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STATE, CAPITAL AND MIGRANT LABOUR IN ZAMBÉZIA, MOZAMBIQUE: A STUDY OF THE LABOUR FORCE OF SENA SUGAR ESTATES LIMITED

by

Judith Frances Head

Thesis submitted in fulfilment
of the requirements for the
degree of Doctor of Philosophy,
Department of Sociology and
Social Administration,
University of Durham.

1980

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14 MAY 1984

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Judith Frances Head

ABSTRACT

The concern of this thesis is the making of a labour force in the Zambézia Province of colonial Mozambique. This examination focuses on a central question: why migrant labour, which emerged in Zambézia with the growth of plantation production at the end of the nineteenth century, continued as the form of labour use by plantation capital until the 1960s. This problem can only be understood within the context of the historical development of state and capital in Zambézia. The thesis suggests that although the state and capital created a part-proletariat in the initial phases of their penetration of the region, they faced a continuing labour shortage which persisted until the 1930s. This was the result of certain contradictions within state policy. After 1930 the state resolved these contradictions by taking direct control of labour and establishing a labour-selling monopoly. However, from the 1940s onwards a new shortage of labour arose. This resulted from the development of forced peasant production of cotton under a concession system and the growth of new plantations. The state confronted this problem by intensifying the pressure on the peasantry for labour and by redistributing this labour between the competing sections of capital. Yet, despite competition for labour no section of capital called for the ending of the migrant system. The second part of the thesis attempts to explain, therefore, why the migrant labour system persisted. It argues that state control of labour allowed capital to operate a low wages policy and to impose severe limitations on the workers' capacity to struggle for higher wages. Only at the end of the 1950s when the system of labour supply could no longer meet the needs of capital in the region were there signs of a change in state policy towards new forms of labour use.

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A NOTE ON SOURCES, END NOTES AND PRESENTATION

The period spent in Mozambique researching this thesis was divided between archival work in Maputo and field work in Zambézia Province. In all approximately one year was spent in Maputo and one year in the field. Besides researching company records in Luabo and government records in Quelimane the field work also included interviews with managers and workers of Sena Sugar Estates at Luabo and a series of interviews with former workers of Sena Sugar Estates. The latter were held in various districts of the Province and were conducted under the auspices of the 1976 July Activities of the Eduardo Mondlane University.

The dissertation is extensively endnoted. This is because the material has been derived from archives in Mozambique used, in some instances, the first time. These are the records of Sena Sugar Estates Limited at Luabo, the Archive of the Provincial Government of Zambézia in Quelimane, the Archive of the Central Department of Agriculture and Forestry in Maputo and the Historical Archive of Mozambique, also in Maputo. An extensive list of these and other primary as well as secondary sources is included towards the end of the dissertation.

Much of the material incorporated in the dissertation had to be translated into English. I have indicated in the appropriate endnote when a quotation is translated. In some cases, and especially in the correspondence cited, a letter in English includes a Portuguese or African word. Where a direct translation was possible it has been included in the text in brackets beside the appropriate word. Where, however, translation required an explanation which would have interrupted the flow of the exposition the term has been included in the glossary of foreign terms.

As far as possible I have tried, in the endnotes, to follow the form of the original document. Hence, many of the references to letters held in Sena Sugar Estates' Archive include only the initials of the correspondents. This is because many of the letters cited were themselves initialled file copies of the original correspondence. The names to which the initials refer are included in the list of abbreviations used in the thesis.

Provincial, district and locality names and boundaries have changed frequently within Zambézia since the 1890s. Indeed, the Province itself has variously been called the District of Quelimane, District of Zambézia and Province of Zambézia. The names of other Provinces have also changed. To avoid confusion, therefore, the modern usage has been adhered to unless the context clearly indicates otherwise. A map showing the modern administrative division of Zambézia Province is included. From this one can locate the areas from which Sena Sugar Estates' labour was drawn since in general the men were called after the region from which they came. To avoid further confusion the men whom Sena Sugar Estates collectively designated as "Angurus", that is, men from that part of Zambézia Province administered directly by the state, as distinct from the prazos until 1930, are referred to as contract labour from Zambézia. Strictly speaking, men from Mopeia, Chinde and their dependent posts were also from Zambézia. However, since Sena Sugar Estates considered these men as a distinct section of the labour force I have tried to adhere to Sena Sugar Estates' designation: labour from the local prazos.

GLOSSARY OF FOREIGN TERMS

capataz	overseer/supervisor
capitânia-mor	literally principal-captaincy; an administrative term.
capitão	foreman
chefe de posto	administrator of a sub-district
cipães/cipais/sipaios	African policemen attached to the civil administration
colono	settler or peasant farmer, used here to mean the latter
conto	one thousand escudos
curador	curator (of Native Affairs), at local level this was the administrator
effectividade	regular attendance
effectivos	literally permanent employees but here referring to men who worked regularly (as opposed to those who were frequently absent from work).
gerente geral	general manager
grémio	board, syndicate, guild
guia	literally delivery note or authorisation (usually to travel). Groups of contracted workers would travel with a guia from which SSE derived its usage of the word, meaning a batch or contingent of contracted men.
Lomwe	a name used to refer to people from north western Zambézia after the ethnic/linguistic group of the region.
machamba	field, peasant plot.
matabicho	tip, gratuity; also used by SSE to mean bonus.
regedoria	the area under the jurisdiction of a regedor or chief.
réis, (singular réal)	an old Portuguese unit of currency
sangira	the leader of a group of contracted men during the journey to the estates. The sangira was usually given light work such as compound cleaning on arriving at the plantation.

ABBREVIATIONS

ARCHIVES

AHM	Arquivo Histórico de Moçambique (Maputo)
DSAF	Direcção dos Serviços de Agricultura e Florestas (Maputo)
GOV. Q.	Archive of the Provincial Governor of Zambézia (Quelimane)
SSE Ar.,	Private Archive of Sena Sugar Estates Limited (Luabo)

INDIVIDUALS

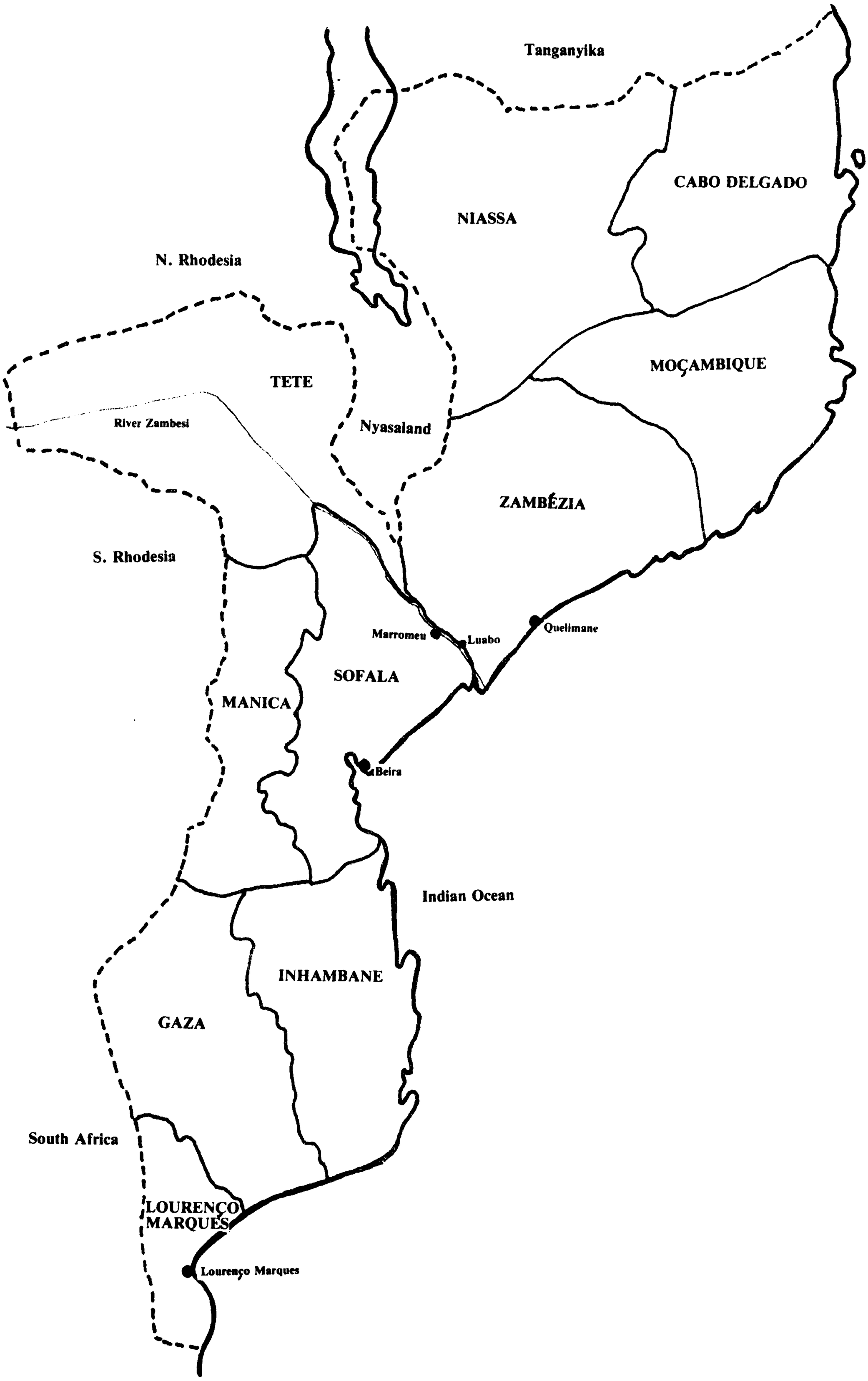
AFS	A.F. Souza
APR	Arthur de Paiva Rapozo
CBRH	Charles Bernard Rafael Hornung
DA	Domingos Arouca
EH/REH	————
HNU	H.N. Usher
JAK	J.A. Knip (?)
JPK	J.P. Kemball
MJG	M.J. Gomes
MT	Max Thurnheer
NHDB/NHDuB	N.H. Du Boulay
SPH	Stephen Hornung

OTHER

Adm.	Administrador
Admin. Civil	Administração Civil
BO	Boletim Oficial
CAM	Companhia do Assúcar de Moçambique

CCM	Companhia do Comércio de Moçambique
Circ.	Circunscrição
Cod.	Códice
CTI	Código do Trabalho dos Indígenas
Exa.	Excelência
FRELIMO	Frente de Libertação de Moçambique
GB	Great Britain
Gov.	Governador/Governo
HMSO	Her Majesty's Stationery Office
IICM	Instituto de Investigação Científica de Moçambique
ILO	International Labour Organisation
LM	Lourenço Marques
Moc.	Moçambique
Ph.D.	Doctor of Philosophy
NI	Negócios Indígenas
Port.	Portuguesa
Prov.	Província
Prov. da Zambézia	Província da Zambézia
RCNI	Repartição Central dos Negócios Indígenas
Rep.	República
Rep. Port.	República Portuguesa
RTI	Regulamento do Trabalho dos Indígenas
SACC	South African Council of Churches
SALDRU	South African Labour and Development Research Institute
SSE	Sena Sugar Estates
SSF	Sena Sugar Factory
UNO	United Nations Organisation
WENELA	Witwatersrand Native Labour Association
$	symbol used to indicate 'escudo'; hence 9 $ 50 means nine escudos fifty centavos

MOZAMBIQUE


Tanganyika
CABO DELGADO
NIASSA
N. Rhodesia
MOÇAMBIQUE
TETE
River Zambesi
Nyasaland
ZAMBÉZIA
S. Rhodesia
Quelimane
Marromeu
Luabo
SOFALA
MANICA
Beira
Indian Ocean
INHAMBANE
GAZA
South Africa
LOURENÇO MARQUES
Lourenço Marques

INTRODUCTION

For over 70 years the accumulation of capital in the enclave of plantation production which developed in Zambézia Province, Mozambique, rested on the exploitation of a partly proletarianised labour force which oscillated between periods of wage labour and periods spent in peasant production. This, then, was migrant labour. Using the example of Sena Sugar Estates (SSE) this study will seek to explain the origins of this form of labour use and the reasons for its persistance. Sena Sugar Estates was chosen as the object of the study for a number of reasons. Firstly, the company's founder first initiated sugar production on the plantations which became SSE in the 1890s. The company's history therefore spans the whole history of colonial capitalism in Mozambique.(1) Secondly, sugar was one of Mozambique's major export crops throughout the colonial capitalist period and SSE was the largest producer of sugar in the colony. Thirdly, SSE was the largest private employer of labour in Mozambique and recruited labour from a wide geographical area around the estates. Fourthly, SSE was only one of a number of plantations within Zambézia, yet their methods of labour recruitment, organisation of labour use and their wage policies were in essential respects the same as those of SSE. Through this history, therefore, it should be possible to reflect changes in the political economy of colonial Mozambique, including the social history of the making and utilisation of a plantation labour force.

Migrant labour has been the dominant form of labour use to emerge in almost the whole of southern Africa. A number of scholars have analysed the phenomenon of migrant labour and have attempted to isolate the distinctive features of this form of labour use.(2) Using categories drawn from Marx's capital this material characterises capitalism as the system of wage labour through which workers, deprived of the means of production and subsistence, are compelled to seek wage work; this is described as the sale of labour-power. The wage the labourer receives for the sale of his labour-power is only a portion of the value created by him during that period, the balance being appropriated as unpaid labour - surplus value - by the owners of the means of production. Labour-power is thus conceptualised as a commodity, and its value is determined in the same way as other commodities - by the amount of socially necessary labour time which has been expended in its production.(3) Migrant labour, according to this literature, allows capital to buy wage-labour below its value. This is because a migrant labour force, working for capital only periodically, though in recurring spells, returns to production outside the capitalist mode where it either retains access to means of domestic production or has a claim on such means. This is the most important condition enabling capital to pay for labour-power below its cost of reproduction:

> When the migrant labourer has access to means of subsistence outside the capitalist sector... then the relationship between wages and the cost of production and reproduction of labour-power is changed. That is to say, capital is able to pay the worker <u>below</u> the cost of his reproduction... Since in determining the level of wages necessary for the subsistence of the migrant worker and his family, account is taken of the fact that the family is supported to some extent, from the product of agricultural production in the Reserves [this material refers to the South

> African case where the Reserves were retained as areas of domestic production_/ it becomes possible to fix wages at the level of subsistence of the individual worker.(4)

The means of subsistence acquired by the worker and his family are thus derived from two sources: the direct wage paid to the worker during employment, and the social support derived from, for example, family agriculture, that is, care of the women and children and the aged, care during sickness and in between spells of employment.(5) In other words, the access of the migrant labourer and his family to domestic production provides part of the means of subsistence from which the capitalist sector benefits. Meillassoux has written:

> The agricultural self-sustaining communities, because of their comprehensiveness and their raison d'etre are able to fulfill functions that capitalism prefers not to assume... the functions of social security.(6)

Capital is thus able to pay the worker below his cost of reproduction and in determining the level of wages necessary for the subsistence of the migrant worker, account is taken of the fact that the family is supported, to some extent, from agricultural production in the area from which the worker is drawn. This has been argued to be the basis of the cheap labour policy pursued not only in South Africa but also in Rhodesia.(7)

Emerging from this material there has been a tendency to treat migrant labour as synonymous with cheap labour, but cheap for whom and under what conditions? This approach excludes other costs associated specifically and uniquely with the employment of migrant labour: the costs of recruiting, transport costs, and the general administrative costs of maintaining a regular and high labour turnover which, when, or if capable of being computed, might not be so readily

offset by savings on the reproduction of labour power. There is furthermore, the related consideration that migrant labour might be 'cheap' in the sense that certain costs of reproduction are avoided, but costly to capital because migrant labour is essentially unstable and untrained and thus correspondingly unproductive.(8) It has been argued for the special conditions under which migrant labour is used in South Africa's goldmining industry that migrant labour has been cheap labour for that mining capital.(9) Firstly, in South Africa, the state assumed the costs of establishing and maintaining the system whereby the costs of supporting individual workers (on the mine compounds) were separated from the costs of renewing the labour force (supported by their families in the reserves).(10) Secondly, technological and cost constraints inhibited the mechanisation of gold mining. Mineowners required large numbers of unskilled workers to mine ore. They could support a high turnover of labour because they did not have to meet the costs of training a skilled labour force, nor support the losses that a high turnover of skilled labour would have presented. In addition, the fixed price of gold made it necessary and the labour reserve system made it possible for mining capital to direct part of the reproduction costs of the work force to the reserves.

There are important parallels to be drawn from the above for the use of migrant labour by plantation capital and state in Zambézia. When the Portuguese colonial state first invited capital to invest in the region in the 1890s it offered investors concessions of land (prazos) and rights over the people resident on that land. The leaseholders of prazos could collect tax and demand an unpaid labour-

service from the peasantry living within their estates. Only after the peasants had fulfilled their labour-service was the leaseholder obliged to pay wages if he required additional work from them.(11) The recruitment costs of labour and the other costs associated with the employment of migrant labour were minimal because men lived in the vicinity of the estate where they worked. However, by the second decade of the 20th century the supply of labour from the prazos was already insufficient for the needs of plantation capital. Increasingly it had to seek labour further afield; labour moreover, which because of the legislation in force, had to receive wages for the whole of the period it was employed. As a result, both the direct and indirect costs of labour were increased. Yet the migrant system not only remained intact but it was actually consolidated. In 1930 the state extended its administration to the whole province, and, through labour legislation and direct intervention, assumed responsibility for guaranteeing a regular supply of labour to capital.

This was a role which plantation capital welcomed. Firstly, state intervention to conscript labour meant that for capital, the costs of employing migrant labour were limited to the fees payable to the state for recruitment licences and the supervision of contracts, the maintenance of recruiters and the transport of labour to and from the estates. The costs of establishing the administrative structure necessary to conscript labour fell mainly on the state. Secondly, state intervention to guarantee the supply of labour allowed plantation capital to rationally organise labour use around the particular needs of the crop. Like gold-mining, sugar production on the Zambesi was based on the use of large numbers of unskilled labourers. Most field tasks were easily and quickly learnt and

contracted men did not need an extensive training period before starting work. Thirdly, and especially in the case of this crop, the demand for labour in sugar production was seasonal. Labour needs were highest during the harvest or 'crop'. In addition, the price of sugar on world markets was highly sensitive to demand and fluctuated widely. Thus, besides a system which allowed sugar producers to adjust labour needs to the season, they also needed a system which allowed labour to be dismissed when production was reduced as a result of low world prices.(12) A migrant system fulfilled both of these needs. Planters could adjust their labour supply in both the short and the long term and were not committed to supporting unproductive labour either during the slack season or during periods of retrenchment. Fourthly, the repressive supervision methods, which were part and parcel of the labour process on plantations, which themselves arose from the migrant system and were sanctioned by the state, meant that productivity could gradually be increased through the use of physical coercion. Capital could 'push' labour to its physical limits in the knowledge that when one man was exhausted another would replace him. Finally, wage levels in the plantation sector were determined by the state. They were not related to any estimated subsistence needs of the worker's family, nor indeed were they calculated on the basis of the subsistence needs of the individual worker.(13) Monthly and daily wage rates were calculated in relation to the 'native' tax in force and had only to cover a proportion of the annual tax. The state, through the migrant system, therefore, invited capital to operate a low wages policy. Yet within this system, capital sought to further reduce the overall cost of labour by driving down that portion of subsistence represented

by the direct wage paid to the worker in and during employment on the estates. This it did by reducing expenditure on food, housing, and health facilities and by manipulating the money wages of its labourers. In Zambézia, then, as in the South African goldmining industry, migrant labour was also cheap labour. And in Zambézia, as in South Africa, the state intervened directly to guarantee the conditions in which capital was provided with cheap labour.

The thesis elaborated by Meillassoux for the general case of migrant labour, and by Wolpe for the South African case, seeks to explain capital's capacity to pay for labour below its value, and thus more cheaply than if this labour were reproduced under conditions of capitalist production, by the conservation of the non-capitalist economy, that is, at the peasant base. This could serve to explain why capital can, under certain conditions, pay a low wage, but it does not explain why workers will accept a low wage. The prolongation of the peasant base, even its artificial preservation in the case of South Africa (14), could serve to help peasant producers stay out of the wage system. In other words, to argue the existence of a peasant base, or a domestic mode of production, is not a self-explanatory account of the impetus behind the changing process of labour migration.

The Wolpe account argues for a necessary 'equilibrium' to this system: namely a level of production of the peasantry which is neither too high to inhibit the process of migration nor too low to prevent the destruction of the peasant economy and with it its function of reproducing the labour force:

> The production and reproduction of the migrant labour force... depended upon the existence of a rough equilibrium between production, distribution and social obligation in the reserves - the level of production in the Reserves together with wages being more or less sufficient to meet the (historically determined) subsistence requirements of migrants and their families, while land tenure and familial community relationships ensured the appropriate distribution of the Reserve product.(15)

This notion of equilibrium could reduce the dynamics of the process of the installation and maintenance of a system of migrant labour to the level of calculations of production and costs of subsistence at the peasant base. To be tested empirically this would require a careful study of the changing conditions of peasant production; this is not the scope of this dissertation. In any case while the retention of peasant production in labour reserves creates the structural conditions within which the wage can/could be driven down below the value of labour-power, this process of wage-fixing is not a matter of any calculation of the value of reserve production, but of workers responding, say, to their declining living standards by initiating forms of defensive action. If the argument for the maintenance of a migrant labour system is not to be reduced to any simple economic proposition, the wider factors of the economy and polity must be inserted. These would require, above all a study of the changing forms of capital and its labour requirements; the changing role of the state and the forms in which struggle between capital and labour took place.(16)

A more complete account of the role of the state in securing and maintaining the flow of migrant labour to capital is presented by Legassick and de Clerq.(17) At the start, they argue, state policy needs to be directed towards attracting labour to production.

Over time this role is supplemented by the need to redistribute labour in production. At other periods still, the tendency is for the state to repel labour from production. The role of the state, therefore, moves through a series of phases which are intimately related to the changing requirements of capital.

> Where the migrant system grew initially out of the social relations of production, and out of the social movement of workers between domestic production and wage-labour under limited compulsions, it has become increasingly a system regulated by the state... limited by the pace and forms of capital accumulation.(18)

Though the analysis would have to be extended to the entire economy of colonial Mozambique the role of the state in relation to the changing forms of capital in the plantation sector of Zambézia Province begins to demonstrate these shifting forms in the role of the state.

In the initial phases of capital accumulation in Zambézia (circa 1890-1913) because of the low level of capital accumulation in Portugal, the colonial state could neither secure the investment of Portuguese capital in the region nor could it create a labour force for the foreign capital attracted to the region, unaided. This is not to say that the state refrained from conscripting labour but merely that, lacking the financial means to impose an effective administration on the whole province it delegated some of the powers it would normally have retained to (foreign) capital. Thus, the burden of conscripting labour fell to capital. Through the prazo system, capital, (backed by the powers invested in it by the state) sought to secure a labour force through a variety of economic and extra-economic means; control of trade, imposition of a tax, imposition of periods of compulsory labour-service (imposed by

force if necessary). These mechanisms were successful in generating labour which worked on plantations for part of the year.

During this period the state's revenue in Zambézia was derived from two principal sources. Firstly, it received rent from the leaseholders of the prazos, that is from plantation capital. Secondly, because plantation agriculture was only established in a small part of the province, and hence because the revenue from this source was limited, the colonial state sought to generate an additional source of revenue by encouraging recruiters to contract labour for the South African mines. However, the continued existence of an open land frontier and consequently, the inability of both plantation capital and the state to effectively control the movement of men meant that there was an upward pressure on wages as planters sought to protect their own supplies of labour from each other and from mine recruiters.

