wood and timber supplies miners were also in the habit of specifying the 'sizes, shapes, hardness, etc.', resulting in so much wastage after the stipulated standard portions had been extracted.<sup>117</sup>

The impact and magnitude of both farmers' and miners' activities on the colony's resources saw the Commission passing a decisive recommendation which resulted in the passage of the Natural Resources Act in 1941. This was followed by the appointment of a Natural Resources Board which had powers to ensure the conservation and 'wise utilisation' of the colony's natural resources such as soil, water, minerals, trees, grasses, vegetation, etc.<sup>118</sup> Thus, unlike in other settler societies, it took the colonial state in Southern Rhodesia almost forty years to respond seriously to demands for formal conservation of natural resources, despite ample evidence, in the first decade of the twentieth century, of an ongoing unsustainable environmental despoliation at the hands of both farmers and miners. As Anderson has shown in Kenya,<sup>119</sup> settler worries about conservation in colonial Zimbabwe were not entirely driven by a profound environmental consciousness, at least during the period under discussion. The majority were goaded into taking up conservation measures because of their apprehension about the economic crisis that would ensue as a result of environmental degradation.

## CONCLUSION

This paper has demonstrated that at the heart of the miner-farmer dispute was a struggle by each class to define its relationship to the environment by ensuring unfettered access to natural resources as well as the space that was the Gold Belt. It has demonstrated that both farmers' and miners' concerns about the distribution of the resources within the Gold Belt were not motivated by a benign regard for the protection of the environment. The concerns were largely about satisfying their production and consumption needs, hence the repertoire of claims, counterclaims and contestation, all waged to fortify their conflicting positions. This study provides an alternative way of understanding the making of white settler identities and represents an ecological narrative of settler colonisation and entrenchment in colonial Zimbabwe. Above all, the controversy and the actual degradation of forests and the land at the hands of both miners and farmers ultimately laid the basis for a state-sanctioned conservation regime in colonial Zimbabwe. This historical case does indeed support the idea that farmers and miners had conflicting logics of appropriation. But what this article has demonstrated is that such incompatibility, while it was never resolved, was contained through fluctuating political struggles and balance shifts in Southern Rhodesia, from miners to farmers in the 1920s, but back in the 1930s, as a result of the Great Depression, to miners.



## NOTES

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<sup>1</sup> For historical writings on ‘disputed territories’, see, for example, Jane Carruthers, ‘Contesting Cultural Landscapes in South Africa and Australia: Comparing the Significance of the Kalahari Gemsbok and Uluru – Kata Tjuta National Parks’, in *Disputed Territories: Land, Culture and Identity in Settler Societies*, ed. David S. Trigger and Gareth Griffiths (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2003), 233–268; Terence Ranger, *Voices from the Rocks: Nature, Culture and History in the Matopos Hills of Zimbabwe* (Harare: Baobab Books, 1999); Norman Etherington, ‘Genocide by Cartography: Secrets and Lies in Maps of the South-eastern African Interior’, 1830–1850’, in *Disputed Territories*, 207–232; See also chapters on the theme: ‘Settlers and Africans: Culture and Nature’ in the collection *Social History and African Environments*, ed. William Beinart and JoAnn. McGregor (Oxford, James Currey, 2003), 197–266.

<sup>2</sup> Carruthers, ‘Contesting Cultural Landscapes’; Ranger, *Voices from the Rocks*.

<sup>3</sup> Katherine G. Aiken, “‘Not Long Ago a Smoking Chimney was a Sign of Prosperity’”: Corporate and Community Response to Pollution at the Bunker Hill Smelter in Kellogg, Idaho’, *Environmental History Review* 18 (Summer 1994): 67–86; Robert Kelley, ‘Mining on Trial’, in *Green Versus Gold: Sources in California’s Environmental History*, ed. C. Merchant (Washington D.C., Island Press, 1998), 120–125; John Wirth, *Smelter Smoke in North America: The Politics of Transborder Pollution* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2000).

<sup>4</sup> David Lowenthal, ‘Empires and Ecologies: Reflections on Environmental History’, in *Ecology and Empire: Environmental History of Settler Societies*, ed. Tom Griffiths and Libby Robin (Pietermaritzburg: University of Natal Press, 1997), 232.

<sup>5</sup> Lewis. H. Gann, *A History of Southern Rhodesia: Early Days to 1934* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1965), 162.