In 1913 the recruitment of labour for the South African mines was banned. By this time, plantation production was well-established and had entered a new phase of expansion. Expansion brought a growing demand for labour which could not be met from the prazos alone. The state, therefore, sought to meet the labour needs of planters and to replace its source of revenue from the renting of labour to South Africa by organising labour recruitment for planters within the province. New legislation followed and colonial administrators were made responsible for directly conscripting labour from villages and hamlets. However, the machinery for providing labour operated inefficiently. Parts of the province had still not been wholly

'pacified' and plantations only occupied a tiny area of the land available. As a result peasants could still flee from the demands of planters and state alike. Thus although state intervention to "attract" labour to capital increased in the period between 1913 and 1930 the years up to 1930 continued to be years of labour shortage.

After 1930, however, the situation changed. On the one hand the seizure of power by the Salazar regime inaugurated a state committed to guaranteeing the expanded reproduction of capital in the province.(19) Among other measures taken to achieve this aim the regime sought to resolve the labour problem by extending its administration to the whole province and by introducing legislation which institutionalised migrant labour. Through a series of inter-locking mechanisms: the pass system, the tax, restrictions on peasant farming, a legal obligation to enter wage work, and punitive sanctions against those who broke the law, the state maintained the flow of labour to plantation capital. On the other hand, the first five years of the 1930s were years of general recession in central-southern Africa. Plantation capital used the abundant supplies of labour generated by the recession to cut the real wages of the labour force and to secure long-term areas of labour supply for future needs. This was made possible by the state's reorganisation of the labour supply within Zambézia.

However, the abundance of labour during the depression was only short-lived and by the mid-1930s recovery in Zambézia and the areas surrounding it had given rise to a growing demand for labour.

This demand was exacerbated by the development of new forms of production in Zambézia itself. Part of the Salazar regime's policies were directed towards encouraging the investment of Portuguese capital in Mozambique. In Zambézia this took two forms. Firstly, peasants were forced into cotton production on concessions granted to Portuguese companies. Secondly, new tea plantations were opened. The labour needs of both sections of capital were high and by the early 1940s there were fears of a labour shortage. In the mid-1940s, therefore, the state took measures to resolve the conflicting labour needs of the various sections of capital in the region. These were directed at three main areas. Firstly, the state moved to control the conditions of cotton production. It limited the areas sown and the numbers of men who could be employed but it allowed concessionaries to enlarge on the industrial reserve army by bringing women into cotton production. Secondly, the state sought to extend its control over the flow of labour to plantations. It redistributed the supply available between the competing plantations and introduced increasingly coercive methods to tighten up the supply of labour and cut down on labour wastage. Thirdly, the state, pushed by planters, resisted the attempts of South African capital to draw labour from the Angonia region of Tete. This then was the period when the state enlarged the workforce but also took on its redistributive role.

However, there were limits to the capacity of the state to control the relation between the supply of labour and wage levels, that is to use the reserve army of labour to keep wage levels down, for there were other competing capitals operating in the areas

surrounding the province. They offered higher wages with which planters in Zambézia could not compete. In Manica and Sofala to the south and in the Rhodesias and Nyasaland to the west, industrialists, farmers and mining capital all sought to expand their own geographical areas of labour supply as the pace of capital accumulation accelerated. In all three areas wages were higher than those offered in Zambezia, because they in turn had to compete with the wages offered on the South African mines.(20) Despite attempts to control the movement of men, the authorities in Zambézia could not seal the borders of the province, and there was, as a result, a steady trickle of clandestine migrants from Zambézia throughout the period. SSE which operated on both sides of the Zambesi river was particularly vulnerable to these pressures.

A new period of labour use was opened in Zambézia at the end of the 1950s. Several coinciding factors accounted for the change. Of these the most important were, firstly, the physical exhaustion of the labour reserves within Zambézia and secondly, at a political level, international pressure on the colonial state induced it to make certain reforms in the colony's labour legislation and use. The effect of these changes was to push up wages. At this point, plantation capital in Zambézia sought to lessen its reliance on migrant labour. The idea of creating a settled labour force was mooted but rejected when the state refused to support the social overhead costs of settlement. Nevertheless, plantation capital sought to mechanise new areas of production and to create a pool of permanent workers who could be employed in various areas of mechanised production throughout the year. For technical reasons mechanisation

in the fields could not proceed very far. However, SSE increasingly sought to replace men recruited from a distance with casual (child and female) labour from the vicinity of the estates; child and female labour which was made available after cotton production was reorganised in some areas and abandoned in others. These changes culminated in 1975 in the disbanding of SSE's recruiting organisation. Apart from the small nucleus of permanent workers, the field labour force was casualised. During the 1960s, then, changes in the production process, themselves the result of an absolute labour shortage and political developments in Mozambique, were accompanied by a state policy directed at expelling workers from production. This process, was, however, overtaken by Mozambique's independence in 1975.

The themes dealt with in this introduction are canvassed in the chapters which follow. The first part of the thesis examines the origins and changing functioning of the migrant labour system and thus the creation of a work force. The second part examines the effects of the system of institutionalised migrant labour in enabling plantation capital to operate a low wage policy, and to maintain this not only with the coercive assistance of the state but also by constraining the development of workers' organisations. The conclusion takes up the theme expressed in the last part of this introduction and briefly reviews the impact of changes introduced in the 1960s at SSE.

NOTES

(1) For an elaboration of the concept of colonial capitalism and its application to Tanzania, see: Michaela von Freyhold, "On Colonial Capitalism in Tanzania" (University of Dar es Salaam, Department of History, paper presented 25th August 1977), mimeo, especially pp. 1-3.

(2) Claude Meillassoux, "From Reproduction to Production: a Marxist Approach to Economic Anthropology," Economy and Society, I, No. I (1972), pp. 93-105; about Southern Africa in particular, where the accumulation of capital has from its inception been associated with the employment of migrant workers there is by now a substantial body of analytical work. See, for example: Harold Wolpe, "Capitalism and Cheap Labour-Power in South Africa: from Segregation to Apartheid," Economy and Society, I, No. 4 (1972), pp. 425-456; Martin Legassick, "Capital Accumulation and Violence," Economy and Society, III, No. 3 (1974), pp. 253-291; on Rhodesia: Giovanni Arrighi, "Labour Supplies in Historical Perspective: a Study of the Proletarianisation of the African Peasantry in Rhodesia," in: Giovanni Arrighi and John S. Saul, Essays on the Political Economy of Africa (Monthly Review Press, New York, 1973); DG Clarke, "Subsistence Wages and Primitive Accumulation on Plantations in Rhodesia" (S.A.L.D.R.U. Conference Paper, Cape Town, September, 1976).

(3) Karl Marx, Capital, Vol. I (Lawrence and Wishart, London, 1967), pp. 170-171: "The value of labour-power is determined, as in the case of every other commodity, by the labour time necessary for the production and consequently for the reproduction of this special article... Given the individual, the production of labour-power consists in his reproduction of himself or his maintenance. Therefore, the labour-time requisite for the production of labour-power reduces itself to that necessary for the production of... the means of subsistence. In other words, the value of labour-power is the value of the means of subsistence necessary for the maintenance of the labourer."

(4) Wolpe, op. cit., p. 434.

(5) Claude Meillassoux, "The Social Organisation of the Peasantry: the Economic Basis of Kinship," Journal of Peasant Studies, I, No. I (1973), pp. 81-90.

(6) Meillassoux, Economy and Society, I, No. I, op. cit., p. 102.

(7) Giovanni Arrighi, "Labour Supplies in Historical Perspective: A Study of the Proletarianisation of the African Peasantry in Rhodesia," Journal of Development Studies, VI, No. 3 (April, 1969), pp. 197-234.

(8) Norman Levy, "The Foundations of the Cheap Labour System in the South African Gold Mining Industry (1887-1906)" (unpublished PhD. thesis, University of London, 1979), pp. 35-39; Levy draws on Michael Buroway, "The Functions and Reproduction of Migrant Labour: Comparative Material from Southern Africa and the United States," American Journal of Sociology, No. 81 (1975-1976), p. 1056.

(9) Levy, op. cit., pp. 30-43. Here Levy is drawing on, inter alia, C. Perrings, "The Production Process, Industrial Labour Strategies and Worker Responses in the Southern African Gold Mining Industry," Journal of African History, XVIII, No. I (1977), p. 132.

(10) Levy, op. cit., p. 36. Levy's analysis here is based on Meillassoux, Economy and Society, I, No. I, op. cit., p. 102; Wolpe, op. cit., pp. 437-438; F. Wilson, Migrant Labour in South Africa (S.A.C.C. and Spro-Cas, Johannesburg, 1972), p. 48 and F. Wilson, Labour in the South African Gold Mines, 1911-1969 (Cambridge, 1972), p. 135.

(11) A study of the dynamics of production under the prazo system and hence a characterisation of the types of labour use generated by it, has still to be made. However, certain parallels can be drawn with some of the forms of labour-service in Tsarist Russia. "Particularly interesting is the form of labour-service for land, so-called labour-service and rent payments in kind... Here we see renting which is simply a survival of the corvée economy and which sometimes passes imperceptibly into the capitalist system of providing the estate with agricultural workers by allotting patches of land to them. Zemstvo statistics establish beyond doubt this connection between such 'renting' and the lessors' own farming. 'With the development of their own farming on the private landowners' estates, the owners had to guarantee themselves a supply of workers at the required time. Hence there develops in many places the tendency among them to distribute land to the peasants on the labour-service basis, or for a part of the crop together with labour-service.'" V.I. Lenin, The Development of Capitalism in Russia (Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1974), pp. 201-202. (Emphasis original).

(12) This was particularly important up to and during the recession of the late 1920s and early 1930s. Thereafter, the policy of the Salazar regime was to channel colonial sugar production to the Portuguese market at controlled prices. This policy meant that colonial sugar producers were cushioned from the effects of a dramatic fall in world sugar prices, but it also meant that they lost out when world prices took a sharp upward turn. For a discussion of the complicated and changing history of Portuguese sugar policy in Mozambique from 1870 to 1945, (written from SSE's point of view), see: Sena Sugar Estates Ltd., Moçambique e o Problema Açucareira (Lisboa, 1945), passim.

(13) cf., Wolpe, op. cit., p. 434.

(14) ibid.

(15) ibid., pp. 439-440.

(16) Wolpe makes the point I have indicated in relation to class struggle and the state in reply to Kantor and Kenny in: Harold Wolpe, "A Comment on 'The Poverty of Neo-Marxism'," Journal of Southern African Studies, IV, No. 2 (April, 1978), pp. 240-256.

(17) Martin Legassick and Francine de Clerq, "Capitalism and Migrant Labour in Southern Africa: The Origins and Nature of the System" (University of London, Institute of Commonwealth Studies, Postgraduate Seminar, Labour Migration within the Empire-Commonwealth from 1780, paper presented 13th June [1977]), mimeo. This paper is argued from the position of the necessity, under conditions of capitalist production, for not simply a wage labour force but for a surplus population, or industrial reserve army, in order that an excess of capital and a shortage of wage labour will not tend to increased wages. A system of migrant labour, especially one with a large catchment area, is a means of extending the wage labour force but especially that surplus population of the reserve army who are not at any one time absorbed in production.

(18) ibid., p. 12.

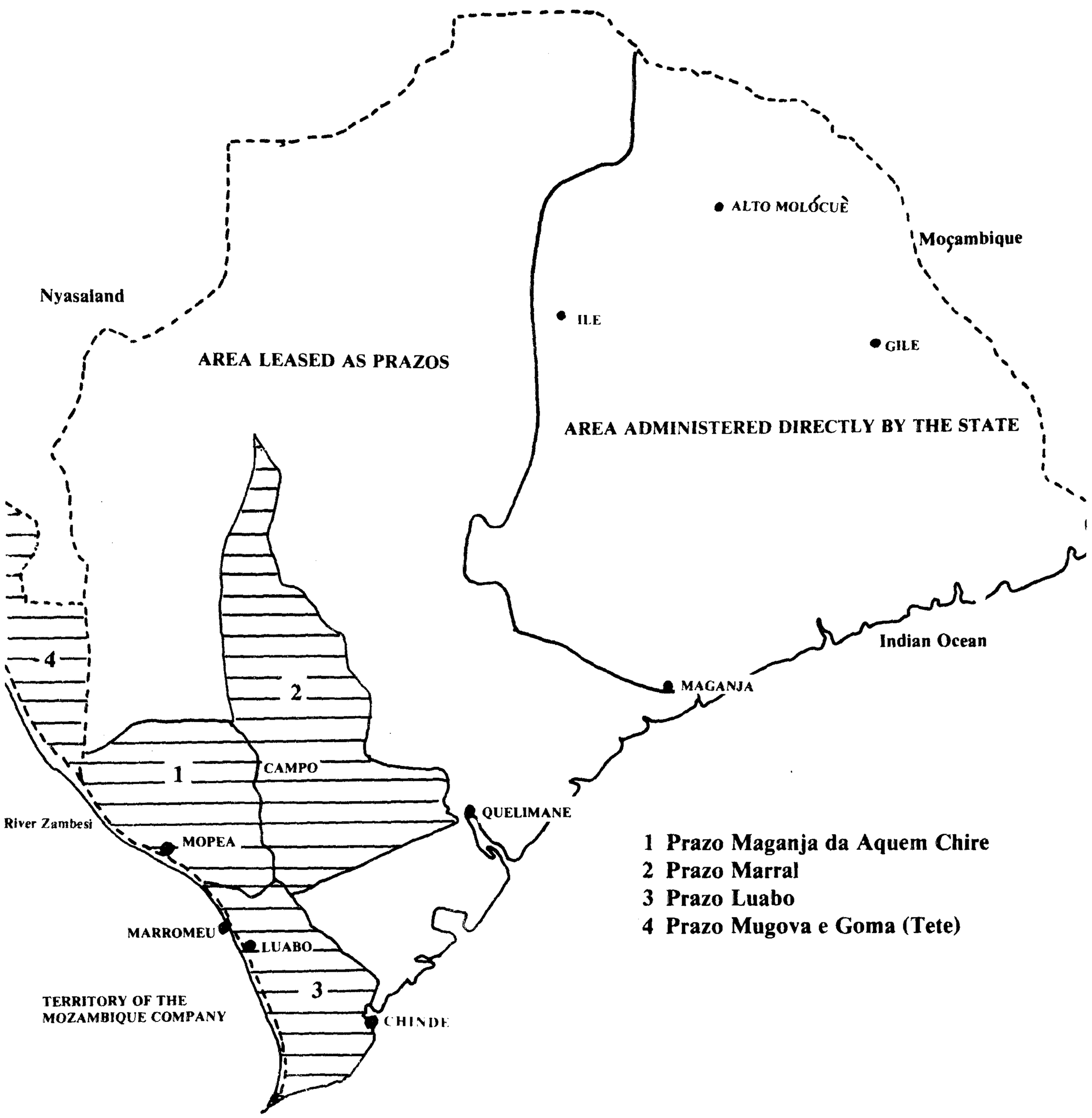
(19) Fransisco Rafael et al., Portugal, Capitalismo e Estado Novo: Algumas Contribuições para o seu Estudo (Edições Afrontamento, Porto, 1976), especially pp. 91-108 and pp. 115-122; Carlos Serra, "Notas para uma Periodização da Penetração Capitalista em Moçambique, (1505-1974)" (Universidade Eduardo Mondlane, Centro de Estudos Africanos, Departamento de História, November, 1979), mimeo, pp. 34-35.

(20) Charles van Onselen, Chibaro: African Mine Labour in Southern Rhodesia, 1900-1933 (Pluto Press, London, 1976), pp. 227-237. The continuing attraction of higher wages in (South Africa and) Rhodesia after 1933 will be substantiated in the text and especially in Chapter IV.

PART I

THE CONDITIONS OF LABOUR SUPPLY 1890-1960

ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISION OF QUELIMANE DISTRICT 1924
SHOWING PRAZOS LEASED BY SSE



CHAPTER I

THE CREATION OF A LABOUR FORCE, ZAMBÉZIA 1890 - 1930:

THE BACKGROUND

In 1890 an Englishman called John Peter Hornung floated the Companhia de Assucar de Moçambique (CAM) in Lisbon. With the backing of friends and the Banco Lusitano, the company was formed to establish a sugar plantation on the banks of the Zambesi river at Mopeia, some 100 miles from the coastal town of Chinde.(1)

The Zambesi region was in a state of turmoil in the 1880s. Only a few years before Hornung's new company was established the opium company which had preceded it was sacked in an uprising which spread throughout the region. So grave was the unrest, which came to be known as the Massingire Rising, that the governor of the province panicked and took refuge in a boat off Quelimane.(2) The area was not finally pacified until the early 1890s.(3) Besides political unrest, the managers of the new company had to overcome a series of other problems before production could start. There was no transport in the region and even the Zambesi was unnavigable to its mouth. Over 500 tons of heavy equipment had to be towed from Quelimane to Mopeia in flat-bottomed barges along the river Qua Qua. There were no unloading facilities in Mopeia, bush had to be cleared and fields ploughed.(4) The experts and technicians brought from various parts of the world to build the factory, supervise cultivation and start production, quickly succumbed to disease. Many died.(5) Labour had

to be recruited. The area in which the plantation was situated was depopulated as a result of the political unrest and African resistance to Portuguese demands for the tax.(6) The people who remained in the vicinity of the estate had no inclination to work on the company's plantation. Production on their own fields sufficed for their needs.

> Money meant nothing to them, and they could only be induced to work for the white man in return for payment of their head tax, and for articles they coverted, such as beads, gaudy cotton goods or old uniform coats.(7)

Even when the production of sugar finally started in 1892 the first harvests were threatened by a series of devastating locust plagues.(8) The first harvest yielded only 605 tonnes of sugar and for the next five years production oscillated wildly between 77 tonnes in 1895 and 1094 tonnes in 1898.(9) It seemed unlikely that the CAM would survive the 19th Century.

Nevertheless, the company survived these initial crises and also a financial and management crisis in 1903/4.(10) Within a few years Hornung had taken over the management of two other failing sugar companies in the region and in 1910 formed the Sena Sugar Factory, (SSF).(11) By then, production on the three estates had reached 15,722 tonnes. It continued to expand almost without interruption over the next ten years.(12) In 1920 SSF became Sena Sugar Estates Ltd., (SSE) managed by the Hornung family through Hornung and Company.(13) Financial backing for the company was provided by the London Banking house of Baron Bruno Schröder.(14) In 1924, Hornung opened his fourth and final plantation on the Zambesi at Luabo. Production on the four estates controlled by Hornung had now reached 39,020 tonnes of sugar.(15)

In part the success of Hornung's venture was the result of Portuguese colonial policy. Sugar producers in Mozambique were offered protection against foreign competition on the home market.(16) More important, however, to Hornung's success was the colonial policy which allowed private capital to recruit cheap, and indeed, unpaid labour for its enterprises. Yet this was not a straightforward process. The years between 1890 and 1930 were years in which the mechanisms for creating a labour force were improvised. Not until the 1930s was the system which took root in the preceding years finally successfully applied to the whole province.

COLONIAL POLICY IN MOZAMBIQUE AT THE END OF THE 19TH CENTURY

Portugal in the 1880s was still a predominantly agricultural society. The country's industrial base was small. Production was limited in the main to the light manufacturing sector including the processing of produce from the agricultural sector and the manufacture of inputs necessary for continued agricultural production. There was little heavy industry and the extractive industry and the transport sector were dominated by foreign capital. The economy was almost bankrupt and relied heavily on foreign loans.(17) The state of the economy was reflected in the political sphere. The industrial and financial bourgeoisie were still at an embryonic stage of formation. Even the commercial bourgeoisie, which had arisen as a result of its monopoly control of trade and transport with the colonies, was small and weak in comparison with its counterparts in Germany and England. The struggle for capitalist control of state

power was in its early stages, and constant political turmoil was characteristic of the period which ended with Salazar's seizure of power in the late 1920s.(18)

It is within this context that Portugal entered the "Scramble for Africa". Confronted by German, British, French and Belgian attempts to impose direct political control over the continent as a means of guaranteeing conditions favourable for the control of raw materials and markets and the export of capital, Portugal was faced with the imminent loss of its colonies. It had neither the means or the manpower to retain them by force. Instead the Portuguese government was forced to fall back on diplomacy. By resting on the sponsorship of each of these powers at various times in both East and West Africa the Portuguese government sought to pre-empt the claims of its rivals. In this way Portugal gained recognition of its colonies, but only on the condition that it effectively occupied them.(19)

The problem, then, which faced the Portuguese government after the Berlin Conference of 1884-1885 was how to bring about effective occupation and how to generate revenue. As António Enes pointed out in the study he made of Mozambique in 1891-1892, two years before becoming Royal Commissioner for the colony, "national resources are not sufficient for such an undertaking, and if they were there would be other, more immediately profitable enterprises in which they would rather invest."(20) Enes' solution and that favoured by the circle of influential colonial officers who surrounded him, was to encourage the investment of foreign capital.

> We need foreigners, any foreigners, of all raoes and nationalities, to help us promote the prosperity of Mozambique... The most effective way, if not to attract and absorb, at least not to drive off foreigners, will certainly be to grant facilities and security to the capital they wish to employ in the Province /Mozambique/, treating this capital not as a dangerous invader but as a necessary partner, to free it from burdens and problems...(21)

The northern third of the colony was leased to the Niassa Company. Financed largely from Germany and England, the Niassa Company was granted wide administrative powers. For a small percentage of annual profits the Portuguese government in effect allowed the company to operate as an autonomous state. Lacking the capital to open up the area to productive investment, the company confined its attentions to generating revenue through the sale of labour to South Africa and to planters within the colony. When the export of labour from the territory was finally banned in 1913 the Niassa Company sank into decay.(22)

In the area of modern Manica and Sofala Province the Mozambique Company was granted a charter on much the same lines as the Niassa Company. Mainly financed from Britain the Mozambique Company suffered from the same problems of stretched resources and inadequate funds as its counterpart in the north. However, unlike the Niassa Company, the Mozambique Company benefitted from its position in relation to Rhodesia. Beira soon developed as a commercial centre and the transit trade provided revenue and the stimulus to some settler agriculture along the railway.(23)

In the southern half of the colony, the pattern of development had already been established before the Portuguese imposed an effective administration in the 1890s. From here, men had been migrating to the sugar plantations of Natal from the 1870s. The opening and expansion of the mines on the Rand in the decades that followed, with their high demand for labour, accelerated the flow of migrants. Capital investment was almost entirely restricted to the development of rail and port facilities serving the Transvaal. Unable to attract capital to invest in agricultural production the state legalised the flow of labour to the mines. Through numerous conventions it consolidated its role as a labour rentier; a role it was to continue to play throughout the colonial period.(24)

With occupation, if not revenue, secured in the north and centre of the colony, and revenue in the south, it was on Zambézia that the hopes of the Portuguese government were centred. Here there appeared to be the possibility of encouraging new forms of production through revitalising a system of land concessions first granted in the 17th Century.

COLONIAL POLICY IN ZAMBÉZIA

The Prazos

The Prazos da Coroa were grants of land made to Portuguese settlers for three generations. The estates were inherited through the female line in order to encourage the emigration of European women and increase the Portuguese population of the area. Numerous

regulations governed the existence of the prazos which were intended to stimulate agricultural production. These regulations were largely ignored and the state was too weak to enforce them. In general prazo-leaseholders derived an income from monopolising trade.(25)

In 1892 new legislation was enacted which was specifically designed to encourage the investment of capital and generate new forms of plantation production whose export would improve the colony's trade balance. The legislation sought to attract investors to the region by offering them the right to collect taxes and recruit labour from the African population living on the estates they leased. The rents of the estates were calculated on the amount of 'native' tax collected. Africans were to pay half the tax in cash or kind and the other half in labour-service. In addition, the leaseholder was entitled to a week's unpaid labour-service from the tax-payers resident on the estate. He could also oblige them to work for additional periods for wages whose minimum level was established by the government. To ensure that agricultural production was increased the leaseholder was expected to open new land regularly and to cultivate an area of land which was related proportionately to the number of taxes collected. To protect his investment the leaseholder was given security of tenure for 15 years, although most leases were automatically increased when they expired. He was also given a monopoly of trade within his concession and other settlers were prevented from opening land within the concession without the leaseholder's permission. Finally, the leaseholder was nominated as the "agent of authority". He was responsible for raising a police force, maintaining law and order, putting down rebellions and settling disputes.(26) In short, the state delegated wide powers of administration to the leaseholders of the

prazos. It also promised them an income through tax collection and a supply of labour through legislation designed to force men to work. On this basis plantation production was to be established. However, legislation designed to promote capital investment and new forms of agricultural production was one thing. Its practice was quite another.

Far from stimulating new forms of production the legislation seems largely to have worked against them. Most of those who leased prazos either did so with the sole aim of generating income through tax collection, or soon lapsed into this pattern of surplus appropriation when the difficulties of developing plantations thwarted their intentions. Thus, the Director of Agriculture wrote in his 1911 Report that the prazos tied up some of the best land in the province. Other settlers would not invest in the land because they had no rights. In the meantime the leaseholder sat on his land either unable or unwilling to develop it.

> A second objection is taken to the fact that in some cases the Prazo companies do no agricultural development or very little; devoting all their energies to making what they can out of the native tax and recruiting. One or two prazo companies show commendable enterprise yet even in the case of the most progressive I estimate that only about 0.5% of the total holding is under cultivation.
>
> Want of capital is the reason given for this inactivity but this should not be admitted as an escusive [sic] for an almost total neglect of cultivating enterprise...(27)

The 'get rich quick' attitude which influenced the activities of those who did not take their leases seriously was also reflected in the practises of those companies which were more concerned to generate expanding sources of income. Besides the CAM there were five

important companies operating in Zambézia: the Companhia da Zambézia, the Companhia do Boror, the Companhia do Luabo, the Sociedade Agrícola do Madal, and the Empresa Agrícola do Lugela.(28) All five companies were repeatedly criticised in early Agricultural Department Reports for their poor agricultural practises and lack of attention to the requirements of the various crops they planted. This attitude was in turn dictated by the companies' directors who were anxious not to sink more capital into ventures which did not promise short-term results.

> And so it is natural that the 'prazos' or land syndicates which now hold concessions for the most valuable lands of the Zambézia alluvial plains, are loathe to sink more funds in developing their enterprises till they see good returns coming in from the many thousands of pounds already invested. But, after making due allowance for the exigencies of the developing work and the natural difficulties of the managers and their assistants in those 'prazos' it must be admitted that a grievous amount of money has been wasted in agricultural operations in Zambézia during the last few years.(29)

The Director of Agriculture in 1909 did not find a single company whose cultivation methods could not be improved easily.

> One prazo learning that in some countries castilloa trees yield good profits in rubber, orders a plantation of this sort to be made; and without considering the unchangeable habits of this forest tree, the tender young plants are transplanted at about 6 metres distance into a level field of heavy uncultivated soil, with weeds and grass poisoning their roots, the sun baking and cracking the earth all about them, and the hot dry winds (without a break for a hundred miles) during a large part of the year whipping their young leaves and drying the very sap out of them. And after some 8 years when the trees are the size they should be at 4 years - it does not require an expert to foretell what the result of tapping must be.
>
> Again, the managers of the various stations, or estates, have been overanxious to get along with the routine work as easily and expeditiously as possible...
>
> And this spirit of frantic effort for quick results, good or bad, had been largely to blame

> for the lack of attention to important details; instead of studying the life habits of his plants the manager has felt obliged to study the pay sheets and statistical reports...(30)

The Director of Agriculture also criticised the prazo-leaseholders for their lack of experienced staff, and the lack of books and journals about current agricultural methods. He concluded that "effectiveness and future profits should be aimed at in all agricultural methods and work instead of temporary expediency and present economies... the output of the average Quelimane estates is deplorably below the economical status."(31)

The situation had changed little by 1924. In that year, according to another Agricultural Department Report, there were 43 "true European farmers" in the District. Of these only the five major companies and two small leaseholders were worthy of note. Of the remainder, many had started their enterprises as a result of the high prices obtaining during the First World War. By 1924 many of these had already failed when the situation returned to normal. Others, who had established their plantations after the war had already failed by 1924, and still others "live or vegetate in an economic situation hardly prosperous when not [already] endangered."(32) There were, in addition, twenty "amateur" farmers, whose situation was even less encouraging than that of the "true" farmers. Most were ex-civil servants or the former employees of other companies. They suffered from lack of training, lack of capital, lack of technical assistance and lack of experience.(33)

As in earlier reports the agricultural methods and practices of the successful companies were criticised. Referring, for example,

to copra, which was the principal export from the district, the writer of the 1924 Report noted that hundreds of coconut palms were planted in land which was not properly cleared or cleaned. Young plants had to struggle for light and air in dense fields of weeds. Fields were not properly drained. These and other malpractices were reflected in the yields. "Lots and lots of adult palms give a tiny yield, with numerous sterile plants and others which do not manage to give a dozen coconuts per year." The district did not have a single modern preparation plant for copra, which was dried in grass-covered sheds.(34)

Only sugar escaped the damning criticisms to which the other crops were subjected, but even sugar producers (SSE) were criticised for growing too many ratoons. Whereas the first crop yielded up to 100 tonnes of cane per hectare, the fourth or fifth cutting of the same plant yielded only 15 tonnes on average. Planters were also criticised for irregular production and export.(35)

Some of the criticisms made by the Agricultural Department can be discounted and others must be assessed within the context of the times. The Department itself was only formed in 1908 and its own record was hardly an example to others.(36) By 1924 the agricultural services of the province had all but collapsed. The writer of the 1924 Report on Agriculture in Zambézia made numerous criticisms of the failings of the department.(37) Lack of funds, transport, manpower, technical books and instruments meant that the government agricultural department had failed to provide planters with the assistance which on its own admission, they desperately needed.

In the absence of previous scientific surveys of soils, climates, pests and insects, they were necessarily forced to conduct their own crop trials and in effect to set up experimental plantations.

Besides the lack of extension services and government support and advice, the planters in 1924 were still confronting an almost complete lack of communications. There were few roads and most of those that existed served no useful purpose.(38) The most common form of transport was the machila and most produce was carried by porters.(39) Thus, with the exception of those planters who had easy access to the river Zambesi, all produce had to be carried on human head to the coast. Not only did the produce deterioriate on the journey but human porterage tied up large numbers of men who could have been otherwise employed. The major difficulty, however, which confronted the planters was a shortage of labour.

The Labour Shortage and the Methods Devised for Dealing with it

Tax and labour demands could only operate effectively as a means of forcing peasants to work on plantations if land was alienated on a significant scale and/or if an effective system of control prevented peasants from moving to areas where these mechanisms did not exist and where land was available on which they could pursue their own production unimpeded. With access to independent means of production and the ability to produce sufficient to meet their own requirements there was no 'natural' or economic reason why peasants should opt to work for someone else. In Zambézia land was not

alienated on a significant scale nor was the system of control through tax and labour demands effective throughout the whole province.(40) Even in the areas leased as prazos peasants could find ways of avoiding tax and labour demands. Firstly, the vast tracts of land leased to companies could not be effectively policed all the time. Peasant families could therefore move out of the areas where company patrols were less regular, or they could move out of the prazo altogether. Secondly, and particularly where the prazos bordered on Nyasaland, peasants could flee to British-controlled territory where both tax and labour demands were less arduous than in Zambezia.(41) Thirdly, many prazo-leaseholders followed a policy of attracting people to their estates in order to reap a rich tax harvest. Here labour-service was not imposed or was less rigorous than on estates where labour was required for plantation production.(42) For all these reasons prazo-leaseholders who did require labour found it necessary to develop an effective system of policing their estates and a system of labour recruitment and payment which bound the tax-payer of the prazo to the company and forced him to work on the company's plantations. The CAM, (later to become the SSF and then SSE in 1920) which required, above all, abundant supplies of cheap labour, is a case in point.

With the exception of ploughing and irrigation all field tasks on the CAM's plantation were manual, including pest control and the application of fertilizer (manure). The cut cane was transported to the factory by rail. Even here 'native' labourers were used to pull the carts on the moveable rail between sections of cane. "The traction is all by blood, mules being employed on the fixed line and on the others native staff as well."(43)

On the 340 hectares prepared for planting in 1896 757 prazo-residents and 16 African supervisors were employed. The factory employed 203 workers. Wood cutting for the boilers and steam ploughs absorbed another 160-180 men a day. Additional labour was required to grow food crops for animals, European staff and African labourers. This was mainly provided by children, men working a punishment and men who arrived before they were needed in the fields.(44) Keeping the fields free of locusts required the immediate mobilisation of 1000 people.(45)

In 1896 the labour employed by the CAM on its Mopeia plantation was drawn from Prazo Maganja Aquem Chire, of which the CAM was the leaseholder, and from the two smaller prazos of Mazaro and Barue which it sub-leased from Correia and Carvalho. These prazos were divided into districts, whose chiefs were obliged to furnish a stipulated number of men calculated on the basis of the previous census. It was the chief's responsibility to organise the tax-payers of his district into groups who were obliged to work for 24 days at a time. When the men had finished their period of service they were replaced by another group, whom they again replaced when that group had worked for 24 days. For 24 days labour the men received 2$020 reis each. None of this wage was paid in cash however. The men received three quarters of the value of the wage in cotton cloth and a ticket for the other quarter which represented one week's tax payment. If the man did not present his tax exemption certificate on the weekly tax-collection day, he was obliged to pay 0$420 réis in cash.(46)

According to the CAM, the advantages of this system were that

1. it calls the colono to work providing him with a sure means of paying his tax;
2. it makes him work more than once, in order that he can, as he certainly wants to, earn other tax cards for the wife or wives that he has;
3. it obliges those who do not work and who therefore cannot present the payment certificate, to work(47)

Men who missed a day's work or who, according to the compound supervisory staff and medical staff, feigned illness, were obliged to work off the days they had missed.(48) Men who did not complete their task received half the day's payment and were not provided with their daily rations.(49)

The organisation of ensacas (rotating groups of men who replaced each other at monthly intervals) meant that the inhabitants of the prazo were divided among themselves. The failure of one group to work meant additional labour for its replacement group. The payment system, as the company stated, ensured that men were obliged to work regularly in order to meet the tax. Should these two mechanisms fail, the additional labour-service imposed as a punishment was intended to act as a deterrent against desertion or failure to work the stipulated period.

Despite the system devised by the CAM there were still occasional labour shortages in the 1890s. For one thing, in the early years the prazo leased by the company lost people from one district because of the violent methods employed by the government to mobilise porters:

> The decrease [in population] in the district of Charunda, where the Capitânia-Mor of Mopea is situated, is the result of the demands of the authorities and the process, a little violent, which is still used to obtain porters and which has led to the withdrawal of the negroes to other districts.(50)

The company also lost people from its prazo in the first years because the government obliged it to collect the taxes outstanding from the years before it took over the plantation:

> The great labour shortage which we had during the first years. This... was principally caused by demanding the tax owed by the natives from the years before our administration, in which the prazo was administered directly by the government. We were compelled by the government to demand this tax.(51)

The director who wrote this company report added that in 1897 things appeared to be returning to normal and the company was expecting a much larger population on its prazo than in previous years. Nevertheless, it had been obliged to ask for labour from a prazo administered directly by the state, in this period, in order to open a canal between the rivers Qua Qua and Zambesi. Several hundred colonos were recruited from the state-run prazo.(52)

Thus, if in the early years, the CAM's labour needs could, more or less, be met from the people resident on its estate, this was not the case as production began to expand. And, notwithstanding the criticisms of the Agricultural Department, production of the four major export crops did expand considerably in the first two decades of the twentieth century.

Production of the Four Principal Export Crops from 1910 (or the Date of their First Harvest) Until 1924 (53)

Copra	
Year	Tonnes
1910	3,256
1911	3,946
1912	4,451
1913	4,036
1914	5,001
1915	7,768
1916	9,386
1917	8,753
1918	2,995
1919	7,126
1920	8,159
1921	7,307
1922	13,083
1923	11,933
1924	12,905

Sugar	
Year	Tonnes
1910	4,214
1911	3,916
1912	2,786
1913	1,070
1914	3,737
1915	4,249
1916	3,683
1917	2,912
1918	1,585
1919	2,306
1920	7,449
1921	8,870
1922	1,644
1923	10,257
1924	10,259

Sisal	
Year	Tonnes
1910	-
1911	-
1912	155
1913	338
1914	282
1915	911
1916	2,030
1917	927
1918	1,230
1919	1,515
1920	1,646
1921	2,138
1922	3,317
1923	2,549
1924	2,950

Cotton	
Year	Tonnes
1910	23
1911	12
1912	30
1913	141
1914	104
1915	190
1916	179
1917	119
1918	115
1919	184
1920	195
1921	220
1922	218
1923	232
1924	401

> Expansion of production meant an expanded labour force.
>
> By 1923 SSE was employing approximately 20,000 men a year.
>
> The plantations - with the great work of preparing the land and channelling water - were being enlarged; from the 200 hectares that they covered in 1897 they reached 1000 [hectares] in 1900 and in 1923 7,850 [hectares]; the number of hands employed rose, in the same space, from a few hundred to about 20,000.(54)

Besides trying to meet the shortfall in labour by recruiting men from Nyasaland,(55) SSE adopted an expedient to obtain more labour which appears to have been common practise among all the major companies in the region. It sub-leased further prazos in order to acquire the right to collect taxes and mobilise the men on them for plantation work. Thus, in 1915, the company asked for permission from the government to transfer labour from Prazo Angonia in modern Tete Province to the Mopeia sugar fields without paying a recruitment fee to the state.(56) SSE also took over Prazos Luabo and Marral in Zambézia and Prazo Mugova e Goma in the Mutarara region of Tete.(57) Finally, in 1926 by buying a third share in the Empresa Agrícola do Lugela, in northwestern Zambézia, SSE acquired the right to mobilise labour resident on the prazos leased by that company.(58)

However, even these expanded sources of labour were not enough for the company's needs, which, by 1920 included plans to open the fourth estate at Luabo. In 1921, therefore, Hornung signed a contract with the High Commissioner for Mozambique under whose terms a guarantee by the company to produce more sugar would be met by a guarantee by the state to furnish more labour. SSE was to receive up to 6000 men a year in two six month lots.(59)

Through the Hornung contract, the state first gave legal recognition at the national level to a role it had been playing on a small scale in Zambézia since the beginning of the century; that of a labour supplier to capital in the region.

The State-Administered Areas of the Province

Not all of Zambézia Province was leased as prazos. One third of the province was placed under the direct administration of the colonial state. Maganja da Costa was placed under a civil administration in 1908, while the areas of Alto and Baixo Molócuè remained under military rule until 1919. In a condition of intermittent rebellion, not even the head tax could be collected in these areas with any regularity.(60)

While agricultural development on the prazos left a lot to be desired that on the state-administered areas of the province was virtually non-existent. In these areas the state itself was responsible for collecting the head tax imposed. It was also responsible for raising labour for those who required it; labour which had to receive the legal minimum wage in force. There was, therefore, little incentive for capital to invest in these regions. Unlike the companies which leased prazos, investors in the state-administered areas had neither the right to collect taxes, which generated an immediate income, nor could they demand part-payment of the tax in labour-service. The initial costs of opening new land in the state-administered areas were therefore much higher than on the prazos. Firstly, on the prazos wages had only to be paid when

the tax-paying population was insufficient for the planter's needs. Secondly the initial costs could in part be offset by the sale of peasant produce where the tax was paid in kind, or from the money tax where peasants paid in cash. There were, however, additional disincentives to investment in the state-administered areas. Unlike the prazo-leaseholders, investors in these regions had no guaranteed labour supply. The amount of labour they received appears to have depended on the whim of the local administrator, and administrators were frequently replaced.(61) Furthermore, although the law obliged men to work for six months of the year, the labour needs of the colonial administration itself were high. Labour was needed to open roads, to serve as porters and machila bearers and to grow food for, and generally service, the civilian, military and auxilliary personnel of the administration.(62)

Yet, it was not only the internal demand for labour which made the prospect of opening plantations in the state-controlled areas of the province unattractive. The mobilisation of labour to serve and produce food for the administration was unproductive. It did not generate revenue. The imposition of a money tax which was intended to generate revenue could only achieve this purpose if a money economy was generalised. Since it was not, and since people recruited for work for the administration were not paid for their labour, the state found itself in the same position as the Niassa Company to the north. It turned to labour export as a means of guaranteeing cash payment of the tax. In 1902 recruiters from the Rand were permitted to engage labour in the area of Maganja da Costa and Prazos Lugela, Milange and Lomue, and shortly afterwards labour export to the island of São Tomé also commenced.(63)

The recruiters were obliged to pay the tax of each man recruited before he was allowed to leave the province. In this way tax-collection was facilitated. Rounding up men for labour recruiters soon became one of the dominant activities of the administrative officials.

> It [this circumscription] exports people to the Transvaal, in relatively high numbers, which results in much easier tax collection, not because those returning bring back money, since few return and those who do do not bring anything with them, but because the recruiters advance important sums to pay the head tax when the census is taken.(64)

Thus, potential investors in the state-administered areas not only faced heavier costs than those who leased prazos; they also faced a labour shortage.

Labour export from the state-administered areas also contributed to the labour shortage on the prazos. Whereas labour recruitment for São Tomé led to a flight of people from the state-administered areas to areas outside the control of the state or to the prazos, labour recruitment for the Transvaal gave rise to a movement of people from the prazos to the areas where the labour recruiters were operating. Men were attracted by the higher wages offered on the Transvaal.(65) In 1905 Hornung petitioned the government to take measures to overcome the labour shortage that recruitment for the Transvaal was creating. In this he appears to have been successful, although it is not clear whether the government controlled the exodus from lower Zambézia or provided Hornung with labour from the areas it administered.

> The important question of native hands has also been regularised - happily the government has agreed to take measures to reduce the difficulties we have been facing since migratory currents were established from the lower Zambesi to the Transvaal.(66)

The measures taken by the government to deal with the labour shortage on the prazos, were not, however, lasting, for four years later the Governor of Zambézia was to write:

> Low wages to correspond with the low output of labour, and abundant labour because, in many things, there is not, for the time being, a means of substituting it with machines, are the two vital necessities for the agriculture of this district.
>
> The prazos regime had guaranteed to the planter not only an abundance of labour necessary for the land clearance that he was obliged to undertake and which was fixed in proportion to the number of hands, but also low wages, fixing them, in law, at equal rates for everyone in the district, in order to avoid an absurd competition in supply from which derives a constant increase [in wages] and which results in general damage.
>
> Came the authorisation for emigration to the Transvaal and recently to S. Tomé and both of these guarantees have been prejudiced and ruined.(67)

Apart from the short-sighted nature of a policy which sought revenue through the sale of labour without any guarantees that the contracted men would return, the revenue which labour export was supposed to provide was irregular. In 1909, for example, the amount of tax collected from the town of Quelimane and the Circumscription of Maganja fell by six contos of réis. This was partly because 580 fewer men were recruited for the Rand than in the previous year and partly because the population had fallen as men fled to escape labour recruitment for São Tomé.(68) Furthermore, far from swelling the state coffers, the revenue from the tax was barely sufficient to meet the administrative cost of collecting it. In 1909 it was estimated that 67 per cent of the tax was lost through inefficient collection or absorbed in administrative costs.(69)

It was not only, however, lack of revenue through labour export and lack of capital investment which confronted the authorities in the state-administered regions of Zambézia. Peasant production for export also dropped during the period. Firstly, peasants were reluctant to bring their produce to Quelimane, or indeed to use the normal trade routes from the interior, as a result of the brutal pacification campaign.(70) Secondly, Portuguese protectionist policy itself contributed to a fall in peasant production for export. Anxious to protect metropolitan manufactured goods the government placed heavy duties on trade goods imported from other parts of Euope into Mozambique. Instead of extending the market for Portuguese goods in Zambézia the policy had the reverse effect. Much of the trade in peasant produce was diverted to Nyasaland where the terms of trade were more favourable to the producer.(71)

Faced with a labour shortage on the prazos, pressure on wages which labour export to the Transvaal brought about, lack of capital investment in the state-administered lands and a lack of revenue, which labour export did not significantly improve, the state increasingly seized the only opportunity available to it for generating revenue. It started to organise the recruitment of additional labour to supplement planters' needs.

At first this appears to have happened only on a small scale and was an ad hoc response to particular situations, such as Hornung's request for additional labour to open a canal. After recruitment for the Transvaal was banned in 1913 it can be assumed that this role was increased, for in 1914/15 the Governor of Zambézia drew up

a list of conditions governing the supply of labour from the state-administered areas to prazo-leaseholders. These included the important stipulation that the employer was to deposit the full amount of the wage for the contract period in the administrative office of the district where the men were engaged before they started their contract.(72) In this way not only was the state assured of the tax payment, it was also assured a cash income on which it could presumably earn interest.

The organisation of labour recruitment by the state for private employers within the province provided a short-term solution to some of the problems which confronted the state. It provided revenue, ensured that the labour needs of planters within the district were at least partially met and prevented the drain on the province's labour resources which the export of labour had created. It did not, however, provide a long-term solution to the imbalance of the district's economy. Firstly, from the point of view of a potential investor in the state-administered areas of Zambézia, there was little difference between labour export to the Transvaal and labour recruitment for the prazos. In both cases the investor faced a potential if not an actual labour shortage; and labour shortage implied an upward pressure on wages. Labour recruitment by the state was therefore a disincentive to investment in the region. Secondly, the differences between the labour regime on the prazos and the labour regime which operated in the state-administered areas led to a voluntary exodus of men from the latter to the former. Whereas on the prazos men generally worked close to home and for a six month period which was broken up into shorter periods to be

worked off at intervals during the year, those contracted by the state for prazo-leaseholders generally worked far from home and for six consecutive months.(73) In 1924 it was estimated that the state lost 11,000 people to the prazos as a result of the differences in the two labour regimes.(74) This in turn meant a loss of revenue through tax and labour recruitment. It also contributed to the labour shortage which detracted investors from establishing plantations in the state-administered areas of the province. In the long-term, a state-run labour system while the dual administrative regime continued, meant a growing underdevelopment of the state-run areas for the sake of capital accumulation on the prazos, with the former merely serving as a labour reservoir for the latter. It did not even necessarily mean the creation of new forms of production for, as has been shown above, many prazo-leaseholders were interested only in collecting taxes.

At the root of the problem was the continued existence of the prazos. There was an extensive debate, which can be traced through the reports of the time, on the effects of the prazos legislation. One school of thought argued that the solution to the province's problems was to extend the prazos. This would provide revenue for the state from rent at no cost. It would encourage investment because of the labour and tax clauses of the lease. It would lead to the general development of the whole region. This view effectively ignored the disadvantages of the system: increased competition for labour, and the problem of guaranteeing a labour supply for those who took over the state-administered areas.

It was the labour question which was central to the argument of those who opposed the extension of the prazos. For them, a cheap and abundant supply of labour was the only way of attracting further capital to the region. To avoid the "absurd" competition for labour and the concommitant pressure on wages which the Governor had outlined in 1909 it was necessary to establish a uniform labour regime. State control of labour would ensure the rational apportionment of labour to those needing it at wages which would be the same throughout the district. Such a policy, with state control over the movement of men, would lead to investment in the state-run areas. The comparative advantages of leasing a prazo would disappear.

It was this view which eventually won the day. In 1930, in line with the new policies of the Salazar regime, the prazos were abolished and a uniform labour regime, run by the state, was imposed on the whole district. The mechanisms for raising labour, tested and tried over the previous forty years, were brought together in a single system over which the state had complete control. Thereafter, men who had been able to avoid wage work and compulsory labour-service by fleeing from prazos and state lands alike, or who had been able to negotiate for higher wages by playing off one employer against another, were to find themselves hemmed in by a system which allowed them almost no room in which to manoeuvre.

NOTES

(1) B.M. Collin, J.P. Hornung, A Family Portrait (The Orpington Press Ltd., Orpington, Kent, /1970/), p. 31.

(2) Leroy Vail and Landeg White, "Prazos, Peasants and International Capitalism: A Reassessment of Lower Zambezian History, 1870-1900" (University of Zambia, School of Education History Seminar Series, 1976-1977), mimeo, p. 16.