<sup>6</sup> Richard Hodder-Williams, *White Farmers in Rhodesia, 1890–1965* (London: The MacMillan Press, Ltd, 1983), 56.

<sup>7</sup> Frank Clements and Edward Harben, *Leaf of Gold: The Story of Rhodesian Tobacco* (London: Methuen & Co. Ltd, 1962), 68. Also cited in Hodder-Williams, *White Farmers in Rhodesia*, 56.

<sup>8</sup> Ian Phimister, *An Economic and Social History of Zimbabwe, 1890–1948: Capital Accumulation and Class Struggle* (London: Longman, 1988), 130. See also, JoAnn McGregor, ‘Conservation, Control and Ecological Change: The Politics and Ecology of Colonial Conservation in Shurugwi, Zimbabwe’, *Environment and History* 1 (1995): 257–260.

<sup>9</sup> Percy. F. Hone, *Southern Rhodesia* (New York: Negro Universities Press, 1969), 293–297; Murray, *The Governmental System in Southern Rhodesia*, 126; Ian. R. Phimister, ‘History of Mining in Southern Rhodesia to 1953’ (Ph.D. diss., University of Rhodesia, 1975), 199–202, and Phimister, *An Economic and Social History of Zimbabwe*, 61–62 and 96; M.E. Lee, ‘Politics and Pressure Groups in Southern Rhodesia, 1898–1923’ (Ph.D. diss, University of London, 1974), see particularly Chapter 4, ‘Changing Conflict: The Growth of Agriculture’, 79–102.

<sup>10</sup> Lee’s thesis discusses ‘the political development of the settler population in Southern Rhodesia from 1898 to 1923, and demonstrates the influence of local interest groups on that development’, 2.

<sup>11</sup> Vimbai C. Kwashirai, ‘Dilemmas in Conservationism in Colonial Zimbabwe, 1890–1930’, *Conservation and Society* 4 (2006): 541–561.

<sup>12</sup> Kelley, ‘Mining on Trial’.

<sup>13</sup> J. Wirth, *Smelter Smoke in North America*. On the same subject see also, J. E. Read, ‘The Trail Smelter Dispute’, *The Canadian Yearbook of International Law* 1 (1963): 213–229; and D. H. Dinwoodie, ‘The Politics of International Pollution Control: The Trail Smelter Case’, *International Journal* 27, 2 (Spring 1972): 219–235.

<sup>14</sup> Aiken, “‘Not Long Ago a Smoking Chimney was a Sign of Prosperity’”; See also, Randall Rohe, ‘Mining’s Impact on the Land’, in *Green Versus Gold*, 125–135.

<sup>15</sup> K. Morse, *The Nature of Gold: An Environmental History of the Klondike Gold Rush* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2003).

<sup>16</sup> Chad Montrie, *To Save the Land and People: A History of Opposition to Surface Coal Mining in Appalachia* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003).

<sup>17</sup> *Report of the Commission to Enquire into the Preservation of Natural Resources of the Colony, 1939* [chaired by Sir Robert McIlwaine] (CSR – 40 – 1939), Hereafter referred to as the McIlwaine Report).

<sup>18</sup> Murray, *The Governmental System in Southern Rhodesia*, 121.

<sup>19</sup> S.J. Du Toit, *Rhodesia: Past and Present* (London: William Heinemann, 1897), 123–124.

<sup>20</sup> NAZ: S1215/1081/4: Notes of Conference between Miners and Farmers, 18 Oct. 1933; and the *Bulawayo Chronicle*, 30 Mar. 1935.

<sup>21</sup> Arthur. Keppel-Jones, *Rhodes and Rhodesia: The White Conquest of Zimbabwe, 1884–1902* (Pietermaritzburg: University of Natal Press, 1983), 363.

<sup>22</sup> Henri Rolin, *Les Lois et l’Administration de la Rhodésie* cited in Philip. Mason, *The Birth of a Dilemma: The Conquest and Settlement of Rhodesia* (London: Oxford University Press, 1958), 270.

<sup>23</sup> NAZ: S480/59C: Conference of Miners and Farmers, 1925, 7

<sup>24</sup> [National Archives, UK] DO 35/841/95/3: Mining, House of Commons, 8 Jun. 1939.

<sup>25</sup> Mason, *The Birth of a Dilemma*, 253.