(3) SSE Ar., Sena Sugar Estates Ltd., Relatório Serviços de Recrutamento e Mão-de-Obra 1966, pp. 2-3.

(4) Sena Sugar Estates Ltd., Moçambique e o Problema Açucareira (Lisboa, 1945), pp. 70-71.

(5) Collin, op. cit., p. 38.

(6) Vail and White op. cit., p. 21 and Companhia do Assucar de Moçambique, Relatórios e Contas das Gerências de 1895 e 1896 (Imprensa Moderna, Lisboa, 1897), p. 68.

(7) Collin, op. cit., p. 29.

(8) ibid., pp. 38-39.

(9) Sena Sugar Estates Ltd., Moç. e o Prob. Açuc., op. cit., p. 78.

(10) Companhia do Assúcar de Moçambique, Relatórios e Contas do Anno Social de 1904-1905 (Typographia de 'A Editora', Lisboa, 1905), passim.

(11) Collin, op. cit., p. 51 and p. 64.

(12) Sena Sugar Estates Ltd., Moç. e o Prob. Açuc., op. cit., p. 78, Quadro XII Produção de Açúcar na Zambézia (Toneladas Métricas) 1893-1923.

Anos	Mopeia	Marromeu	Caia	Total
1893	605	-	-	605
1894	807	-	-	807
1895	77	-	-	77
1896	966	-	-	966
1897	261	-	-	261
1898	1094	-	-	1094
1899	1674	-	-	1674
1900	2600	-	-	2600
1901	1271	-	-	1271
1902	1796	2950	-	4746
1903	2056	1190	-	3246
1904	3719	3500	-	7219
1905	4157	1900	-	6057
1906	3165	700	-	3865
1907	1770	1200	-	2970
1908	6016	2000	5231	13247

(12) continued

Anos	Mopeia	Marromeu	Caia	Total
1909	6277	2011	9647	17335
1910	6210	2680	6832	15722
1911	6777	4201	10210	21188
1912	5905	7060	8046	21011
1913	7917	8814	10773	27504
1914	9152	10475	9317	28944
1915	7214	10394	10137	27145
1916	9324	8101	8114	15539
1917	11210	12136	9954	33300
1918	5656	6219	3089	14964*
1919	18207	9028	10011	27239
1920	10183	9750	9796	29733

*ibid., p. 30. There were "huge" floods on the Zambesi in 1918 which reduced the harvest by half.

(13) Department of Trade, Companies Registration Office, Companies House, (London) Sena Sugar Estates Ltd., No. 162317 (F. Vol.). In 1975 a Management and Selling Agency Agreement still existed between SSE and Hornung and Co. Ltd., Sir John Hornung, Major N.H. Du Boulay and Mr S.P. Hornung, who were all descendents of the companies' founder, were directors and shareholders of both companies (SSE Ltd., Report and Accounts 1975). For further information about SSE's capital, shareholders and the relationship between SSE and Hornung and Co., see the Sena Sugar Estates' files at Companies House.

(14) Collin, op. cit., pp. 51-52.

(15) Sena Sugar Estates Ltd., Moç. e o Prob. Açuc., op. cit., p. 81.

(16) ibid., passim. In part Hornung's success was related to the world price for sugar. Once the Portuguese quota had been met SSF was free to sell its surplus production on world markets. From the beginning of the First World War the price of sugar on the international market steadily rose. It remained high until the mid-1920s. The decision to expand production and open a fourth factory was made, at least in part, in response to the high price for sugar (Collin, op. cit., pp. 97-98 and p. 112).

(17) Armando Castro, A Economia Portuguesa do Século XX, 1900-1925 (Edições 70, Lisboa, 1973), passim; Fransisco Rafael et al., Portugal, Capitalismo e Estado Novo: Algumas Contribuições para o seu Estudo (Edições Afrontamento, Porto, 1976), pp. 91-92.

(18) Rafael et al., op. cit., pp. 91-93 and pp. 115-117; Carlos Serra, "Notas para uma Periodização da Pentração Capitalista em Moçambique, (1505-1974)" (Universidade Eduardo Mondlane, Centro de Estudos Africanos, Departamento de História, November, 1979), mimeo, p. 15.

(19) James Duffy, Portuguese Africa (Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1959), pp. 201-224; Serra, op. cit., pp. 15-16.

(20) António Enes, Moçambique: Relatório Apresentado ao Governo (1893) Agência Geral do Ultramar (4a Edição, Imprensa Nacional, Lisboa, 1971), p. 59. (Translation J.H.)

(21) ibid., p. 59 and p. 64. (Translation J.H.)

(22) G.B., Naval Intelligence Division of the Admiralty, A Manual of Portuguese East Africa (HMSO, London, 1920), pp. 167-171 and p. 180.

(23) G.B., Naval Intelligence Division of the Admiralty, op. cit., pp. 154-162, 179-180, and 184-186. See also: Barry Neil-Tomlinson "Manica and Sofala and the Mozambique Chartered Company, 1892-1910" (University of London, Institute of Commonwealth Studies, African History Seminar, paper presented 23 May 1979), mimeo, passim.

(24) Centro de Estudos Africanos, Universidade Eduardo Mondlane, The Mozambican Miner: A Study in the Export of Labour (IICM, Maputo, 1977), especially pp. 11-15.

(25) Allen F. Isaacman, Mozambique: The Africanisation of a European Institution, The Zambesi Prazos 1750-1902 (University of Wisconsin Press, 1972), passim. For an overview of the period 1505-1884 and a reinterpretation of pre-nineteenth century Mozambican history see Serra op. cit., pp. 1-14. Serra, p. 4, rejects Isaacman's theory that the prazos were a European political institution which was Africanised. "The prazos were not a feudal institution imported from Europe nor were they a specifically African feudal system. They were also not the 'Africanisation' of a European institution. They were rather a particular expression of the action and 'fixing' of merchant capital..."

(26) Rep. Port., Ministério das Colónias, Regime dos Prazos da Zambézia: Relatório Apresentado ao Conselho Colonial, em Junho de 1915 pelo Vogal Representante da Província de Moçambique, Ernesto de Vilhena, Parecer do mesmo Conselho de 22 de Outubro desse Ano (Imprensa Nacional de Lisboa, 1916).

(27) DSAF, R.H. Lyne, Report on Quelimane 1911, Secretária Geral do Governo Geral da Prov. de Moç, Repartição de Agricultura.

(28) For details of the prazos leased by these companies and their operations in the area see: G.B., Naval Intelligence Division of the Admiralty, op. cit., pp. 163-167, and F. Gavicho de Lacerda, Costumes e Lendas da Zambézia (Lisboa, 1925), pp. 121-147.

(29) DSAF, O.W. Barrett, Relatório Geral sobre a Agricultura da Zambézia (1909), p. 1.

(30) ibid., p. 2.

(31) ibid., p. 11 et passim.

(32) DSAF, Prov. de Moç., Repartição de Agricultura, Relatório da Delegação de Quelimane (Primeiros Elementos para o Esbôço Económico-Agrícola do Distrito de Quelimane) 1924, p. 76. (Translation J.H.)

(33) ibid., loc. cit.

(34) ibid., p. 40 and p. 42. (Translation J.H.).

(35) ibid., p. 46 and p. 47.

(36) In his 1911 report on the agriculture of Zambézia, for example, the director of the government Agricultural Department wrote that Mr. Zurcher, who had been appointed as government agronomist in Quelimane, had been unable to achieve anything in his first fifteen months of office. "Mr Zurcher's first act was to condemn the Maquival Station. This plot of ground had been selected at a spot 26 kilometres from the town of Quelimane, on the Quelimane-Maquival railway. It was surrounded on three sides by a mangrove swamp and in the wet season was submerged sometimes to a depth of two metres. The wire fence being under water, I think therefore, Mr Zurcher was quite right to condemn the site on these grounds alone as an experimental station; indeed he had no other alternative. £1,200 had ben [sic] expended on it but there was nothing at all to show for this money except the wire fence and some rolls of wire on the grass... We see here at work the same system that has helped to paralyse the work of the Department of Agriculture, namely, the division of responsibility from power. Mr Zurcher has been able to do nothing. During the time that he has held the appointment - 15 months - there have been eight changes in Governorship, every Governor or Acting Governor either postponing schemes that were never carried out or stating that it would be better to wait until his successor arrived. £400 was allocated for agriculture in Quelimane in the financial year 1910-11, but how this money was spent or whether it was ever spent at all is not known to the Agronomist, nor is it known to me..." (Lyne, op. cit., pp. 62-63).

(37) Relatorio da Delegação de Quelimane... 1924, op. cit., pp. 98-102.

(38) ibid., pp. 83-84.

(39) ibid., p. 101. The machila was a litter or sedan chair carried by four men. The men carrying the litter were expected to run about four kilometres after which they were replaced by another four men. The machila was still not an uncommon form of transport in the region in the 1940s. (Interview at Alto Molócuè, 16-17 July 1976).

(40) Not all of Zambézia Province was under the administration of prazo-leaseholders. For the situation in the areas of the province administered directly by the state see pp. 51-57.

(41) Relatório do Governador do Distrito de Quelimane 1907-1909 (Imprensa Nacional, LM, 1909), p. 74. One argument against raising the 'native' tax in Zambézia was that it would lead to a flight of men to Nyasaland. The situation was little different in 1924. "Prazo Massingire, however, has been depopulated, according to all the witnesses, for other reasons. Amongst others, the proximity of the Protectorate of Nyasaland looms large, where the free labour market can lead to an eagerly desired laziness. He who travels along the Chire... hardly encounters a single living soul in Portuguese territory, but will see a string of huts on their bank where the inhabitants of Massingire, for various reasons, have settled and pay their tax, although they come to make their 'machambas', cut firewood and hunt on the fertile fields of the left [Portuguese] side." Relatório da Delegação de Quelimane... 1924, op. cit., p. 26. (Translation J.H.) Clandestine emigration from Zambezia to Nyasaland continued until the 1960s, for the same reasons. See Chapter IX.

(42) Relatório do Governador: Distrito de Quelimane 1914-1915 (Imprensa Nacional, LM, 1916), pp. 61-62.

(43) Companhia do Assúcar de Moçambique... 1895 e 1896, op. cit., p. 48. (Translation J.H.)

(44) ibid., pp. 49-59.

(45) ibid., p. 46.

(46) ibid., pp. 49-51.

(47) ibid., p. 51. (Translation J.H.)

(48) ibid., p. 49. If the illness was fictitious the man was obliged to work two days for every one missed.

(49) ibid., p. 50.

(50) ibid., p. 26. (Translation J.H.)

(51) ibid., p. 68. (Translation J.H.)

(52) ibid., pp. 9-10.

(53) Compiled from Relatório da Delegação de Quelimane... 1924, op. cit., pp. 45-54. The totals for sugar exclude sugar sold locally. They also probably exclude sugar produced on the Marromeu and Caia estates which lay in a different administrative area; the Territory of the Mozambique Company. The hectarage under European cultivation (excluding grazing land) was the following in 1923 (p. 38):

(53) continued

crop	hectares	crop	hectares
coconut	25,532	groundnut	500
sugar cane	8,651	tobacco	400
sisal	7,520	rice	350
cotton	7,400	tea	270
maize	6,500	sorghum	151
vegetables	2,607	millet	80
cassava	1,000	salad veg.	47
kapok	652	sweet potato	40
coffee	500		
		TOTAL	62,200

(54) Sena Sugar Estates Ltd., Moç. e o Prob. Açuc., op. cit., p. 78. (Translation J.H.)

(55) Gavicho de Lacerda, op. cit., p. 117.

(56) AHM, NI, Cod. 3-54, Livro de Cópias de Ofícios e Ordens de Serviço Enviados pela Secretária dos Negócios Indígenas 1905 Abril 9- 1905 Setembro 6, [in fact the correspondence in this file refers to the years 1915-1916 and not 1905 as the catalogue states] 7/46, 13 Abril, o Secretário dos Negócios Indígenas ao Governador de Quelimane.

(57) AHM, Admin. Civil, Maço 77, Número do Ordem 1026, Processo 946, Pasta No. 93, Assunto Sena Sugar Estates Ltd., 501/856, 14 Abril 30, Chefe da Repartição do Gabinete, LM.

(58) AHM, Admin. Civil, Maço 77, Pasta No. 93, op. cit., Secretária Provincial do Interiror do Alto Comissariado da Prov. de Moç. Direcção dos Serviços dos Negócios Indígenas, Informação, 19 de Junho de 1926.

(59) AHM, Admin. Civil, Maço 77, Pasta No. 93, op. cit., Alto Comissariado da Prov. de Moç., Repartição do Gabinete, Envia-Se por Ordem de Sua Exa. o Alto Comissario ao Exmo. Snr. Secretário Provincial do Interior, Cópia do Telegrama de Quelimane Datado de 6-7-926 e Registado nesta Repartição em 7-7-926 sob o Número no. 437.

(60) Relatório do Governador... Quelimane 1907-1909, op. cit., p. 47; GOV.Q, Prov. de Moç., Zambézia, Circ. do Alto Molócuè, Relatório Apresentado em Conformidade com a Ordem de Serviço No. 2/954, do Governo da Zambézia, de 4 de Março de 1954, sobre: A Circunscrição do Alto Molócuè após os Comandos Militares em 1919 e a Fundação dos seus Postos Administrativas até 1954. A Reorganização das Regedorias Indígenas, seus Limites e Sucessão de Regedores, António Henriques de Oliveira, Adm., pp. 1-5.

(61) Gavicho de Lacerda, op. cit., p. 101.

(62) Lyne, op. cit., pp. 46-47: "In these reserves (Maganja da Costa, Alto and Baixo Molocue) there is no development work going on by private companies or individuals; a somewhat surprising circumstance considering the natural advantages. I can find no explending [sic] for this except that for all practical purposes these reserves are government prazos and that as far as labour goes any settler would be at the mercy of the local administrator or commandant who exercises despotic ways over the people. He could not count on being able to obtain labour through the methods ordinarily employed in other countries, namely, by treating directly with the natives. If the commandant prohibited the chief from providing a settler with labour he could not obtain any and there is nothing to prevent a commandant so exercising his influence, if not openly, then secretly. At various stations numbers of boys and girls as well as adults are collected in from the kraals and set to work planting cassava, groundnuts, rice, cowpeas, potatoes and other annuals. The number so engaged is between 3000 and 4000 altogether.

Levies are so arranged that everyone does a certain quantity of work in the year. This system results in the monopolising of all labour by the government officials.

This labour is being employed for the most part in growing food for its own consumption, and, therefore, serves no useful public end as the people could do equally well if left alone in their own kraals. It would be, I think, in the interests of the District to discontinue this system and to direct that no compulsory labour be employed except upon necessary public works."

(63) Relatório do Governador... Quelimane 1907-1909, op. cit., pp. 238-240.

(64) ibid., pp. 71-72. (Translation J.H.)

(65) ibid., pp. 240-241: "One of the pernicious effects of the emigration consists of the discontent with which the native returned from the mines afterwards receives the wages fixed by the law of the prazos... there is no doubt that it surprises and annoys him to see that for four weeks work some only pay him 1$ 600 réis when others gave him three pounds." (Translation J.H.) The Governor continued that higher wages on the Rand were putting pressure on wages on the prazos. When one leaseholder put his wages up to attract labour the others were forced to follow suit if they did not want to see their labour force disappear.

(66) CAM... 1904-1905 op. cit., p. 5. (Translation J.H.)

(67) Relatório do Governador... Quelimane 1907-1909, op. cit., pp. 237-238. (Translation J.H.)

(68) ibid., p. 131.

(69) ibid., p. 73.

(70) ibid., p. 52.

(71) ibid., pp. 98-100.

(72) Relatório do Governador... Quelimane 1914-1915, op. cit., pp. 62-65; Serra, op. cit., p. 21, argues that the ban on the recruitment of labour for the South African mines above parallel 22° after 1913 was not the result of employers' concern about the health of men from the tropics, which was the official justification for the ban. Rather it was brought into force because planters in Zambézia and northern Mozambique themselves required cheap labour. "Parallel 22 became, especially from 1913, rather than a geographical division between areas with different levels of physical robustness a battlefield between two sections of capital struggling for the provision of cheap labour: the south, South African mining capital acting through WENELA, and the north, plantation capital..." (Translation J.H.) Martin Legassick and Francine de Clerq, on the other hand, argue that the restriction on recruiting labour north of parallel 22° was the result of internal developments in South Africa. From 1900 onwards, white workers in South Africa called on the state to redistribute labour in production by protecting jobs on a racial basis and to intervene "to ensure that the undercutting effect on wage levels of the penal contract system did not extend to them... As a result of economic and political struggles of white workers... the state did intervene in these chauvinistic, racist ways: the job colour bar regulations under the 1911 Mines and Works Act, the ending of "tropical" recruitment in 1913, ... are examples. Simultaneously, the state and employers began to institutionalise an "internal" recruitment network which, to the extent that it could secure a sufficient supply, would provide the basis for a nationalistic phasing out of "foreign labour." (Emphasis added) ("Capitalism and Migrant Labour in Southern Africa: The Origins and Nature of the System" (University of London, Institute of Commonwealth Studies, Postgraduate Seminar, Labour Migration within the Empire-Commonwealth from 1780, 13 June [1977]). Given the Portuguese state's overwhelming need for revenue during this period; revenue which could most easily be secured by the recruitment of labour for South Africa, it seems unlikely that the Portuguese state would have been able to oppose the interests of South African mining capital if internal developments both within the mining industry and in the society had not themselves led to a restriction on the recruitment of "tropical" labour. Thus although planters in Zambézia and northern Mozambique benefitted from the ban, they benefitted not because of their growing importance and ability to shape Portuguese colonial policy, but because the changing pattern of capital accumulation in South Africa enabled them to pursue their own interests.

(73) Relatório da Delegação de Quelimane... 1924, op. cit., p. 34. Many men were absent from their homes for longer than six months. The journey from Alto Molócuè, from where much of the labour engaged under the terms of the Hornung Contract came, to Mopeia, took three weeks each way (ibid., p. 31). Thus men recruited from the state-administered area of Alto Molócuè for labour on the prazos could expect to be away at least seven and a half months and longer still if they had not worked consistently throughout the contract period.

(74) Relatório da Delegação de Quelimane... 1924, op. cit., p. 27.

CHAPTER II

THE LABOUR LEGISLATION OF 1930

If the first 40 years of colonial capitalism in Mozambique can be characterised as ones in which the state was too weak to impose a policy which would aid capital accumulation in Portugal, the next 30 years were notable for the growing strength of the state and its ability to reorientate colonial policy to serve both the interests of metropolitan capital in Portugal and Portuguese capital in Mozambique. Admittedly, the state was never strong enough to break the pattern of dependence established in the previous era. The massive export of labour to South Africa and the rail-links and port facilities which served South Africa and Rhodesia continued as the main fonts of revenue. Nevertheless, from the last years of the 1920s a new colonial policy began to take shape in Lisbon which sought to integrate the colonial and metropolitan economies, and to open up the possibility of expanded production and accumulation in both. In Salazar's words, the role of the colonies was henceforth to be one of "producing and selling raw materials to the metropole and with the price of these to buy manufactured goods from it."(1)

The regime headed by António Salazar from 1928 until his death in 1968 came to power as a result of a military coup in 1926. The regime, promising strong government and an end to the political turmoil which had characterised the country for the past decades, united the various fractions of the Portuguese bourgeoisie. Each too

weak in themselves to assume state power, they came together in support of a government which was pledged to struggle against the effects of the growing international recession and strengthen the economy.(2)

The thrust of the new regime's policies was directed at boosting national capital and protecting it from foreign competition. The state intervened in the banking system and introduced fiscal measures designed to resolve the country's acute financial crisis and reduce the national debt. It intervened in the manufacturing sector to save the tobacco industry which was in danger of collapse. It gave subsidies to the national shipping industry. It supported the mining sector and pledged investment in communications designed to help agricultural producers.(3)

Similar policies were pursued in the colonies with the aim of counteracting the effects of the depression, encouraging colonial production and providing protected markets for Portuguese manufactured goods. To this end colonial policy was directed from Lisbon through the Minister of the Colonies, who was responsible for appointing and supervising colonial governors. The finances of the colonies were overhauled and in Mozambique strict foreign-exchange regulations were introduced to prevent the flow of gold and foreign exchange from the colony. Protectionist measures were strengthened to reduce colonial dependence on foreign-manufactured goods and encourage the import of Portuguese-manufactured goods, and to increase the export of colonial produce to Portugal. In addition the state provided aid to enterprises which were in danger of failing as a result of the

fall in the value of their exports during the depression. It also made available credit and special terms for those wishing to invest in the colonies. These measures culminated in the 1932 Monetary Decree which tightened and drew together the existing legislation, and in a series of proposals arising from a Commercial Conference held in Lisbon in the same year, designed to strengthen the existing policy. Together they formed the embryo of a comprehensive development plan for Mozambique.(4)

From the point of view of this study, however, the most important changes introduced by the new regime concerned labour. Underpinning the policies of the Salazar government was the need to guarantee the conditions under which accumulation took place in the colonies and to extend these to new investors. In Mozambique this meant ironing out the anomalies of the old labour regime. To this end state administration was extended to the area conceded to the Niassa Company and to the prazos, both of which ceased to exist. In place of the two labour regimes which had previously existed a uniform state-administered labour system was imposed. Central to the new labour system was the labour legislation. This covered everything related to the employment of 'native' labour in the colony.

THE LABOUR LAW

> The Government of the Republic does not impose, nor does it permit that any form of obligatory or forced labour is demanded of the natives of its colonies for private ends, but it does insist that they fulfill the moral duty which necessarily falls on them of seeking through work the means of subsistence, thus contributing to the general interest of humanity.

The boldly stated words of the preamble of the 1928 Código do Trabalho dos Indígenas nas Colónias Portugueses de África (5) sum up the ambiguity of the legislation enacted by the Salazar regime. Forced labour for private ends was expressly prohibited, but Africans had a moral duty to work. It was by citing the first words of this preamble that the colonial government was to consistently deny that it resorted to forced labour practises, when challenged over the next 30 years. It was through enforcing the clauses of the law which established how Africans were to fulfil their duty to work that the government made sure that forced labour, where voluntary labour was not available, continued to furnish the needs of private employers. Denials of forced labour practises notwithstanding, the whole thrust of the labour law and other laws which supplemented it was to oblige men to take up regular wage work whether they wanted to or not.

The 1928 Código do Trabalho dos Indígenas (CTI) was the basic document covering the conditions of 'native' employment in all the Portuguese colonies in Africa. It remained in force until 1962. This law laid down the guidelines to be followed by the individual colonial governments in matters relating to labour but allowed them to adapt the law to suit their own specific circumstances.(6) The CTI was therefore supplemented by a Regulation governing 'native' labour in each of the major African colonies. In many places the individual Regulations exactly repeat the words of the CTI. In other places they amplify its clauses or abbreviate them by referring back to them. However, they differ only in substance to the degree that the individual legislation introduces new material to govern a particular set of circumstances which do not apply generally, such as,

for example, labour recruitment to South Africa from Mozambique. The CII and the Regulamento do Trabalho dos Indígenas na Colónia de Moçambique (RTI)(7) which was approved in 1930, can, therefore, be treated as one body of legislation; a body of legislation which ruled the lives of African peasants and workers in Zambézia until 1962. However, to avoid confusion, the analysis which follows will concentrate on the RTI, making occasional references back to the CTI.

Just as the CII prohibited forced labour for private ends, so did the RTI. "Obligatory work for private ends is absolutely forbidden. Those who impose it will be punished."(8) However, the prohibition on raising labour by force for private employers was not a prohibition on the use of forced labour as such. In certain circumstances forced labour could be mobilised for public work, or work of interest to the 'natives' themselves.

There were three categories of obligatory labour recognised in law. Firstly, where government agencies or the municipality were unable to attract sufficient volunteer labour they were allowed to recruit workers by force. In this situation workers were to be afforded the same conditions and wages as voluntary labour. Secondly, the government and its agents were permitted to resort to force to mobilise labour to deal with natural calamities. Natural calamities ranged from floods and insect plagues to the extermination of rodents and control of epidemics. People obliged to work in these circumstances received food and shelter and a gratuity at the end of their period of service, but no wages. Finally, the local authorities were allowed to forcibly recruit people for a whole range of services

connected with 'native' living conditions and agriculture. These included road maintenance, cleaning villages and suburbs, maintaining wells and watering points for animals, and growing crops in African reserves whose income would revert to the peasants. For services of this type the government provided tools, materials and seeds but it did not pay any wages.(9)

It was the responsibility of the local administrative officials to raise labour for public works. Theoretically they could only resort to force when persuasion was not effective. However, whether they used force or persuasion they were enjoined to work through the 'native' authorities and choose men for public works who had shown themselves the most 'lazy'.

> As much in the employment of persuasion as the forceful means they might need to use, they [the administrative officials] will always act through the native chiefs, and, in agreement with them, distribute the burdens of work and choose the natives who most abuse laziness and who without prejudicing their economic activities can be employed on work of public interest.(10)

The meaning of laziness becomes clear if we examine the categories of people exempt from public work.

There were several categories of 'natives' who were exempt from the obligation to do public work: boys under 14 and men over 60; the sick and invalid; sipaios and anyone else who worked for the state or the security services; recognised 'native' chiefs. Also exempt were men who had worked for at least six months in the colony or men who had returned from working a contract abroad, as long as neither group had been out of work for more than six months. Women were exempt from the first type of public work but could be

recruited for either of the other two types of work as long as this did not involve them leaving the area where they lived.(11) In effect, all able-bodied women and young boys, and any man who was not attached to the civil service or military, and who had been without regular employment for six months, could be forcibly recruited for public work by the state.

The law, therefore, not only made provision for the labour needs of the government, by allowing administrators to press men into public work when volunteer labour was not forthcoming in sufficient numbers, but it also established a deterrent against "laziness". Men who refused to take up employment after a six month period were the first to be recruited for public work. The prohibition on the use of forced labour by private employers was, therefore, no more than a legal nicety designed to disguise the real object of the labour law, which was to establish the conditions in which men would be obliged to seek employment with private companies and individuals.

Besides establishing a system of punishments the effect of which was to discourage men from avoiding regular wage work, the law also included clauses intended to ensure that men fulfilled their contracts with private employers. Firstly, any man who had signed a contract but who had failed to appear at the work place, or any man who had failed to complete a contract, could be sent or returned to his employer.

> It is not considered as an imposition of obligatory work any act practised by the authorities or civil servants to oblige natives to take or retake work for which they have entered a voluntary contract, when, without a just cause recognised by the curador or his agents, they refuse to take this work, or abandon it before finishing the contract.(12)

Secondly any man who committed a minor crime or who infringed the labour law could be condemned to correctional work. There were numerous infringements of the labour law. Article 311 of the RTI stated that:

> Workers will be punished with correctional work up to a year, depending on the gravity of the fault committed:
> 1. who do not fulfill the duties which fall on them in terms of Article 107...

Article 107 defined these duties as:

> 1. To obey the orders of the boss in everything that is in agreement with the prescriptions of the present Regulation;
> 2. to carry out the work with which he is entrusted, with zeal and in the best possible way, compatible with his strength and aptitudes;
> 3. to compensate the boss for the losses and damage he wilfully causes, agreeing to the discounts which are authorised by the authorities;
> 4. not to leave the work-place without the prior authorisation of the boss.

Article 311 continued:

> Workers will be punished with correctional work...
> 2. who sell goods... or any other products of the same type as those which are harvested or made on the property or the establishment where they work, if they cannot prove that they acquired them legally;
> 3. who disturb or try to disturb the discipline and good order of the places where they work;
> 4. who are absent from the workplace without the permission of the boss or his representative, except when they are going to present complaint or protest to the local authority;
> 5. who are habitually drunk or who habitually engage in other vices or practise immoral acts which disturb the discipline of the workers or which show a lack of respect for the bosses and other people;
> 6. who engage in theft, wilful damage and other crimes or contraventions to which a more serious penalty does not apply;
> 7. who refuse to carry out the duties for which they were engaged when such services are compatible with their aptitudes and robustness and conform with the dispositions of this Regulation;
> 8. who disobey the instructions, orders or notices of the authorities.(13)

Men condemned to correctional work were liable to work only for the government or local municipality. They received 30-60 per cent of the wage payable for identical work elsewhere.(14) However, half of this wage was discounted to cover any losses such as advances on wages, recruiting costs and the like, which the employer might have incurred as a result of the worker's 'desertion' or error. Only if no compensation was owing to the employer, did the worker receive the other half of the wage.(15)

Like those men who did not 'voluntarily' seek employment after a six month break, and who were therefore liable to obligatory work, men who transgressed the labour laws or general laws of the colony found themselves liable to undertake correctional work. This involved not only an extension of the period worked but also a loss of earnings. Thus, correctional work, like obligatory work, was intended as a deterrent. It was designed to discourage men from desertion, shirking and inciting indiscipline at the work place.

Taken together, those clauses of the labour law which allowed various forms of forced labour for public work undermined the prohibition on the use of forced labour for private ends. They ensured that, even if not directly recruited by force, men would take up and complete a regular contract with a private employer. The combined effect of these aspects of the labour law was to guarantee not only that labour would be available to those who needed it, but that the contracted men would also work hard and refrain from criticising or rebelling against the conditions of their labour.

ENFORCEMENT OF THE LAW

All African men over the age of 18 were required by law to carry a caderneta or pass.(16) The pass contained a comprehensive biography of the individual and his background. More importantly, however, from the point of view of law enforcement, it also contained details of his last period of employment. Firstly, the pass registered the colony, concelho (urban district) or circumscrição (rural district) where the pass was issued, and gave the number of the register in which it was recorded. Secondly the pass recorded the name and domicile of the bearer, and the concelho or circumscrição in which he normally lived; the names of his parents and their place of residence if known; the name and probable age of his wife if the bearer was married and sexes and probable ages of his children. Thirdly, the pass contained a print of the left or both thumbs. Fourthly, it contained details of his normal employment. These included the name of the employer and place of employment, the bearer's salary and the date and length of the last contract. Fifthly, the pass registered the date on which the bearer had left his employment and 'the way in which he fulfilled his obligations as a native worker."(17) Finally the law included the recommendation that:

> besides these details, it is obligatory that those which refer to the payment of the native tax ... and any other details which are of practical usefulness with regard to the life of the natives and easy proof of his identity, rights and fulfilment of his duties, should be declared."(18)
> (emphasis added)

Through the pass system the agents of the colonial government who were responsible for enforcing the law: administrators, their

assistants and the 'native authorities', were armed with an efficient and reliable weapon for putting the law into immediate effect. If the pass did not record the date of a contract, or if six months had lapsed since the previous contract had terminated, the bearer was liable to instant arrest and punishment in the form of obligatory or correctional labour. The pass thus allowed colonial officials to apprehend at a glance any man who had failed to take up a contract or who had failed to complete one.

The pass system also served another purpose. Without a valid pass a man could neither leave the area where he lived nor seek voluntary employment.(19) The pass system therefore facilitated control of the physical movement of African men. It helped administrators and their assistants to prevent men from leaving the province in search of better-paid work elsewhere. It also enabled administrators to keep a register of the numbers of men available for work and a record of their employment, which, when combined with the other labour statistics kept by administrators, and the returns of employers, allowed the provincial authorities to control the distribution of labour.

THE DISTRIBUTION OF LABOUR

Recruiting Licences

With a few minor exceptions all private employers were obliged to possess annual recruiting licences, which were issued by the administrative authorities.(20) Four types of licences were

issued depending on the type of recruitment undertaken. Firstly, employers could request a licence to recruit directly on their own behalf. For this type of licence a deposit of 500 escudos was required and an annual sum of 100 escudos was paid for the licence.(21) When the applicant for a licence of this type was a company with properties in more than one administrative district its managers could be nominated as recruiters. In this case an additional annual tax was payable on the licence.(22) Men recruited by such firms could not leave their own administrative district without first being presented to the administrator.(23) A company applying for a licence to recruit on its own behalf was obliged to hand in to the administrator in whose district his company was located, among other things, the names of his properties, the type of work they undertook and where they were situated, the number of workers employed monthly during the previous year, the annual wages bill, a list of the regions where the company wanted to recruit and the number of workers required during the period of the licence's validity.(24)

The second type of licence applied to recruitment agencies operating on behalf of other employers in the colony. Recruitment agencies were allowed to engage labour for agricultural and industrial concerns which asked for their services. The Governor General of the colony decided on the number of such agencies and the length of time that they were considered necessary.(25) Each recruitment agency was staffed by a general engager with the help of one or two European auxiliaries and an equal number of African auxiliaries. The area in which the society could operate, while not

necessarily confined to one administrative district, was limited by the Governor General. Within this area the general engager could recruit workers for anyone who asked for his services. However, the area in which the general engager operated in no way constituted a reserve and anyone else who held a recruiting licence was entitled to recruit within the area.(26) general engagers paid a deposit of 5000 escudos for their licences and an annual fee of 2000 escudos.(27)

The third type of recruiting licence was granted to farmers, industrialists, business men and proprietors who formed non-profit making societies to recruit workers for their establishments. Workers recruited by these societies were distributed among the members on a ration basis. These societies were obliged to have a representative in Lourenço Marques to liaise with the Governor General who chose the recruiting agent.(28)

Finally, there were agencies which recruited men for work outside the Colony. They were regulated by the Modus Vivendi and any other Treaties or Conventions in force.(29) In practise, labour recruitment for work abroad was only permitted in the south of the country and in Tete Province. In the area south of the river Save WENELA held a monopoly on labour recruitment.(30) Hence this type of licence only effectively applied to Tete.

Zambézia as a Labour Reserve

In Zambézia Province the ban on recruitment of labour for work outside the colony(31) was extended to a ban on recruitment of

workers for projects in other provinces of the colony. A law of 1929(32) described Zambézia as a 'labour reserve' for employers within the province. The 1929 law was a re-enactment of an earlier law of 1919(33), which appears to have lapsed in the intervening years. There is little direct evidence available about either of the laws. However circumstantial evidence suggests possible reasons for their creation. In the case of the 1919 law there were probably three reasons. Firstly, wages were always higher in Manica and Sofala (the territory of the Mozambique Company) than in Zambézia.(34) Secondly, until the world recession of the late 1920s there was a continual labour shortage in central Mozambique. The law was therefore, presumably created to prevent the outward flow of labour to the south which would have exacerbated the labour problems of planters in Zambézia. The third reason relates directly to the second and concerns SSE's labour recruiting policy. By 1919, as we have already seen, SSF was already employing some 20,000 men a year. SSF's plantations straddled the Zambesi river and were therefore located both in the territory of the Mozambique Company and Zambézia. To avoid paying the higher wages in force in the territory of the Mozambique Company SSF employed large numbers of men from Zambézia, at the rate in force there, on its plantations on the south bank of the river.(35) The law was probably, at least in part, designed to prevent this practise. It was presumably not put into effect, because, as one of the few successful plantations in the province, SSE was in a strong bargaining position with regard to labour. However, by 1929 the threat of an outward flow of labour to the south was not acute. Indeed the general shortage of labour in the region had given way to a glut of men on the labour market as peasants were

forced to seek work to pay their taxes; taxes which they could not meet through the sale of their produce because of falling prices.(36) It seems reasonable to assume, therefore, that the re-enactment of the law in 1929 was part of the general labour policy brought into force by the new regime. Fearing another labour shortage when the region recovered from the depression, the regime was anxious to protect local planters and safeguard their labour supply. In the short-term while the supply of labour was abundant the law could be ignored.(37) Whatever the reasons for the law its aim was to consolidate the ability of the provincial government to distribute labour. The province, in theory, at least formed a sealed area from which labour recruitment for other provinces was banned.

The law defining Zambézia as a labour reserve was consolidated by those clauses of the RTI which allowed administrators to control the physical movement of men (through the pass system) and control the distribution of labour through the issuing of recruiting licences. Together they were intended to ensure that the labour available in the province was sufficient for employers' needs, and was distributed on the basis of those needs. In this way competition between employers for labour could be held in check.

Contracts

Besides issuing recruiting licences, local administrators were also responsible for supervising contracts between employers/recruiters and the men they wished to engage. These contracts were of two types: contracts with the intervention of the authorities and contracts without the intervention of the authorities.

Contracts with the intervention of the authority could only be made after the contracted men had presented their passes to the administrator who verified that they were eligible to be recruited. It was the administrator's duty to establish that both parties had agreed to all the clauses of the contract without coercion, and that the contract was legal. Contracts celebrated in this way were individual, (unless the worker's wife and children accompanied him), except when they involved a group of men recruited to work for the same length of time in the same place. All contracts had to be signed in the presence of the administrator or his agent if they involved the contracted men leaving the administrative area where they lived.(38) Given the pattern of labour recruitment in Zambezia, where large firms recruited much of their labour outside the administrative division where the plantation was situated, the majority of workers signed their contracts in the presence of the administrator.(39)

Contracts without the intervention of the authority could only be made when the worker intended to work in the administrative division where he lived, or voluntarily appeared before an employer outside this area. In the latter case he could only be employed if his pass indicated that he was free to offer his services.(40) Contracts made without the intervention of the authorities were of two types: verbal or written. Verbal contracts were usually made by private families requiring domestic workers. They lasted for an indefinite period of time although they had to be renewed either weekly or monthly. The employer was obliged to inform the local administrator about the principal conditions of the contract and the

identity of the contracting parties.(41) Written contracts could be either individual or collective, and had to be signed by the employer or his representative at the work place. These contracts had to be sent to the administrator of the area where the work-place was located within eight days. When workers agreeing to this type of contract came from another administrative district copies of the contract had to be sent to their own administrator.(42) If the employer normally employed more than ten workers he was required to send monthly returns of the numbers of men employed to the local administrator.(43)

Contracts without the intervention of the authority were designed principally for large employers who drew casual labour from the immediate vicinity of the work place, for employers who engaged volunteer labour from other areas, for small employers who relied on local labour for their needs, and for families who engaged volunteer labour for domestic work. Contracts without the intervention of the authority, therefore, in general, only applied to men who worked in the area where they lived or to men who voluntarily sought work in another administrative district. However, the number of men who voluntarily sought work outside their own administrative district was limited. There were two main reasons for this, both of which related to the revenue the state acquired from controlling the supply of labour to private employers.

REVENUE DERIVING FROM THE STATE'S CONTROL OF LABOUR

Fees Payable on Contracts

For each worker contracted with the intervention of the authorities (men recruited for work in another administrative district) the employer was obliged to pay a tax of three escudos fifty centavos. For each man recruited without the intervention of the authorities on a written contract (for work in the administrative division where he lived) the employer was obliged to pay a tax of three escudos. In both cases two escudos fifty centavos was paid directly into the state coffers by the local administrator. The balance of the tax was retained by the administrator to cover the cost of issuing or dealing with contracts.(44) No tax was collected for men who voluntarily sought work outside their own administrative district. Thus not only did the existence of large numbers of volunteer workers undermine efficient administrative control of labour but it also meant a loss of revenue. It was therefore in the state's interest to restrict the number of volunteer workers.

The 'Native' Tax

One of the major responsibilities of the colonial administrators and the hierarchy of 'native chiefs' who assisted them, was to organise the collection of the 'native' tax. To this end the administrative divisions of the colony were organised on the basis of population distribution in order that the maximum number of people could be covered for tax-collection purposes with the minimum

expense.(45) They rarely took account of the economic, social and ethnic composition of particular regions. Changes in the administrative divisions of the colony were usually the result of changes in the composition of the population or the administrator's inability to effectively supervise the areas under his jurisdiction.(46) Likewise, the reorganisation of the 'native authorities' was undertaken at various times to ensure a more efficient system of tax collection and the application of the labour laws.(47)

An annual census was taken ostensibly to provide accurate information about the number of tax payers in each administrative district. In fact, census taking was usually deficient and irregular because of the lack of resources and manpower and often took place in the administrative office using the previous year's figures as a base.(48) Nevertheless, however inaccurate, the census did provide a guide to the number of taxes which were available for collection. It also provided information about the numbers of men available for wage work, since, with a few exceptions, men eligible for the full tax contribution were also those who were obliged to work for six months of the year.

From the reports available, the tax collected from the African population of Zambézia appears to have been the single most important item of direct revenue in the district budget in the twentieth century.(49) Administrators were, therefore, anxious to collect as many taxes as possible. Their zeal was such, or the census unreliability was such, that reports for the 1940s and 1950s show that in many instances the percentage of tax collected was greater

than the percentage estimated as owing.(50) To facilitate tax collection and to guarantee regular revenue for the state from this source, both the CTI and the RTI allowed administrators to demand the tax when passes were examined either before men left to take up a contract or when they returned from a contract.

Tax Collection

Without a valid pass, as we have seen, men could not be recruited for work outside their own administrative district. Before they left the district they were obliged to hand their pass to the administrator. Among other things the pass registered the date of the last tax payment. If the tax was due and the man was unable to pay it the pass was invalid and the man could not leave the district. To facilitate both tax collection and labour recruitment therefore recruiters were allowed to advance a sum towards the payment of the tax when they contracted workers.(51) Thus, encouraging men to take up a contract with a private employers was a sure means of guaranteeing tax payment.

The law also allowed administrators to collect the tax at the end of the contract. All men recruited for work outside their own district on a contract with the intervention of the authorities, and men working in their own district on a written contract of over three months duration (without the intervention of the authorities) received half their wages for the contract period at the workplace. The employer was obliged to remit the other half of the monthly wage to the administrator of the men's home district for payment at

the end of the contract.(52) Since men were obliged to hand in their pass to the administrator when they came to receive the deferred wage the tax could be deducted from the wage before it was paid.

Only men who worked in their own district for less than three consecutive months, and men on a verbal contract outside their home district, received their wages in full at the work place.(53) In the former case the administrator still retained control over the tax payer since he could not leave the area without first presenting his pass to the authorities. In the latter case, control was less easy to maintain since the man had already left the district. Collecting the tax was also less easy for the same reason. Thus the second reason volunteer labour was discouraged by administrators was to ensure regular tax payment in the home district.(54)

ADMINISTRATIVE INVOLVEMENT IN RECRUITING

Through the RTI colonial administrators were responsible for issuing recruitment licences and supervising recruiters. They were responsible for issuing and supervising contracts. They were responsible for collecting the 'native' tax, which could most easily be done by making sure that men took up a regular contract with a private employer. They were responsible for punishing men who abused 'laziness' and who infringed the labour law. They were responsible, in fact, for supervising every aspect of the law and carrying it out, except one. Administrators were specifically prohibited from raising labour by force for private employers. They

were, therefore, also forbidden from directly recruiting men for private employers.

> The authorities... are absolutely prohibited from:
> 1. recruiting native workers for the service of private individuals or companies, either directly or through the mediation of the civil servants or agents of authority who are subordinate to them.(55)

Yet administrators, as we have seen, had powerful reasons for intervening directly in the recruitment of workers for private companies, not least of which were the need to collect the 'native' tax and to make sure that the 'natives' fulfilled their duty to work. It therefore seems unlikely, given the whole thrust of the law, and given also the close and regular contact administrators necessarily maintained with both recruiters and the men they recruited, that the prohibition should stand without qualification. A careful reading of the law reveals that qualifications indeed existed.

Article 34 of the RTI, for example, states that administrators were not prevented from helping recruiters to carry out their work. Indeed, it was their duty to do so:

> All the authorities who exercise jurisdiction over the native population or who, in the exercise of their functions, are in direct contact with those populations, have a duty to facilitate the work of all those who need to recruit workers, as long as those who exercise this office seek to convince the natives to contract their services by legal and honest means.(56)

Article 35 described the forms this help could take.

> The facilities to be given to recruiters must be limited to the following acts:
> 1. indicate to them the places in which, because of greater population density, less need for the natives to attend to their own agriculture, or other reasons of the moment, they can most easily proceed with recruitment...
> 3. To advise the natives, and their chiefs, in the presence of the recruiters themselves or outside it, to procure work, but always explaining to them that in no way can they be obliged to contract their services with these recruiters...(57)

Finally, Article 36 stated that although administrators were not allowed to be seen recruiting for private companies, nor could they direct their subordinates to do so, this injunction did not include "the fortuitous cases where the authorities of their subordinates travel in the company of recruiters, as long as they do not do so with the intention of, through their presence, coercing the natives to enter a contract..."(58)

As we shall see in Chapter IV the 'fortuitous' cases in which administrators or their subordinates accompanied private recruiters were numerous. Indeed, so numerous were they that more fortuitous were the cases when administrators were not helping recruiters. Far from being the exception, the direct recruitment of forced labour for private companies was the rule. If administrators wished to carry out their duties diligently they had little option but to help private recruiters. The 1930 labour law therefore established the conditions in which plantation capital in Zambézia could call on the state for abundant supplies of labour. However, planters not only required large numbers of workers they also needed cheap labour. Through the clauses of the law which established the wage levels to be paid to African labourers the state also ensured that the second principal need of planters in the region would be fulfilled.

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TAXES, WAGES AND CONTRACT LABOUR - THE PROVISION OF CHEAP LABOUR

Besides its obvious function as a source of revenue for the state the 'native' tax was also designed to serve another purpose. It was intended as an additional means of forcing men to enter a regular contract with a private employer.

> Some diplomas, and all those who have tramped the colonies with their eyes open, recognise that the work of taking the census and collecting the native tax are, without doubt, the most important of all the duties which fall on the circumscriptions and posts, because they make the native feel the obedience which he owes to the sovereign power and to the people of whom he is becoming a part and who hope to integrate him in their civilisation; and they are also the most rigorous and intelligent stimulation for the natives to take up work and are at the same time a token of their submission and discipline.(59) (emphasis added)

To this end the RTI contained a series of clauses which regulated the relationship between taxes and wages.

The RTI established the minimum wage levels for the different types of work 'natives' were to undertake. These were related directly to the tax in force. When the tax altered the minimum wage levels altered correspondingly. The monthly wage of a worker was to vary between 25 per cent and 40 per cent of the annual tax. The minimum percentage applied to workers engaged for agricultural work in their own districts. The maximum percentage applied to men working outside the colony or who were engaged for special work inside it. Workers engaged on contracts for agricultural work outside their home districts or for other types of work in them received the difference between the two percentages, that is, 32.5 per cent of the annual tax, per month.(60)

In effect, these percentages meant that in the extreme case where men had no alternative means of paying the tax, it was necessary for them to spend at least four months in wage work to pay off the tax if they were contracted for agricultural work in their own district, and three months in wage labour if they were contracted for agricultural work outside it. In both cases these were minimum periods since, clearly, any man without alternative means of paying the tax also had other financial commitments. Furthermore, the tax could only be met within these periods if the man worked every day of the contract and completed his daily task, on which payment of the day's wages depended.(61) Failure to do so meant a loss of earnings and a consequent extension of the period spent in wage labour to meet the tax. However, most men in Zambézia had access to land and independent means of production. Indeed, it was precisely because peasants would not willingly leave the land in search of wage work that the elaborate legislation was necessary in the first place. To prevent men from meeting the tax by selling their own produce, and hence avoiding wage labour, the clauses of the law designed to encourage them to take up wage work came into play.

As we have seen, men who did not voluntarily take up a contract with a private employer could be forced to work for the government. Whether men volunteered for wage work or were directly coerced into it, the effects were the same. The man's family was deprived of male labour for a significant period of the year. The absence of the man for six months increased the amount of time his family needed to spend on the production of crops either for

direct consumption or for sale to meet additional subsistence needs. This in turn reduced the amount of time available for the production of a surplus which could be sold to pay the tax. Hence it increased the likelihood of at least part of the tax being met from the man's wages. This in turn acted as an additional indirect means of ensuring that men took up regular wage work.