<sup>26</sup> *Chimurenga/Umvukela* are respectively Shona/Ndebele terms meaning ‘uprising’.

<sup>27</sup> Robin Palmer, *Land and Racial Domination in Rhodesia* (London: Heinemann, 1977).

- <sup>28</sup> Henry. V. Moyana, *The Political Economy of Land in Zimbabwe* (Gweru: Mambo Press, 1984), 70.
- <sup>29</sup> For a detailed outline of the administrative and political structures of the mining industry, see Murray, *The Governmental System in Southern Rhodesia*, Chapter 5, 'The Mining Sector', 118–161.
- <sup>30</sup> Keppel-Jones, *Rhodes and Rhodesia*, 581.
- <sup>31</sup> Gann, *A History of Southern Rhodesia*, 161.
- <sup>32</sup> Keppel-Jones, *Rhodes and Rhodesia*, 370.
- <sup>33</sup> Gann, *A History of Southern Rhodesia*, 162; Phimister, 'History of Mining in Southern Rhodesia to 1953', 58.
- <sup>34</sup> Gann, *A History of Southern Rhodesia*, 162.
- <sup>35</sup> Phimister, *An Economic and Social History of Zimbabwe*, 58.
- <sup>36</sup> Phimister, 'History of Mining in Southern Rhodesia to 1953', 99.
- <sup>37</sup> Henri Rolin, *Rolin's Rhodesia*, (First published in Brussels, 1913), Reprinted, Volume 21 (Bulawayo: Books of Rhodesia, 1978), 244.
- <sup>38</sup> Phimister, 'History of Mining in Southern Rhodesia to 1953', 200.
- <sup>39</sup> Murray, *The Governmental System in Southern Rhodesia*, 120.
- <sup>40</sup> Phimister, *An Economic and Social History of Zimbabwe*, 61–62.
- <sup>41</sup> National Archives of Zimbabwe [hereafter NAZ] S.1246, General, 1917–45: Memorandum on Titles to Land on the 'Gold Belt' of Southern Rhodesia: The Rights of Miner and Farmer. Issued by the Department of Lands, 1928?.
- <sup>42</sup> *Southern Rhodesia: Handbook for the use of Prospective Settlers on the Land*, (Issued by Direction of the Hon. Minister for Agriculture and Lands), Sixth Edition (No Date), 27.
- <sup>43</sup> Phimister, 'History of Mining in Southern Rhodesia to 1953', 62.
- <sup>44</sup> Phimister, *An Economic and Social History of Zimbabwe*, 58.
- <sup>45</sup> *The Matabele Times and Mining Journal*, 25 Feb. 1899.
- <sup>46</sup> *The Matabele Times and Mining Journal*, 4 Mar. 1899.
- <sup>47</sup> *The Matabele Times and Mining Journal*, 18 Feb. 1899.
- <sup>48</sup> *The Matabele Times and Mining Journal*, 18 Feb. 1899.
- <sup>49</sup> Hodder-Williams, *White Farmers in Rhodesia*, 53.
- <sup>50</sup> *Southern Rhodesia: Report of the Department of Agriculture for the Year ended 31 Mar. 1905*, presented to the Legislative Council, 13.
- <sup>51</sup> *Report of the Department of Agriculture for the Year ended 31 Mar. 1905*, 13.
- <sup>52</sup> Gann, *A History of Southern Rhodesia*, 171.
- <sup>53</sup> Gann, *A History of Southern Rhodesia*, 171.
- <sup>54</sup> Gann, *A History of Southern Rhodesia*, 167.
- <sup>55</sup> Phimister, *An Economic and Social History of Zimbabwe*, 62.
- <sup>56</sup> Phimister, *An Economic and Social History of Zimbabwe*, 62; also cited in Lee, 'Politics and Pressure Groups', 84. The direct quotation derived from the *Proceedings of the Rhodesia Agricultural Union Congress, 1906*, 102.
- <sup>57</sup> The Gold Belt title was applicable to Mashonaland only because most of Matabeleland was alienated under the Victoria Agreement Title. Here miners did not enjoy any special

privileges in the form of reservations. See NAZ S.1246: Memorandum on Titles to Land on the 'Gold Belt' of Southern Rhodesia.

<sup>58</sup> Phimister, *An Economic and Social History of Zimbabwe*, 96.