Through the mechanisms designed to ensure that men worked regularly, for six months of the year, including the financial mechanism of the tax, the law established the conditions in which a rotating supply of labour would be made available to private employers. Put another way, the state established the mechanisms for institutionalising migrant labour. Resting on the use of labour drawn from the peasantry, and therefore on the use of labour which had access to independent means of production, the migrant system had one major advantage over the use of permanent proletarianised labour from the employer's point of view. Capital was able to buy labour power below value. Whereas the wage normally paid to a worker who had no other means of support to fall back on had to cover, among other things, the cost of any taxes demanded by the state, the worker's own subsistence needs and those of his family throughout his working life, the wage paid to these migrant workers barely covered the cost of the tax and the means for keeping the worker alive during the contract period. It did not cover his family's needs, nor his needs between contracts. The migrant system thus provided employers with a supply of cheap labour. It is within this context that the meaning of the wage levels established in the legislation become clear. Although described as minimum wage

levels they were in fact designed as a ceiling beyond which wages should not rise. They were intended as maximum wage levels, which, because of their inability to sustain the families of contract workers (through the stipulation that the monthly wage only had to cover a proportion of the annual tax) would ensure the reproduction of the migrant system and hence the reproduction of cheap labour.(62)

The cheap labour system as a whole was protected from erosion from within by the clauses of the law which guaranteed the rational distribution of labour between employers. This meant that pressure on wages which might have arisen through competition for labour was controlled (by ensuring that all employers had access to sufficient labour for their needs). The system was also protected by the clauses of the law which denied Africans any human or civil rights, and restricted their freedom to seek better-paid employment elsewhere. Any attempt by men to avoid wage labour was prima facie evidence of 'laziness' with the legal penalty that laziness invoked: obligatory labour. Any attempt to struggle for higher wages or improve conditions could be construed as a contravention of the labour law. Infringements of the labour law, as we have seen, were punished by a term of correctional labour. Workers were therefore denied any legal means of protecting or furthering their own interests. Employers' interests, on the other hand, were fully protected by the law. By giving the state monopoly control over labour the law established the conditions in which private capital could call on cheap and abundant supplies of labour.

NOTES

(1) Fransisco Rafael et al., Portugal, Capitalismo e Estado Novo: Algumas Contribuicões para o seu Estudo (Edicões Afrontamento, Porto, 1976), p. 94. (Translation J.H.)

(2) ibid., pp. 115-144.

(3) Leonard H. Leach, Report on Economic Conditions in Portugal with Notes on the Financial Situation in Angola and Mozambique, March 1928, Department of Overseas Trade (HMSO, London, 1928), passim. Some of the measures taken by the government to cope with the financial crisis were felt to be dangerous by the author (p. 14).

(4) H.A. Ford, Economic Conditions in Portuguese East Africa, October 1932, No. 537, Department of Overseas Trade (HMSO, London, 1933), passim.

(5) Rep. Port., Colónia de Angola, Código do Trabalho dos Indígenas nas Colónias Portuguesas de África, Aprovado por Decreto No 16: 199 de 6 de Dezembro de 1928, Anotada pela Direcção dos Serviços da Administracão Civil (2ª edição, Imprensa Nacional da Província de Angola, Luanda, 1956). (Translation J.H.)

(6) ibid., preamble, p. 8. 'Natives' were defined as "individuals of the negro race, or descended from it, who, because of their learning and customs are not distinguishable from the rest of that race" (Art. 2, p. 15). (Translation J.H.) In a sub-clause of the same Article governors of the individual colonies were given the power to define who, within their colony, was to be included in the category of 'native'. This was an important amendment because the status of "mistos" [people of mixed descent] was not clearly defined. Apart from the problem of "mistos" within Mozambique the problem of those who were defined as 'natives' also arose when labour was transferred between colonies. For a discussion of the implications of this situation on the wages policy pursued by plantation capital see Chapter V below.

(7) Rep. Port., Regulamento do Trabalho dos Indígenas na Colónia de Moçambique, Aprovado por Portaria No. 1:180 de 4 de Setembro de 1930 (2ª edição, Imprensa Nacional de Moçambique, LM, 1947), hereinafter referred to in all subsequent notes as RTI.

(8) ibid., Art. 271, p. 78. (Translation J.H.)

(9) ibid., Arts. 272-273, pp. 79-80.

(10) ibid., Art. 275, único, p. 80. (Translation J.H.)

(11) ibid., Art. 277, pp. 80-81.

(12) ibid., Art. 276, p. 80. (Translation J.H.)

(13) ibid., Art. 311, pp. 91-92 and Art. 107, p. 33. (Translation J.H.)

(14) ibid., Arts. 279-280, p. 81.

(15) ibid., Arts. 281-282, p. 81. Art. 189, p. 57 discussed what was to happen to the wages owing to workers who had contravened the law. Where a worker had failed to complete the contract satisfactorily part of the outstanding wage was to be paid to the employer to cover the advance on wages paid when the man signed the contract. The remainder was to be sent to the administrator. If the worker had 'deserted', that is, left the work place without just cause, he lost any wages owing to him. These were to be handed to the administrator to be paid into a special fund for "native assistance". There was therefore, an additional financial deterrent against failing to complete a contract, or completing a contract satisfactorily, written into the law.

(16) CTI, op. cit., Art. 90, p. 43. RTI, op. cit., Art. 85, p. 28.

(17) CTI, op. cit., Art. 90, p. 43. (Translation J.H.)

(18) ibid., pp. 43-44. (Translation J.H.)

(19) Rep. Port., Principal Legislação da Colónia de Moçambique 1926-1932, (Mandada Publicar pela Portaria Ministerial de 23 de Agosto de 1932) de Maio de 1926 a 31 de Dezembro de 1932, Vol. I (Imprensa Nacional de Moçambique, LM, 1933), p. 7 ff. Portaria No. 332 Criando a "Caderneta de Identificação e Trabalho" a Adquirir Obrigatoriamente pelos Indígenas desta Província com of fim de Tornar mais Eficiente o Serviço de Emissão de Bilhetes de Identidade, Art. 4, p. 8 and Art. 9, p. 9.

(20) RTI, op. cit., Art. 23, pp. 10-11.

(21) ibid., Arts. 24-25, p. 11. The fees payable for recruiting licences provided a source of revenue for the state. For the other sources of revenue which the state acquired from the direct control of 'native' labour see pp. 85-88.

(22) ibid., Art. 38, 1°, pp. 16-17.

(23) ibid., Art. 112, p. 34 and Art. 114, p. 35.

(24) ibid., Art. 40, p. 17.

(25) ibid., Art. 42, p. 18.

(26) ibid., Art. 43, pp. 18-19.

(27) ibid., Art. 25, p. 11.

(28) ibid., Arts. 71-81, pp. 25-27.

(29) ibid., Art. 54, p. 22.

(30) Centro de Estudos Africanos, Universidade Eduardo Mondlane, The Mozambican Miner: A Study in the Export of Labour (IIAM, Maputo, 1977), pp. 15-16 and Appendix I.

(31) A Decree of 1919, Decreto 5:829, continued to allow the recruitment of workers from the District of Quelimane [Zambézia] for São Tomé. However I could find no material about the numbers of men recruited nor about the length of time the decree was in force.

(32) Ministério das Colónias, Codigo do Trabalho, Estatuto Político, Relações do Direito Privado, Reserva de Mão-de-Obra (Imprensa Nacional, Lisboa, 1929), Decreto No. 16:475, 6 de Fev. de 1929, Paços do Governo, pp. 155-156.

(33) ibid., Decreto 5:713 de 10 de Maio de 1919, this decree was invalidated by the CTI of 1928.

(34) SSE Ar., File 94, Labour for Marromeu, Max Thurnheer (MT), Gerente Geral SSE Mopea to Ministro das Colónias, 25 June 1932. [The first time a file held in SSE's archive is mentioned in a chapter the full reference will be given. Subsequent references to the file will only give the number of the file.]

(35) SSE Ar., File 94, G. Hornung Director SSE Mopea to Governador da Companhia de Moçambique, 9 July 1932.

(36) SSE Ar., File 133, Recruiting, Quelimane and Angonia (1930-1939), MT to Hornung and Co. Ltd., 14 Nov. 1930, No. 529/30.

(37) See Chapter III for SSE's labour policy during the world depression.

(38) RTI, op. cit., Art. 89, p. 29, Art. 112, p. 34, and Arts. 113-114, pp. 34-35.

(39) See AHM. NI 16 A/31 945, Respostas ao Questionário que Acompanhou a Circular No. 1356/A/31 de 22/5/1945. This document lists the administrative districts of Zambezia Province and indicates how many men were eligible for wage labour. It also records how many men were recruited for work in the districts where they lived and how many men were recruited for work outside their own districts. See also SSE Ar., File 94, SSE Ltd. Mão-de-Obra Indígena 1942. In 1940 on its five properties (Luabo, Marromeu, Mopela, Matilde and Chinde) SSE employed 13,178 men from the districts in which the estates were situated and 21,936 men from other districts.

(40) RTI, op. cit., Art. 120, p. 36. In exceptional circumstances the Governor General was permitted to allow employers to recruit labour on contracts without the intervention of the authorities outside the district where the firm was situated. In this case contracts were not valid for more than three months (Art. 121, pp. 36-37).

(41) ibid., Art. 122, p. 37.

(42) ibid., Art. 124, p. 37.

(43) ibid., Art. 126, 1°, p. 38.

(44) ibid., Arts. 98-99, pp. 30-31 (these fees increased over the years).

(45) GOV. Q., Prov. de Moç., Zambézia, Circ. do Alto Molócuè, Relatório Apresentado em Conformidade com a Ordem de Serviço No. 2/954, do Governo da Zambézia, de 4 de Março de 1954, sobre: A Circunscrição do Alto Molócuè após os Comandos Militares em 1919 e a Fundação dos seus Postos Administrativas até 1954. A Reorganização das Regedorias Indígenas, seus Limites e Sucessão de Regedores, António Henriques de Oliveira, Adm., passim. For a fuller discussion of this theme see Chapter IX.

(46) ibid., passim.

(47) ibid., passim.

(48) GOV. Q., Rep. Port., Prov. de Moç., Governo da Zambézia, Relatório do Governo do Distrito 1.1.56 a 31.12.56, p. 41.

(49) Relatório do Governador do Distrito de Quelimane 1907-1909 (Imprensa Nacional, LM, 1909) p. 140. This report excludes rents from the prazos and only refers to revenue collected from the areas administered directly by the state; Relatório do Governador, Distrito de Quelimane 1914-1915 (Imprensa Nacional, LM, 1916), pp. 84-85, between 1912 and 1914 the revenue from the hut tax was exceeded only by the revenue from the rent of the prazos and import duties. In the fiscal year 1914-1915, however, the revenue from the hut tax exceeded all other sources of revenue in the district; GOV. Q., Col. de Moç., Prov. da Zambézia, Relatório do Governador, Capitão da Infantaria, César Maria de Serpa Rosa, Respeitante ao Periodo de 4 de Maio de 1943 a 31 de Dezembro de 1947, pp. 118-119, figures for the years 1943-1947.

(50) Relatório do Governador (Zambézia)... 1943... 1947, op. cit., p. 122, Mapa da Previsão e da Cobrança do Imposto Indígena nos Anos de 1943 a 1947; Relatório do Governo do Distrito (Zambézia)... (19)56, op. cit., p. 51, Mapa Comparativo da Cobrança do Imposto Indígena nos Ultimos Cinco Anos; GOV. Q., Governo da Zambézia, Relatório do Governo do Distrito Relativo ao Ano de 1959, Elaborado pelo Intendente, João Moreira Barbosa Matos, na Qualidade de Encaregado do Governo, p. 43, Mapa Comparativo da Cobrança do Imposto Indígena nos Anos de 1957, 1958 e 1959.

(51) RTI, op. cit., Arts. 192-194 and 199, pp. 58-60.

(52) ibid., Art. 184, pp. 54-56; Art. 206, pp. 61-62, employers who had not given an advance of wages (to pay the tax) when they contracted men could deduct a proportion of the tax from the part of the wage paid on the estate for this purpose. Monies deduced were to be deposited with the administrator who could himself order deductions to be made.

(53) ibid., Arts. 182-183, pp. 53-54.

(54) SSE Ar., File 94, MT General Manager to Hornung and Co., 30 Aug. 1943, No. 350/43 GM, Visit of His Excellency the Provincial Governor. Thurnheer wrote that the last Provincial Governor did everything he could to discourage volunteer labour because "it suited... the various Administrators from the point of view of hut tax collection, since it helped them to stop the natives from wandering too far afield without being able to trace their whereabouts at short notice and thus reducing their possibilities of hut tax revenue and corresponding percentage within the shortest possible period..."

(55) RTI, op. cit., Art. 36, 1°, p. 15. (Translation J.H.)

(56) ibid., Art. 34, p. 14. (Translation J.H.)

(57) ibid., Art. 35, 1°, 3°, pp. 14-15. (Translation J.H.)

(58) ibid., Art. 36, 2°, p. 15. (Translation J.H.)

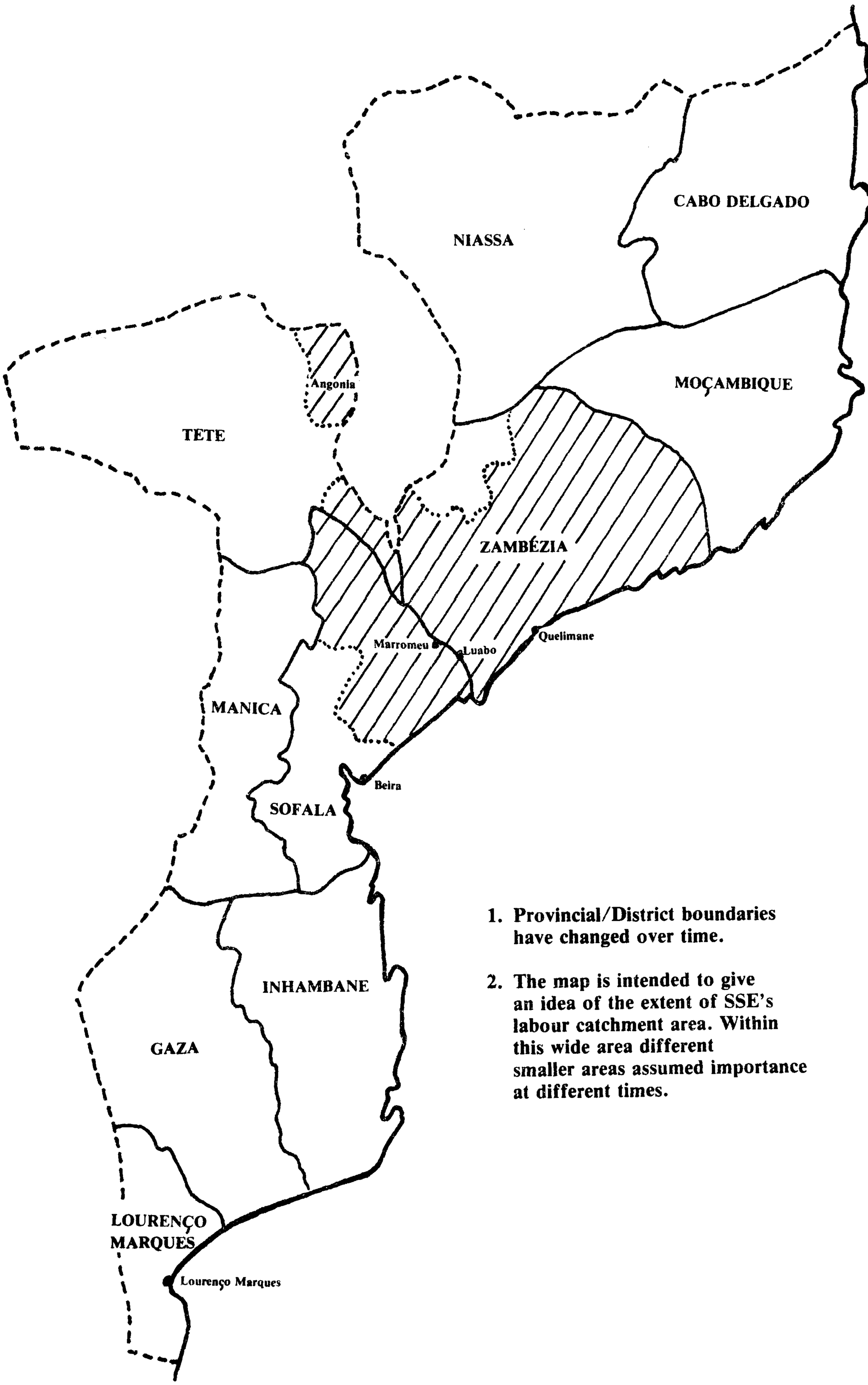
(59) Relatório do Governador do Distrito (Zambézia)... (19)56, op. cit., pp. 37-38. The Governor is here quoting the opinion of a previous Higher Inspection of the Administration. (Translation J.H.)

(60) RTI, op. cit., Art. 178, pp. 52-53. These percentages applied to the highest tax in force in the colony.

(61) See Chapter V.

(62) Clearly, unless the balance between taxes, wages and peasant production was maintained over time there was an in-built tendency for peasants to become more and more dependent on wage labour. See, for example, Harold Wolpe, "Capitalism and Cheap Labour-Power in South Africa: From Segregation to Apartheid," Economy and Society, 1, No. 4, (1972) pp. 425-456, on the pressures undermining the ability of the Reserves [in the South African case] to reproduce labour-power. The survival of the migrant labour system and the mechanisms which guaranteed its reproduction in Zambézia will be discussed in Chapter IV.

MAIN AREAS FROM WHICH SSE DREW ITS LABOUR 1930-1960



1. **Provincial/District boundaries have changed over time.**

2. **The map is intended to give an idea of the extent of SSE's labour catchment area. Within this wide area different smaller areas assumed importance at different times.**

CHAPTER III

SSE REORGANISATION OF LABOUR SUPPLY AND RECRUITMENT,

THE DEPRESSION YEARS OF THE 1930s

During the early years of the 1930s, the new labour legislation was to have little direct impact on the mobilisation of labour within Zambézia. Drawn up on the premise that African men were loathe to seek wage work, the legislation was designed to establish an interlocking set of mechanisms which would force them to enter an annual contract. It was intended, therefore, to provide a practical means of overcoming the problem of obtaining a guaranteed supply of labour. However, when the state moved to take over the prazos and implement its new labour policy Zambézia was in the midst of a general recession. Falling prices for agricultural commodities on world markets had forced many planters in the region to retrench. "The very bad times indeed" that agricultural enterprises in Zambézia and Nyasaland were experiencing had led to a wholesale reduction in the numbers of men employed.(1) The employment situation was exacerbated by two additional related factors. Firstly, the price of peasant produce was also falling. Secondly, the government was pressing Africans to pay their taxes, "compelling a great number of natives, who, in the ordinary way, would probably not seek work here, to look for work on the Zambesi."(2) Planters in the region suddenly found themselves confronted with abundant supplies of labour. Indeed, in 1930, SSE remarked on "its present unusual difficulty of being saddled with more labour than it actually needed."(3)

SSE was unable to take advantage of the "unusual" number of men who voluntarily sought work on the estates. Firstly, SSE recognised that the abundance of labour would probably be short-lived. Writing to the company's directors, SSE's General Manager gave voice to this view when he noted that the firm had a very good reputation among "the labour-seeking classes of natives within our neighbourhood, but it is difficult to believe that when conditions improve elsewhere... things will go on in the same way."(4) Secondly, SSE was itself forced to retrench. Although the company received protection for a proportion of its output on the Portuguese market, the remainder was sold on world markets, at prices which steadily declined after 1924.(5) To counteract the drop in prices on unprotected markets, SSE sought ways of introducing economies and cutting the costs of production. These economies included laying off labour. However, the economies introduced by SSE were not only intended to deal with the immediate crisis. By 1930, and before SSE undertook any major reorganisation, the Portuguese Government had introduced legislation which guaranteed the survival of the colonial sugar industry.(6) The economies were introduced, as much, if not more, therefore, to protect SSE's interests in the long term. SSE's long-term interests centred on reducing the overall cost of labour and securing a guaranteed supply of low-paid labour. Fearing that another shortage of labour would arise after the region recovered from the crisis SSE saw in the depression the means of reorganising its labour supply and recruiting organisation in order to consolidate its right to recruit labour from Zambézia which would be guaranteed in the long term through the implementation of the labour legislation.

REORGANISATION OF LABOUR SUPPLY

Until 1930 the labour employed on SSE's four estates was drawn from four principal supply areas. Firstly, the company recruited labour from the local prazos of which it was leaseholder: Prazos Maganja Aquem Chire, Luabo and Marral in Zambézia and Mugova e Goma in the Mutarara region of Tete Province. Secondly, it recruited labour from Prazo Angonia in the northwestern region of Tete Province, of which it was also leaseholder. Thirdly, labour was furnished by the authorities from the areas of Zambézia administered directly by the state. Fourthly, SSE was also obliged to recruit labour from the territory administered by the Mozambique Company, where two of its plantations (Marromeu and Caia) were situated.(7) Finally, the company also employed men from Nyasaland, Niassa Province and from all the other areas where it recruited labourers, who voluntarily sought work on the estates. As a result of historical precedent and agreements with the various administrative authorities in the region men from the different areas worked contracts of different lengths, received different rates of pay and received their wages in different currencies.

SSE Wages 1931 [Excluding Bonus payments](8)

Labour	Wage		Period
Angonia	10 shillings	BS[a]	per month of 26 days
"Anguru" contract labour	1 escudo	BNU[b]	" " " 30 days [sic]*
"Charre" labour	5 escudos	PS[c]	" " " 30 days
local prazos	0.091 "	PS[c]	per day
Moz. Company Volunteers	10 shillings	BS[a]	per month ————
"Up-country" Volunteers	10 shillings	BS[a]	per month of 26 days
"Anguru" Volunteers	" "	"	" " " " (6 months)
"Anguru" Volunteers	12 "	"	" " " " (12 months)
"Nyassas"	10 "	"	" " " " ----------

*the writer must have meant one escudo per day. This would be consistent with the wage paid to "Anguru" contract labour in 1932.

[a]British Sterling

[b]Banco Nacional Ultramarino

[c]Portuguese Silver

Using a rate of 100 escudos to the pound for Banco Nacional Ultramarino currency and one escudo Portuguese Silver at two shillings, and reducing the working month to 26 days in all cases, the wages of SSE's contracted labour force were approximately the following in 1931:

Angonia	10 shillings	(for 26 days labour)
"Anguru" contract labour	5 shillings 5 pence	" " "
"Charre" labour	8 shillings 8 pence	" " "
local prazos labour	3 shillings 5 pence	" " "

The most costly section of the labour force were men recruited from the territory of the Mozambique Company. Whereas in 1932 a

contracted worker from Zambézia Province received 30 escudos a month a comparable worker from the Mozambique Company's territory received the equivalent of 71 escudos 50 centavos a month in gold.(9) In order to reduce the amount of labour employed from the Mozambique Company's territory, SSE's first move in the depression was to close the Caia factory. It alleged that it had done so simply because of the falling world price of sugar.(10) The Mozambique Company, angered by this move, and as anxious as the Government of Zambézia to secure a means of ensuring that Africans paid their taxes, retaliated by refusing to allow any "foreign" labour into its territory.(11) SSE promptly responded by closing its second factory in the Mozambique Company's territory. Its real reasons for the closures then became clear. The Mozambique Company had retained the gold standard. As Hornung explained in an article to the Beira News "in view of the fact that the difference between the sterling price of sugar and the sterling cost of producing that sugar is now almost infinitesimal, there is a distinct loss when the cost of production is forced onto or maintained on the gold standard."(12) Related to this was the fact that labour from the area was paid more highly than labour from Zambézia.

> The principal point, however, is that such labour from the Territories of the Mozambique Company had to be paid in gold or its equivalent, and at a much higher rate than that paid to natives coming from areas under the direct administration of the state in Zambézia; a fact which has increased our costs of production to such an extent that it will be impossible to get economic results at a time when we are already struggling with great difficulties as a result of the general world crisis which particularly affects the sugar industry.(13)

In the petition to the Minister of the Colonies, in which this point was made, SSE threatened to close both plantations permanently, and

to transfer its operations elsewhere unless it received certain guarantees. Among them was the right to transfer labour freely from Zambézia, at the lower wage in force there, to the plantations in the Mozambique Company's territory.(14)

The temporary closure of the Marromeu and Caia plantations(15) besides enabling SSE to dismiss labour from the Mozambique Company's territory, also allowed SSE to lay off other sections of the work force, on whom it did not intend to rely in the long term. Firstly, the company tackled the problem of labour from Prazo Mugova e Goma, (in Mutarara) or 'Charre' labour as it was called. Labour from Prazo Mugova e Goma was a problem for three reasons. The abolition of the prazos meant that SSE had lost its exclusive recruiting rights in the area. In addition, work on the construction of a bridge across the Zambesi was then beginning. It was expected that when the work on the bridge was in full swing some 16,000-20,000 men would be required.(16) SSE anticipated that much of this labour would be drawn from Mutarara. Men from the area would resist going to SSE because "the [bridge] contractors are paying ridiculously high wages."(17) Finally, according to SSE's General Manager "of all our prazo labour Charre boys are unfortunately the most insolent, unreliable and troublesome."(18) In 1930, therefore, SSE started to lay off labour from Mutarara when the men had worked off the advances paid on their wages.(19)

Secondly, SSE laid off 2,000 men from Niassa Province and limited the number of "up-country" volunteers employed. Volunteer labour was cheaper than contract labour because no recruiting costs

were involved in its employment. Further, men who volunteered for work were more likely to work harder than men recruited by force. Nevertheless, SSE felt that the numbers of volunteers would drop dramatically from Nyasaland and the border areas of Mozambique when the economic situation improved.(20) Its reliance on labour from these sources would have led to a withdrawal of its de facto reserves of contract labour in other areas. SSE could not afford to take on cheaper volunteer labour in the short-term and lose the right to guaranteed supplies of contract labour in the long term, especially if the feared labour shortage materialised after the depression. An additional reason for the dismissal of this source of volunteer labour was the payment of their wages in gold.

> It must also not be lost sight of that in the case of up-country volunteers, we invariably have to obtain gold from Beira, which, with very little exception, leaves the country when the boys have finished their time, we only reaping the benefit of local advances given now and then (this from the trading point of view).(21)

Having dispensed with labour which was either costly or not guaranteed in the long term SSE was left with three major sources of supply. Firstly, there were men from the prazos around the estates. These men were the lowest paid section of the work force. Men from the prazos had been employed since the 1890s. By the 1930s the company had come to rely on them for much of the specialised work on the plantations.(22) It also used labour from the prazos extensively in Marromeu and Caia, for the same reasons that it had tried to employ contract labour from Zambézia there. Labour from the prazos received lower wages than men from the Mozambique Company's territory. Men from the prazos also received their wages in Portuguese currency which

was "a convenient outlet for surplus escudos - and they spend their earnings locally, which is another advantage to us (SSE)."(23) When the state extended its administration to the whole of Zambézia Province SSE had received assurances from the government that no other recruiter would be allowed to operate within the area of the former prazos for a period of four years. Thereafter SSE expected the government to continue to honour the precedent established and to prevent any threat to its recruiting monopoly in the area.(24) Men from the local prazos were, therefore, not only low-paid and essential for certain types of work, but they were also a guaranteed source of labour in the long-term. With the closure of Marromeu and Caia SSE decided to redeploy some of the "prazos" labour to the estates in Zambézia and to cut down on recruiting in the region, without giving up the reserve completely.(25)

Secondly, there were men from Angonia in Tete Province. Men from Angonia tended to be employed mainly, although not exclusively, as cane-cutters at Marromeu. Their productivity was high. In 1931, for example, one man from Angonia cut as much cane as two men recruited from Zambézia. Yet their high output was not confined to cutting. In almost every aspect of field work men from Angonia consistently produced more than men from other areas.(26) Since SSE was also granted exclusive recruiting rights in Angonia for a period of four years after the prazo was handed back to the state the company was anxious not to lose this source of labour. Thus, when Marromeu and Caia were closed SSE avoided dismissing men from Angonia. Instead the company's General Manager was instructed to find other work for them.(27)

Thirdly, there were the men recruited from the state-administered areas of Zambézia, or "Angurus". Under the terms of the Hornung Contract of 1921 SSE was to continue to receive labour from these areas for a period of twenty years, even if the prazos legislation was revoked in the meantime. With the extension of direct state administration to the whole of Zambézia and a labour law which committed the authorities to raise labour for planters in the province, SSE saw in Zambézia a long-term supply of guaranteed labour. Labour, moreover, which, with labour from the local prazos, was also the lowest paid section of the work force. To avoid dismissing men from Zambézia when the Mozambique Company prohibited their employment at Marromeu and Caia, SSE transferred workers from those plantations to Luabo and Mopeia.(28)

SSE's labour policy during the depression then, centred on the retention of "Anguru" labour which it considered the "back-bone of the labour force and likely to remain so for a considerable time to come." Men from the prazos were to make up its labour requirements, with men from Angonia in first place.(29) The company dispensed with labour from the Mozambique company as far as possible. It also dispensed with labour from Mutarara ("Charre" labour) and limited the number of volunteers. Recognising that the depression and with it the abundance of labour were probably temporary phenomena, SSE moved to secure low-paid guaranteed labour from Zambézia Province and from the local prazos for work on the estates on both sides of the river, and highly paid but efficient labour from Angonia for work in Marromeu.

MEASURES TO REDUCE THE COST OF LABOUR

Besides affording SSE the opportunity to reorganise its labour supply, the abundance of labour brought about by the depression also enabled SSE to reduce the wages of its labour force and increase their productivity. Marshalling economic arguments which focused on the serious nature of the crisis SSE was able to use the threat of the sugar industry's collapse to lower the cost of labour.

In 1934 SSE reduced the wages paid to volunteer workers on the estates from ten to eight shillings (sterling) a month.(30) A year later the wages of men from Angonia were reduced by the same amount.(31) This decision was taken in spite of the advice of the company's recruiter in Angonia. The recruiter had argued that this was a dangerous move and should be the last measure to be adopted in view of its possible consequences.

> We do not face other recruiters in Angonia at the moment but it is reported to me that the Rhodesian gold mines, which had stopped production, are going to open again, and if this happens, under the terms of the contract or agreement existing between the Portuguese Government and that of that country, which was only renewed a little while ago, it ought not to surprise us if, from one moment to the next, we have a competitor within Angonia.(32)

The second way in which SSE attempted to reduce the cost of labour during the depression was by imposing new and larger tasks without a corresponding increase in wages. In 1930, for example, the standard cane cutting task for labour from Angonia was 3.5 tons on overstands and 2.5 tons a day on ratoons. In 1931 the ratoon task was increased to 3 tons a day. Likewise, the numbers of men employed on collective tasks was reduced. In 1930, for example, eight contracted

labourers from Zambézia were expected to load three cane trucks a day. In 1931 five men were allocated to this task. Similarly, whereas in 1930 12 men lifted, pushed forward and relayed 400 yards of portable field railway track a day, in 1931 only eight men were detailed to this task. The gangs responsible for ballasting 400 yards of track were reduced from 16 to nine men. Most other field tasks on the estates were increased in similar ways.(33)

In 1936, the Mopeia factory closed. Some workers were permanently laid off. Others were transferred to the two remaining properties at Marromeu and Luabo. SSE seized this opportunity to impose heavier tasks on the men transferred from Mopeia, although this was not accomplished without protest from the men in question.

> The Mopeias gave more trouble than most, complained continually of having to load four trucks instead of three as at Mopeia, turned out late for work and if they didn't run away from their trucks, usually finished after everyone else. Mr Ferguson told me that he had the same experience with them at Luabo and Mr Clydesdale also confirms it.(34)

Finally, the company was able to use the administrative reorganisation of Zambézia to reduce the costs of engaging labour from the prazos. Until 1930 workers from the local prazos were recruited for periods of six months and a year which were worked off in two month periods with a two month interval.(35) In 1931 the contract period was increased to three months to be worked consecutively. Under the new labour legislation men had the option of completing another three month contract immediately or completing the second three months later in the year. If they chose to stay on the estates for more than three months at a time SSE was obliged to issue

blankets, singlets and shorts to the men. To avoid issuing these items SSE argued that when the men's attendance and productivity bonuses were taken into consideration they earned a monthly wage which was above the legal minimum in force. If the law on clothing were enforced the company would have no option but to cease paying the bonuses [matabichos].

> In accordance with the labour regulations any boys contracted for periods in excess of 3 months receive blankets, singlets etc., but after discussing the matter with the local administrator it was explained that should he compel us to issue such clothing to the boys we would have no other course but to deduct its value against matabichos. It was accordingly put to the boys as to whether they would prefer blankets, singlets or the usual matabichos, having without exception chosen the latter.(36)

Besides the reduction of recruiting costs SSE benefitted from the longer contracts in other ways. Under the new system SSE was allowed to pay the entire wage at the work place. It therefore avoided depositing 50 per cent of the salary with the administrator before the men had worked their term. It also avoided paying out large sums to guarantee payment of the hut tax.(37)

Important though the direct measures to reduce wages were, SSE did not confine its attempts to cut the cost of labour to reducing the wages of the workforce alone. As part of its overall strategy to reduce labour costs SSE also attempted to cut the indirect costs of labour. It used the depression as an excuse for reducing its recruiting expenses.

REORGANISATION OF RECRUITMENT

Prior to the 1930s SSE's recruiters appear to have had unlimited access to company funds. The company's accounting system was far from rigorous and the expenses incurred by recruiters seem to have been accepted by SSE almost without question. Personal accounts were not separated from recruiting accounts and some recruiters had access to unlimited credit.(38) In line with the greater financial stringency enforced as a result of the depression SSE began to demand strict, itemised budgets from its recruiters. It also cut off the recruiters' unlimited credit and where they still had access to company funds separated their personal from their recruiting accounts.(39) This change in policy was facilitated by the discovery that two of the company's recruiters had been involved in dishonest deals. The first concerned the company appointed Administrator of Prazo Mugova e Goma who automatically became SSE's recruiter in Mutarara when the prazos were abolished. In 1930 SSE's Acting General Manager asked the recruiter how the company could get back the advances on wages paid to the men waiting to go to the estates who were no longer required. The recruiter suggested that the men should be handed over to any other recruiter who guaranteed to refund the advances, which in effect meant giving labour SSE had recruited to the company's competitiors.(40) SSE's Acting General Manager was not impressed by this solution. In a letter to the London Management Company he pointed out that such a move in effect meant that SSE would be supporting the recruiting costs of other companies.

> It is obvious that a very firm hand will be necessary in so far as Mr Rebello [the recruiter] is concerned, for I regret to say that he is a distinct representative of the period of many years ago when money was no object

> and SSE was considered as a good old Zambesi milch cow. We must avoid at all costs that outsiders reap the benefits of our labour, remaining as onlookers without putting a stop to it.(41)

Thinking that SSE would not require the labour from Mutarara and would only demand the refund of the advances made, Mr Rebello passed the labour in question to a contractor for the Zambesi Bridge. SSE discovered this deal when, as a result of the Mozambique Company's ban on "foreign" labour, it thought it might need the labour from Mutarara ("Charre" labour) after all. When the company asked how quickly the men could leave for Marromeu it discovered that of 900 men contracted 607 had already left for work on the bridge. To make matters worse, Mr Rebello had entered negotiations with the contractor on the bridge while the latter was still employed as SSE's General Manager.

> The supply of this labour was made by Mr Rebello in terms of instructions received from Mr Rapozo prior to his handing over the company's powers to myself, and in accordance with verbal agreements made with him... worlds fail me to express my surprise at such an attitude, and all I can say is that Mr Rebello's action calls, to my mind, for instant dismissal.(42)

At about the same time the practises of SSE's recruiter in the state-administered areas of Zambézia came to light.

> The whole matter in a nutshell is that Mr Ignacio's [Ignacio de Paiva Rapozo] financial state of affairs has reached such a critical situation that to my mind he cannot see to get clear of his debts in any way, unless it were with unlimited credits from the S.S.E., which, as you know, have fortunately been stopped by you at the right moment.(43)

Firstly, Paiva Rapozo was in debt to the tune of £9000. These debts had partly been contracted in SSE's name. Secondly, he had not paid the railfare of a large number of men recruited in the second half of 1930 "which resulted apparently in a saving for Mr Ignacio but at

the same time in a bad name for the S.S.E. and for the natives in a much longer stretch to walk until they reached Mopeia."(44) Thirdly, Paivo Raposo had circulated cheques for hundreds of pounds without cover. Fourthly, SSE had left money with the Administrator of Alto Molócuè for payment of the hut tax of men recruited from the district. Notwithstanding these deposits, the administrator repeatedly called on SSE for the payment of a debt of £430.

> It now appears that monies deposited by the S.S.E. as far back as 1928 were withdrawn by Mr Ignacio without our knowledge, and that a change of administration in Alto Molócuè disclosed certain discrepancies, with the result that when monies were sent by us to Alto Molócuè in payment of time expired labour from the region, the administrator thought fit of retaining a sufficient amount to cover the outstandings against Mr Ignacio, which automatically resulted in the disgraceful fact that labour that had been working on the estates for 6 months had been withheld payment for about three months.

Although Paiva Rapozo's assistant temporarily pacified the administrator and ensured that the labourers were paid he did not manage to prevent the administrator from threatening legal action. Nor could he stop Paiva Rapozo's actions rebounding on the company's recruiting in the area. As SSE's General Manager remarked "this also resulted in a certain amount of difficulty in so far as the present recruiting in Alto Molócuè is concerned, as, for obvious reasons, the Administrator did not show much inclination to assist us as usual."(45)

SSE's General Manager cut off Paiva Rapozo's funds and suggested that his assistants took over the recruiting. He offered them the recruiting on the condition that the expenses were reduced. Instead of 30 shillings per man the recruiter was to receive 28 shillings per man delivered at the estates.(46) This reduction in

recruiting expenses, was, however, only one of a number of such reductions, for in 1932 the company made a new contract with Paiva Raposo's substitute in Zambézia. He was paid 20 shillings for the first 3000 men engaged and a salary of £750 a year irrespective of the number of men he recruited.(47) By 1935 the recruiter in Zambézia was receiving only 16 shillings a 'head' for the first 2000 men engaged and a salary of £600 per annum.(48) Besides a reduction in salary and the per capita fee, the drop in the numbers of men for whom he received a fee implied a drop in the recruiter's profits.

In Angonia SSE used the excuse of rigid economies and a possible suspension of recruitment in the area (which the company had no intention of doing) to dismiss the recruiter who had worked for them for 14 years. Instead they employed his assistant. Whereas the former had earned £1,200 per annum the latter received an annual salary of only £400.(49) Similarly the recruiting budget for "prazo" labour was reduced. In 1934 "all round reductions" resulted in a saving of 30 per cent. Staff were laid off, the 'tip' paid to the 'native authorities' for their help in rounding up men was reduced and European jobs were re-defined in order to allow for salary cuts. In one case an employee took a drop in annual salary of £400 a year.(50)

By 1944 the financial reorganisation of recruitment was completed. All recruiting expenses, both direct and indirect, were controlled by SSE. The per capita fee was abolished and recruiters and their assistants received a fixed salary. In Zambézia, where SSE's recruiting areas had expanded considerably since the early 1930s, the recruiter and his assistant received a combined salary of

£1,200 per year. This was less than the total salary of the chief recruiter alone in Angonia in 1931.(51)

The early years of the 1930s are best characterised as a watershed in SSE's history. Until then the major problem which confronted the company was that of securing adequate supplies of labour for its expanding needs. Unable to recruit sufficient workers locally SSE was forced to seek labour from a variety of sources. For reasons beyond the company's control men from the different areas received different rates of pay for the same work. While the administrative division of the colony remained unchanged and while the labour available, even from these heterogeneous sources of supply, was barely adequate to meet the company's needs, there was little SSE could do to overcome the anomalies of its labour regime and specifically the disparity in wages.

The international recession of the 1930s, coinciding as it did with the abolition of the prazos and the extension of state rule to the whole of Zambézia Province altered this situation dramatically. Suddenly, SSE found itself faced with large numbers of men seeking work and two administrations, the colonial state in Zambézia and the Mozambique Company south of the river, which were anxious to secure employment for the tax payers under their jurisdiction. SSE was able to take advantage of this situation in two ways. Firstly, it set about making overall reductions in the cost of labour; reductions it had been unable to make on such a wide scale in the previous period of labour shortage, and reductions it feared it would not be able to make on the same scale when the region recovered from the depression.

SSE's policy was directed towards reducing real wages. The company dismissed sections of the labour force, notably from territory administered by the Mozambique Company. Instead, it employed lower-paid labour from Zambézia Province for the same work. It reduced the money wages of other sections of the labour force, for example men from Angonia and volunteer labour. It increased the productivity of labour without a commensurate increase in wages. Finally, SSE also attempted to reduce indirect labour costs by reducing the recruitment budget.

Taken in isolation this policy might appear to have been no more than an immediate and obvious response to the international recession. With the falling price of sugar on the world market it might be argued that SSE was forced to reduce the costs of production in order to protect its profit margins. To a certain extent, of course, this was true. However, such a view ignores the implications of SSE's policies. Thus it fails to ask, for example, why SSE introduced selective cuts rather than across the board reductions in money wages. It also fails to ask why SSE was so concerned to protect certain sources of labour supply and to dispense with others. When these questions are taken into consideration it becomes clear that the policies SSE introduced in the depression were not intended simply to cope with the immediate crisis. With the introduction of the new legislation and guarantees from the colonial government that SSE could continue to recruit in Zambézia without interference, SSE was guaranteed a supply of low-paid labour. It no longer needed men from the Mozambique Company's territory. By threatening to suspend production completely on its Marromeu and Caia estates SSE

was able to dispense with all but a token labour force from the Mozambique Company's territory, and to secure the right to employ lower-paid labour from Zambézia on its plantations there in the long term. Thus, the second major way in which SSE was able to take advantage of the depression was by using it as an excuse to reorganise its labour supply in order to secure the most favourable conditions for continued production. In short, the first years of the 1930s were years in which SSE, hiding behind the excuse of the immediate crisis, sought to put its affairs in order. The company sought to reduce its labour costs and to reorganise its labour supply in order to take full advantage of the new labour legislation when agricultural production in central Mozambique recovered from the effects of the recession.

NOTES

(1) SSE Ar., File 133, Recruiting, Quelimane and Angonia (1930-1939), MT to Hornung and Co. Ltd., 14 Nov. 1930.

(2) ibid.

(3) ibid.

(4) ibid.

(5) Sena Sugar Estates, Ltd., Moçambique e o Problema Açucareira (Lisboa, 1945), pp. 11-13. In 1920 the price of sugar on the international market reached a peak of £104 per short ton. By 1930 the price of sugar on the same market had fallen to £5.17.1 per short ton. However, it was not until 1924-1925 that the price of sugar on the international market had ceased to be remunerative; until then protection on the Portuguese market was an attraction but not a necessity.

(6) ibid., p. 29. Pages 47-48 describe the measures introduced by the government to save the colonial industry from collapse. In addition to other measures these included the introduction of a monthly tax on foreign imported sugar which altered according to the world price. The aim of this legislation was to guarantee colonial producers the same protection that they had received in 1928. The protected market therefore acted as a safety net for SSE.

(7) The Mozambique Company's Charter only expired in 1942. In that year the state assumed direct responsibility for administering the company's territory which was roughly bounded by the modern Provinces of Manica and Sofala. Until 1942, the Mozambique Company acted as a virtually autonomous state. Among other things, it circulated its own currency and imposed its own labour regime.

(8) SSE Ar., File 94, Labour for Marromeu, Reply to Labour Questionnaire, n.n. / Luabo /, 1931. It is impossible to give an accurate picture of the wages paid to SSE's labour force in the early 1930s because the situation is complicated by three factors. Firstly, Portuguese currency was devalued between 1929 and 1931. Secondly there appear to have been five different currencies in use on the lower Zambesi at the time; paper sterling, gold sterling, paper escudos, gold escudos, Mozambique Company gold coinage and Portuguese silver currency. Thirdly, SSE used abbreviations for the currencies in which wages were paid. It has only been possible to make an informed guess about the meaning of these abbreviations. For currencies in circulation at the time and their sterling equivalents see: J. Pyke, Economic Conditions in Portuguese East Africa, December 1929, Department of Overseas Trade (HMSO, London, 1930), p. 6, and H.A. Ford, Economic Conditions in Portuguese East Africa, October 1932, No. 537, Department

(8) (Continued)
of Overseas Trade (HMSO, London, 1933), pp. 8-9. From the figures presented men from the local prazos appear to have been the lowest paid section of the labour force in 1930. According to SSE's General Manager their bonus earnings were higher than those of other groups of workers. However, in that year he ordered that their basic wages were to be increased (SSE Ar., File 133, MT to Hornung and Co., 14 Nov. 1930, op. cit.). After 1930 men from the prazos would, anyway, have been entitled to receive the new minimum wage of thirty escudos a month, thus bringing their basic wage into line with other contracted agricultural labour from Zambézia.

(9) SSE Ar., File 94, G Hornung, Director SSE Mopea to Governador da Companhia de Moçambique, Beira, 9 July 1932.

(10) ibid.

(11) SSE Ar., File 94, Article from The Beira News 22 June 1932. "The suspension was made at the request of the government of the Territory of the Companhia de Moçambique owing to the unavoidable necessity of assuring work for the thousands of natives of the Territory, who because of the world crisis and the competition of imported native labour, were faced with great difficulty in obtaining the necessary means of subsistence and the money for the payment of their obligations."

(12) ibid. (quoting an interview with Captain G. Hornung, Director of SSE, with the Lourenço Marques Guardian, 19 May 1932).

(13) SSE Ar., File 94, MT Mopea to Ministro das Colónias, 25 June 1932. (Translation J.H.)

(14) ibid. SSE Ar., File 94A, Labour for Marromeu, MT Gerente Geral SSE to Ministro das Colónias, 11 July 1942, gives the subsequent his history of labour from Zambezia employed at Marromeu until 1942.

(15) Sena Sugar Estates Ltd., Moç. e o Prob. Açuc., op. cit., p. 81. The Caia factory closed temporarily in 1931 and 1932, re-opened in 1933 and 1934 and closed permanently in 1935, although its plantation continued to feed cane to the Marromeu factory. In 1936 the Mopeia factory went out of production, probably because its equipment was old and fields not suited to cane cultivation. The Mopeia plantation became instead part of SSE's cotton concession, (see Chapter IV) and was also used as grazing land for the company's herds of cattle.

(16) SSE Ar., File 133, MT Acting General Manager to Hornung and Co. 27 Dec. 1930, Private and Confidential, Mr Thomas de Paiva Rapozo.

(17) SSE Ar., File 133, Charles Bernard Rafael Hornung (CBRH) to General Manager, 16 Dec 1930, No. 477/30, 'General' H. & Co. Ltd., Native Labour.

(18) SSE Ar., File 133, MT to Hornung & Co. Ltd., 14 Nov. 1930, No. 529/30.

(19) SSE Ar., File 133, MT to Estate Manager, Marromeu, 14 Nov. 1930, No. 29/30 'Mgt' - Reduction of labour strength.

(20) ibid.

(21) ibid.

(22) SSE Ar., File 94, Reply to Labour Questionnaire, n.n. [Luabo], 1931 and Labour Questionnaire Reply, H.N. Ilsher, Marromeu, 2 Nov. 1931. Specialised work included: moving the portable field railway, transporting firewood and making charcoal for the factory boilers, and mooring, loading and unloading the river steamers. On all but the first task eight men from Prazo Luabo did the same work as 12 "Angurus". Men from the local prazos were also extensively employed in the company's factories. (SSE Ar., File 133, MT to Estate Manager Luabo, 20 May 1931, Prazo labour recruited by Mr Pinto Basto, General Factory Labour from the Prazos). On all its estates SSE employed local men for factory work almost exclusively from the 1890s until the 1960s.

(23) SSE Ar., File 133, MT to Hornung and Co., 14 Nov. 1930, No. 529/30.

(24) ibid.

(25) SSE Ar., File 133, MT to Estate Manager Luabo, 14 Nov. 1930, No. 25/30 'Mgt', Re. Labour.