<sup>59</sup> NAZ S.1246: Memorandum on Titles to Land on the 'Gold Belt' of Southern Rhodesia.

<sup>60</sup> *An Agricultural Survey of Southern Rhodesia: The Agro-Economic Survey*, Part 11 (Salisbury: The Government Printer), 15–16.

<sup>61</sup> *Rhodesia Herald*, 19 Aug. 1910.

<sup>62</sup> *Rhodesia Herald*, 9 Sept. 1910.

<sup>63</sup> *Rhodesia Herald*, 14 Oct. 1910.

<sup>64</sup> *Rhodesia Herald*, 14 Oct. 1910.

<sup>65</sup> Cross's lengthy observations were reproduced verbatim in the *Bulawayo Chronicle*, 10 Aug. 1907.

<sup>66</sup> *Bulawayo Chronicle*, 10 Aug. 1907.

<sup>67</sup> *Bulawayo Chronicle*, 10 Aug. 1907.

<sup>68</sup> *Southern Rhodesia: Handbook for the use of Prospective Settlers on the Land*, (Issued by Direction of the Hon. Minister for Agriculture and Lands), Sixth Edition (No Date), 25–26.

<sup>69</sup> Lee, 'Politics and Pressure Groups in Southern Rhodesia', 141.

<sup>70</sup> *Southern Rhodesia Legislative Council Debates*, First Session, Sixth Council, Volume 4, Number 1, 1914, columns, 86 and 84. Also cited in Phimister, 'History of Mining in Southern Rhodesia', 201.

<sup>71</sup> NAZ S480/92: Petitions and Protests to Legislative Assembly against Amendment affecting Gold Belt Titles 1924: Petition from the Rhodesian Small Workers' and Tributor's Association to Sir Charles Coghlan, Premier of the Colony of Southern Rhodesia, 1924.

<sup>72</sup> NAZ S480/92: Petitions and Protests to Legislative Assembly against Amendment affecting Gold Belt Titles 1924: Minutes of the Rhodesia Chamber of Mines.

<sup>73</sup> *The Importance of the Mines to the Farmers*, issued by the Chamber of Mines, the Chamber of Mines, Salisbury, (Bulawayo, May 1924).

<sup>74</sup> *The Importance of the Mines to the Farmers*.

<sup>75</sup> Phimister, 'History of Mining in Southern Rhodesia', 202.

<sup>76</sup> Palmer, 'Agricultural History of Rhodesia', 236.

<sup>77</sup> *An Agricultural Survey of Southern Rhodesia: The Agro-Economic Survey* (Salisbury, Government Printer, Part II, no year of publication), p. 17. See also Palmer, 'The Agricultural History of Rhodesia'. Between the 1930s and 1950s the state introduced statutory Marketing Boards to oversee the marketing of the main agricultural products such as maize, cotton, tobacco, beef and dairy products, either solely by those boards or in conjunction with a European co-operative movement. This was done to undercut competition from African farmers, among other things.

<sup>78</sup> Palmer, 'Agricultural History of Rhodesia', 235.

<sup>79</sup> *Rhodesian Manual: African Manual on Mining, Industry, and Agriculture* (Incorporating Rhodesia and Portuguese East Africa (Johannesburg: Mining and Industrial Publications of Africa, Ltd., 1927), 93).

- <sup>80</sup> NAZ: S480/59C: Miner versus Farmer: Conference between representatives of the Mining and Farming industries held at Salisbury, Southern Rhodesia, 24 and 25 April 1925.
- <sup>81</sup> NAZ: S480/59C: Miner versus Farmer: Conference.
- <sup>82</sup> NAZ: S480/59C: Miner versus Farmer: Conference.
- <sup>83</sup> NAZ: S480/59C: Miner versus Farmer: Conference, 8
- <sup>84</sup> NAZ: S480/59C: Miner versus Farmer: Conference, 61.
- <sup>85</sup> NAZ: S480/59C, Miner versus Farmer: Memorandum prepared by Acting Assistant Director of Lands, Department of Lands, 23 Feb. 1927.
- <sup>86</sup> NAZ: S480/59C, Miner versus Farmer: Memorandum prepared by Acting Assistant Director of Lands.
- <sup>87</sup> NAZ: S480/59C: Miner versus Farmer: Conference, 127.
- <sup>88</sup> NAZ: S480/59C, Miner versus Farmer: Memorandum prepared by Acting Assistant Director of Lands.
- <sup>89</sup> NAZ: S480/59C: Miner versus Farmer: Conference, 6.
- <sup>90</sup> For more on this see Phimister, *An Economic and Social History of Zimbabwe*, 227–229.
- <sup>91</sup> Phimister, *An Economic and Social History of Zimbabwe*, 228.
- <sup>92</sup> NAZ: S480/59C, Miner versus Farmer: Memorandum prepared by Acting Assistant Director of Lands.
- <sup>93</sup> NAZ: S480/59C, Miner versus Farmer: Memorandum prepared by Acting Assistant Director of Lands.
- <sup>94</sup> NAZ: S480/59C: Miner versus Farmer: Conference, 26.
- <sup>95</sup> NAZ: S480/59C: Miner versus Farmer: Conference, 26.
- <sup>96</sup> *Rhodesian Manual*, 94.
- <sup>97</sup> NAZ: S480/59C, Miner versus Farmer: Memorandum prepared by Acting Assistant Director of Lands.
- <sup>98</sup> NAZ: S480/59C: Miner Versus Farmer: Minutes of a meeting held in the Legislative Assembly Chamber, Salisbury, 12 & 13 Feb. 1926.
- <sup>99</sup> NAZ: S480/59A: Farmers versus Miners: Copy of Letter from the Secretary of the Rhodesian Agricultural Union, Salisbury, to the Secretary for Mines and Works, Salisbury, 23 Aug. 1927.
- <sup>100</sup> *Rhodesia Manual*, 94.
- <sup>101</sup> *Rhodesia Manual*, 94.
- <sup>102</sup> NAZ: S1215/1081/4: Conference between Miners and Farmers, 1933: Notes of Conference between Miners and Farmers held at the Legislative Buildings, Salisbury, 18 Oct. 1933.
- <sup>103</sup> NAZ: S1215/1081/4: Conference between Miners and Farmers, 1933.
- <sup>104</sup> NAZ: S1215/1081/4: Conference between Miners and Farmers, 1933.
- <sup>105</sup> NAZ: S1215/1081/4: Conference between Miners and Farmers, 1933.
- <sup>106</sup> *Report of the Committee of Enquiry into the Economic Position of the Agriculture Industry*, (chaired by Mr. Max Danziger) (CSR –16 – 1934),1. (Hereafter referred to as the Danziger Report). The Committee identified about eighteen causes of the poor

state of the farming industry among which were a heavy slump in the value of farming commodities on export as well as local markets, redundant creameries, unrestricted imports of agricultural commodities, etc. For more details on the causes see pages 2–3 of the Report.

<sup>107</sup> The Danziger Report, 1.

<sup>108</sup> The Danziger Report, 29.

<sup>109</sup> The Danziger Report, 29. Colonial officials had, in the past, a field day blaming African agricultural methods for being unscientific and hence causing wanton environmental degradation while at the same time they paid scant attention to the European farmers' so-called scientific methods which equally caused soil erosion – as the Enquiry into the Economic Position of the Agriculture Industry was to reveal. For further discussion on this see: McGregor, 'Conservation, Control and Ecological Change', 261–266; Terence Ranger, *Peasant Consciousness and Guerrilla War in Zimbabwe* (London: James Currey, 1985), 68–69.

<sup>110</sup> The McIlwaine Report, 15–16.

<sup>111</sup> The McIlwaine Report, 16.

<sup>112</sup> The McIlwaine Report, 19.

<sup>113</sup> The McIlwaine Report, 36.

<sup>114</sup> The McIlwaine Report, 34.

<sup>115</sup> A cord was assumed to represent a 'pile of wood eight feet long, four high and four wide', definition given in McIlwaine Report, 34.

<sup>116</sup> The McIlwaine Report, 36.

<sup>117</sup> The McIlwaine Report, 37.

<sup>118</sup> C.H. Thompson and H.W. Woodruff, *Economic Development in Rhodesia and Nyasaland* (London: Dennis Dobson Limited, 1953), 50.

<sup>119</sup> D. Anderson, 'Depression, Dust Bowl, Demography, and Drought: The Colonial State and Soil Conservation in East Africa During the 1930s,' *African Affairs* 83 (1984): 321–344, p. 324.