(26) SSE Ar., File 94, Reply to Labour Questionnaire, 1931, op. cit., in ditching, moulding and flood defence work for example, two men from Angonia (and Prazo Mugova e Goma) did the work of three "Angurus". On tasks connected with the moving of the portable field railway one man from Angonia did the work of two men from Ile ("Angurus").

(27) SSE Ar., File 133, MT to Estate Manager Marromeu, No. 29/30, op. cit.

(28) ibid.

(29) SSE Ar., File 133, MT to Hornung and Co., No. 529/30 op. cit.

(30) SSE Ar., File 133, MT to Fernando Clavel do Carmo, Angonia, 27 Sep. 1934, Particular.

(31) SSE Ar., File 133, MT to Fernando Clavel do Carmo, Mopea (do Passagem), 3 June 1935.

(32) SSE Ar., File 133, F. Clavel do Carmo, Angonia, to MT Mopea, 1934, n.d. (Translation J.H.)

(33) SSE Ar., File 94, H.N. Usher, Labour Questionnaire Reply 1931, op. cit.

(34) SSE Ar., File 94, Estate Manager M'meu/Caia to Mr Durrant, Assistant Manager Luabo, 10 Apr. 1936, Copy for General Manager.

(35) SSE Ar., File 133, MT to Estate Manager Luabo, 20 May 1931, Prazo Labour Recruited by Mr Pinto Basto. In the 1890s men from the prazos were recruited for one month with a month's interval between the next period of wage labour, (see Chapter I). Hence already by 1930 SSE had gradually been able to increase the period men worked. This meant that the company saved on recruiting expenses and avoided some of the disruption to work that a high turnover of labour implied.

(36) SSE Ar., File 133, MT to Estate Manager Luabo, 20 May 1931, op. cit.

(37) SSE Ar., File 133, MT to Gastão Ferreira Pinto Basto, 28 May 1931, No. 9/31 H.O., Recrutamento de Mão-de-Obra nas Áreas dos Antigos Prazos.

(38) SSE Ar., File 133, see correspondence referring to recruitment, passim.

(39) ibid.

(40) SSE Ar., File 133, Acting General Manager to Hornung and Co., 27 Dec. 1930, No. 617/30 'GM', Recruiting in Charre, Armando Teixeira Rebello.

(41) ibid.

(42) SSE Ar., File 133, MT to Hornung and Co., 3 Jan. 1931, Private and Confidential, Recruiting in Charre, Armando Teixeira Rebello. The letter continued "it is amazing and unbelievable to think that we should be used and abused in such an unprecedented manner, and if it were only for the question of obtaining refund of the advances made to such Charre natives the position would not actually be so serious, but those concerned have apparently conveniently lost sight of the fact that the recruiting of this Charre labour cost the S.S.E. a good bit of money, (I reckon that the all-round figure for the whole year's expenditure will be in the vicinity of £5 per native) and it is obvious that the S.S.E. once more has been badly used as a milch cow."

(43) SSE Ar., File 133, MT to Captain G Hornung, 3 Jan. 1931, Recruiting in Quelimane District. Ignacio and Tómas de Paiva Rapozo (the contractor for the Zambesi bridge and SSE's former General Manager) were both nephews of J.P. Hornung. The history of the Paiva Rapozo family in Zambézia goes back to the middle of the nineteenth century. For an account of the notoriety of the family, recorded in the songs of the lower Zambesi region see Leroy Vail and Landeg White, "Plantation Protest: The History of a Mozambican Song", Journal of Southern African Studies, V, No. 1 (Oct. 1978), pp.1-25.

(44) SSE Ar., File 133, MT to Hornung, 3 Jan. 1931, op. cit.

(45) ibid. The letter continued "I would also add that to my mind Mr Ignacio will be only too glad to get rid of the recruiting for S.S.E. in Quelimane District - for the time being he is certainly afraid of returning to his camp for fear of being constantly molested by his creditors, besides I know it be his intention to join contractors on the Bridge (the fever of gold diggers moving towards the Zambesi Bridge like towards a rising sun in general)." The analogy to gold-digging aptly sums up the mood of the times. A reading of the 1930-1931 correspondance on this file indicates a history of intrigue and double-dealing to obtain the high profits available from rounding up labour for private firms.

(46) ibid.

(47) SSE Ar., File 133, MT to Dr Fernando Beleza dos Santos, 31 Dec. 1932, No. 23/32/HO, Futuro Recrutamento no Alto Distrito de Quelimane para a SSE Ltd. e ao Cargo de V. Exa.

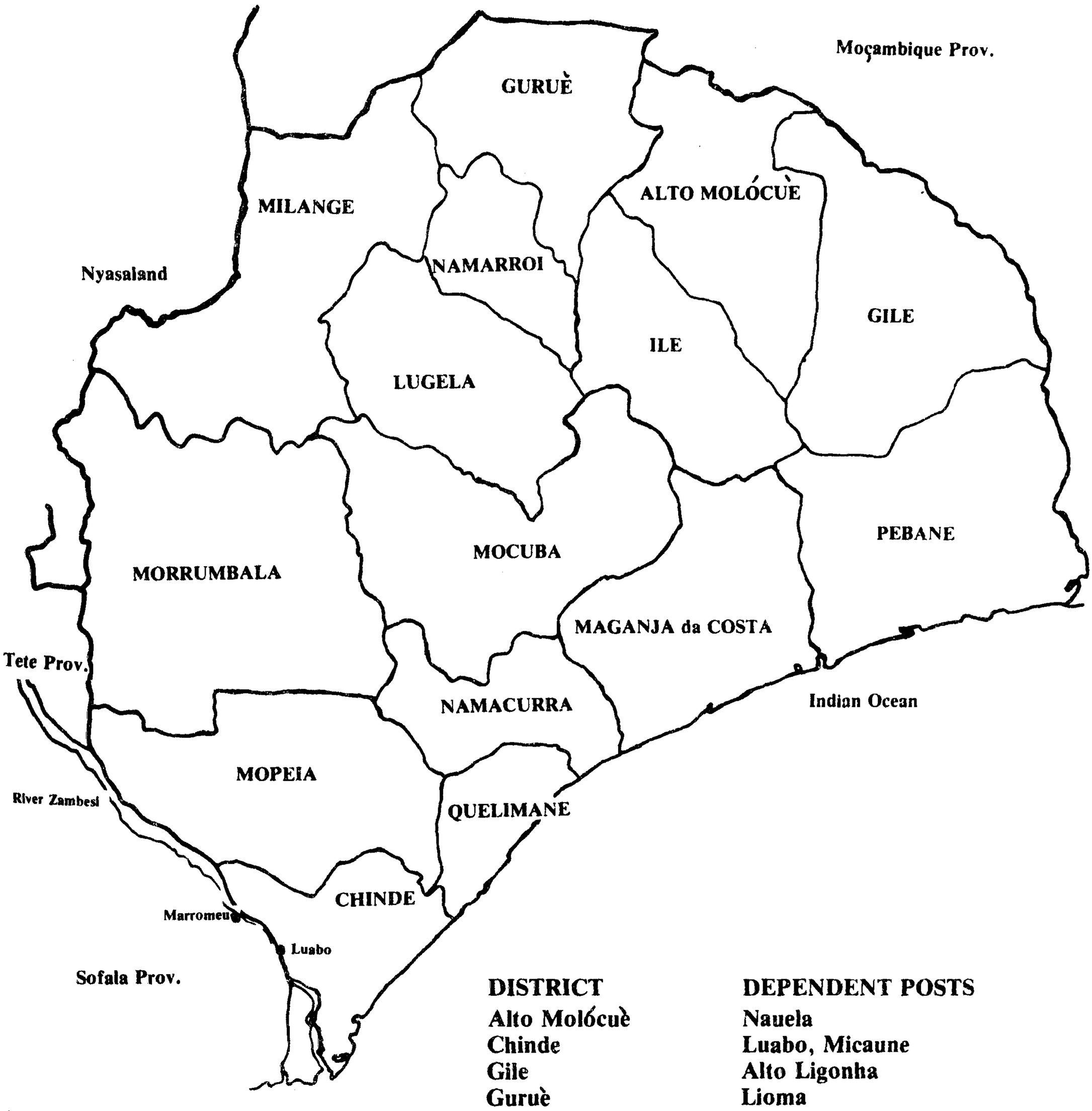
(48) SSE Ar., File 133, MT to D. Carlos de Camara, 11 May 1935, No. 9/35/HO, Recrutamento no Alto Distrito de Quelimane para a SSE Ltd., Referente ao Ano de 1935, ao Cargo Único e Exclusivo de V. Exa.

(49) SSE Ar., File 133, Gerente Geral to Fernando Clavel do Carmo, 5 Aug. 1931, No. 40/31/HO, Orçamento Referente ao Recrutamento para o Ano Cultural de 1932 and MT to António Barréto, 26 Aug. 1935.

(50) SSE Ar., File 133, Notes for Col. Hornung Re. Prazos Recruiting, Mopea, 12 June 1935.

(51) SSE Ar., File 133A, Recruiting, Angonia, Quelimane, Local, MT to Col. Hornung, 18 Nov. 1944, Private. cf. SSE Ar., File 133, Director SSE to Fernando Clavel de Carmo, 3 July 1931. In addition to his salary and per capita fee, the Angonia Recruiter also received a house, cash to purchase furniture, free lighting, a car, travelling expenses and a first class passage to Europe.

MODERN ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISION OF ZAMBÉZIA



DISTRICT	DEPENDENT POSTS
Alto Molócuè	Nauela
Chinde	Luabo, Micaune
Gile	Alto Ligonha
Guruè	Lioma
Ile	Mulevala, Socone
Lugela	Muanbanama, Munhamade, Tacuane
Maganja da Costa	Baixo Licungo, Bajone, Mucubela
Milange	Molumbo, Mongue
Mocuba	Mugeba
Mopeia	Campo
Morrumbala	Chirre, Derre
Namacurra	Macuze, Nicoadala
Namarroi	—
Pebane	Mualama, Naburi
Quelimane	Inhassunge, Maquival

CHAPTER IV

COMPETITION WITHIN THE CONDITIONS OF LABOUR SUPPLY, 1936 - 1960

As SSE had feared, the abundance of labour in the early 1930s was a temporary phenomenon. By the end of the 1930s agriculture and industry in Zambézia and the regions surrounding it were recovering from the depression. As agriculture and industry recovered so the demand for labour increased. In Angonia, for example, the earlier predictions of SSE's recruiter were soon confirmed. By 1937 SSE was facing stiff competition for labour from the Rhodesian mines. Indeed, in that year the company was obliged to offer men from Angonia a wage rise and to allow the wives and families of recruited men to accompany them to the estates. "The latter is the chief attraction and one that the mines cannot offer, otherwise the competition of recruiting in Angonia for the mines (clandestine and otherwise) is seriously being felt."(1)

In the territory administered by the Mozambique Company there was also a growing shortage of labour. In 1938, a group of maize farmers in the Vila Pery region formed a recruiting society to engage labour in the Provinces of Tete and Moçambique because they could not recruit enough labour locally for their needs. SSE was not threatened by this move because the society was prohibited from recruiting in Angonia, where, among employers inside Mozambique, SSE still had exclusive rights to recruit labour.(2) By 1947 however,

the situation had changed. Not only was SSE still facing competition from the Rhodesian mines but employers in Vila Pery were "enticing" SSE's contracted workers away from the company while they were waiting to go to the estates,(3) and by 1950 SSE's recruiter was reporting that men returning from Marromeu would not return to the company.

> They said that they would not come and work for us any more and that now they only want to go to Vila Pery. The motive is the difference in wages, and in fact they are right. While these men receive between four and six pounds, those in other work, I mean for all our competitors, receive between 10 and 14 pounds. Furthermore, through bad luck, which emphasised the difference more, as soon as I had finished making some payments some men arrived to receive their wages from a saw mill for which Mr Maciel recruits. I had just finished paying five or six pounds to my men and the others received 11 and 12 pounds!(4)

The recruiter noted that the wages paid by SSE's competitors were for industrial work whereas SSE's wage was calculated on the lower rate for agricultural work. However, the "black" did not understand this. "What he understands is that he receives much less working for us than for any other boss."(5) Competition for labour in Angonia continued to plague SSE until the end of the period. In 1957, for example, SSE's General Manager noted that "the area is one where great competition exists both in the form of direct recruiting as well as clandestine emigration."(6)

Recruiters from the territory administered by the Mozambique Company (which became Manica and Sofala Province when the state extended its administration to the area in 1942) not only threatened SSE's labour supplies in Angonia. Men who managed to cross the river Zambesi illegally from Zambézia Province were welcomed by employers in Manica and Sofala with "open arms". Higher wages south of the

river was the chief reason for the exodus. The Governor of Zambézia tried to stop men leaving his province on various occasions, but, finally, at the end of the 1950s, capitulated.

> As for the exit to Manica and Sofala, it must in fact be influenced by the attraction of better wages, and we understand that the entry of those natives is facilitated by the shortage of labour which is pressing in that district. We must seek, in the meantime, without excessive pressure to legalise the situation of those natives, because... it is better that they should work in other districts of Portuguese territory, than that they should be brought, through fear of reprisals, to look for work in foreign territory.(7)

In Zambézia, too, recovery after the depression was accompanied by a growing demand for labour. For example, in 1937, besides SSE, Namagoa Plantations, the Zambézia Company, the Madal Company and the Boror Company, were all recruiting in the Mugeba region. In the same year Namagoa Plantations started to recruit labour in Alto Molócuè and Mulevala. In the latter area they were offering "attractive conditions". As a result SSE considered withdrawing its recruiters from the area.(8) Yet it was not only the expanding needs of established firms which gave rise to growing fears of a labour shortage in Zambézia. Here the situation was compounded by two new developments. Both were the result of the Salazar regime's new policies. Anxious to harness colonial production to the needs of the metropolitan economy and to encourage the investment of Portuguese capital in Mozambique, the regime began to encourage new forms of production under Portuguese control. The first development in this direction took place in 1926 when a Decree established the conditions under which cotton production would be encouraged in the colonies.(9)

THE EFFECTS OF THE SPREAD OF COTTON CULTIVATION

Cotton production in Zambézia was organised on a concessionary system modelled on that established in the Belgian Congo. Companies were granted large areas of land and the right to organise cotton production among the peasants residing on the concession. The concessionary distributed seed to the peasantry, supervised cultivation and organised markets. Capital investment seems to have been limited to the installation of ginneries, purchase of seed, construction of rudimentary sheds to serve as markets and warehouses, transport for the marketed crop and expenditure on the employment of supervisory staff to oversee and supervise production. Accumulation rested on the difference between the purchasing price of cotton from the peasantry and the selling price on the Lisbon market. Prices were fixed by the government in conjunction with the Cotton Board which represented the concessionaries' interests.(10) In order, then, to make profits, the companies needed to produce as large a crop as possible, and in the absence of mechanised cultivation they needed as many producers as possible.

It was only in the mid-1930s that the cotton scheme really took root in Zambézia, but almost immediately its effects were felt. Of the four major concessionaries three were Portuguese. One of them Lopes Irmãos, had opened a concession in Morrumbala which was traditionally a recruiting reserve for SSE. In 1936 Lopes Irmãos accused SSE of recruiting labour at gun-point. SSE responded by saying that far from using force it had been unable to raise any labour in the region. This was because the Lopes Irmãos' cotton agent was telling peasants that they were not obliged to work but

only to grow cotton. He guaranteed payment of the hut-tax in the event of damage to the crop or a failed harvest.(11) The local administrator confirmed SSE's account. He reported that "workers, they have been the devil, because these gentlemen do not want to go to work. The good work of the cotton propaganda."(12)

Lopes Irmãos' cotton operations continued to jeopardise SSE's recruitment in Morrumbala until the 1960s.(13) Yet it was not only in Morrumbala that SSE's labour supply was threatened. Foreseeing the consequences of the spread of cotton cultivation SSE had itself taken a concession around its estates. On its concession SSE distributed seed only to women, thus ensuring that men continued to take up an annual contract with the company.

> We again and again stressed our policy of distributing seed to women only as a good one and assuring us of the male population for labour needs in other directions, also avoiding that men, under the cloak of cotton growing (with work anyway done by women and children almost exclusively) should be enabled to evade agricultural work in connection with and for equally important enterprises of a far more lasting and stable nature.(14)

Profit considerations were secondary to the need to prevent others from opening a concession in the area and depriving the plantations of their local supply of male labour.(15) However, SSE was unable to prevent the spread of the crop elsewhere; nor could it prevent other concessionaries from using male labour. By the beginning of the 1940s its recruiting areas in Zambézia coincided with cotton concessions and cotton was being advanced as the major reason for a growing labour shortage.

> If, during 1941, and this despite the extreme official pressure in favour of cotton growing by the natives, there was no question of a shortage of native labour for other needs, it was entirely due to the 1941 drought with resultant famine conditions... the same cannot be said in relation to 1942.

> Ever so many factors have no doubt contributed to the acute native labour shortage this year, but not least the native cotton growing under official pressure and this mainly in relation to the areas where the concession holder is the sole master, as is exactly the case with all the districts where we have been in the habit of drawing our recruited Anguru labour...(16)

By the middle of the 1940s the effects of forced cotton cultivation were beginning to alarm the authorities. Firstly, over-cultivation of the crop and its spread to areas which were patently unsuitable for its cultivation were beginning to give rise to problems of soil erosion. Secondly, there was a growing food shortage in the district. Not only did peasant diet deteriorate as fields were ploughed for cotton but there was also a shortage of food on plantations which was supplied in the main by the peasantry.(17)

In an attempt to deal with the food situation the government ordered that the areas encompassed by the cotton concessions should be restricted. However, this did not materially help the labour situation for instead of cotton, peasants were obliged to grow more food crops, either under the supervision of the concessionary or the local administrator.(18) To confront the labour shortage, therefore, the government also introduced legislation in the mid-1940s which restricted the numbers of men who could avoid wage labour either by farming in their own right or by registering as full-time farmers of cotton. Only men who fulfilled a series of stringent conditions were issued with the card which exempted them from forced labour.(19) Instead cotton concessionaries were encouraged to draw on the labour of women. In some areas they were also encouraged to use men who were deemed too old for plantation work.(20) However,

despite this move, the evidence suggests that in some areas cotton concessionaries evaded the law, by issuing false cards to peasant men. In 1953, for instance, a government circular warned that concessionaries who broke the law would be punished:

> The administrative authorities will rigorously reprimand the abuse of cards for cotton and rice farmers, making sure that their holders are in fact farmers of cotton and rice, and punishing the agents of the concessionaries who distribute cards outside these conditions.(21)

The continuing competition for labour between cotton concessionaries and plantations at local level probably resulted from the interpretation of the regulations made by the local administrator. Where, for whatever reasons, administrators favoured the interests of the concessionary, competition continued. In 1960/1, for instance, when cotton growing had ceased on SSE's own concession because women refused to continue the cultivation(22) it was still upsetting SSE's recruitment operations in other areas. For example, in a letter to a director of the company, SSE's General Manager noted in August 1960 that during September, October and November 3680 "Angurus" would leave the estates. Under the conditions then prevailing it would only be possible to recruit 2500 men to replace them. "Difficulties are specially to be found in the Maganja and Pebane area due to the increase in cotton growers and lack of energy of the authorities."(23) (emphasis added)

THE GROWTH OF TEA PLANTATIONS

The spread of forced cotton cultivation to almost all the circumscriptions within Zambézia from which SSE recruited labour was

not the only threat to SSE's labour supply. Another threat to SSE's labour supplies was posed by the expansion of tea production in the Guruè region of North-west Zambézia. Most, if not all, of the planters were Portuguese. The most important of them, Manuel Saraiva Junqueiro, Carlos Ribeiro and Americo Felizardo were men who had started their careers in Zambézia as employees of other companies. Aided by "Credito Agrícola" and promises of labour they had branched out on their own.(24) By 1945, the combined needs of the ten major planters in Guruè had already exceeded the capacity of the circumscription to furnish labour. Whereas the able-bodied male population of Guruè (men who were available for contracts) amounted to 7000 men the planter's annual labour needs amounted to 18,000 men. Eleven thousand men had, therefore, to be recruited from other circumscriptions.(25)

One area from which the tea planters hoped to recruit labour was Ile, where SSE recruited labour. On several occasions they had tried to obstruct SSE's recruiting there which they had never "viewed with pleasure". Their policy of obstruction was unsuccessful, however, because the governor of the time had not favoured one firm to the detriment of another, nor had he allowed exclusive recruiting. With the nomination of a new provincial governor in 1950 everything "began to get shaken up again".(26) Manuel Junqueiro had returned from Portugal with a letter from the Governor General of Mozambique instructing the Interim Governor of Zambézia to favour the Guruè planters at the expense of SSE in Ile. SSE's General Manager advised the company's representative to raise the matter in Lourenço Marques while the Managing Director took it up in Lisbon with the Governor

General and the Minister of the Colonies. He suggested that SSE's case should rest on two points. Firstly it should stress that Guruè's labour needs were exaggerated, and secondly, it should point out that the tea planters already had exclusive recruiting rights in Guruè, Namarroi and much of Alto Molócuè. If they needed more labour they should be encouraged to recruit it in Niassa Province.(27) However, before SSE could take any action the company's General Manager was called to a meeting with the Interim Governor of Zambézia. He was told that Ile had been re-allocated to the Guruè planters, on the private instructions of the Minister of the Colonies. SSE's General Manager was "very surprised" although he understood why the Minister should want to help Guruè. The Minister had family ties with Junqueiro. He had also formerly been the tea planters' representative in Lisbon.(28)

SSE protested to the Interim Governor of Zambézia and to the Minister of the Colonies. The company pointed out that it had been recruiting in Ile for twenty years and that in the past three years it had recruited a total of 16,850 men and boys from the region. SSE added that labour from Ile had been trained for cutting and loading work and that opening recruitment in a new area would involve training completely fresh men, which would lead to problems with the harvest. SSE therefore asked for Ile to be re-opened to their recruiters again, or failing this for two years in which to organise recruitment elsewhere.(29) Further to this protest SSE felt that there was little it could do except explain the situation to the new Governor of Zambézia when he arrived. The company decided not to bring up the subject with the Minister of Colonies immediately but to

mention it again when labour needs were discussed in relation to increased sugar production.

> There is no doubt that Junqueiro is clever and has played his cards well, but sooner or later those in authority will realise that the production of his tea crop is of little importance compared with the larger interests which Portugal has in seeing that the production of sugar is increased.(30)

But SSE lost its reserve in Ile. Instead the company was allowed to recruit labour in Morrumbala and Maganja. This decision was a blow for SSE. The company felt that labour from Maganja would not be able to cope with the work on the estates, besides which SSE faced competition for labour in the district from the Boror Company.(31)

In 1956 SSE once more faced the loss of a recruiting reserve to the Guruè tea planters. As in the districts of Alto Molócuè and Ile, SSE had been recruiting labour in Gilé District for 25-30 years. Indeed, these three areas were the principal sources of SSE's labour under the Hornung Contract. The matter of Gilé probably arose as the direct result of local Government policy. In an attempt to overcome the growing labour shortage, the Governor of Zambézia had issued instructions in 1953 which ordered employers to cease from engaging more men than they actually required. This was common policy among employers in the region, not only to guard against absenteeism but also to ensure that labour needs were adequate for peak periods of the year.(32) The Administrator of Chinde had discovered that SSE had 300 men on its books against daily needs of 60 men.(33) At a meeting of recruiters called by the Provincial Governor to discuss the labour situation, the Governor revealed that he was "horrified" to learn of SSE's practise in Chinde. He asserted that if Chinde were properly recruited it would yield 120 men a month. He therefore

prohibited SSE from recruiting in Gilé. SSE's recruiter protested. The Governor waived aside his objections. He argued that during the period he had held office SSE had not lost a ton of sugar through labour shortage whereas "Guruè had lost hundreds of pounds of tea for this reason."(34) SSE feared that it would not be possible to recruit 120 men a month from Chinde. Even if this number were forthcoming the company felt, on the basis of past experience, that the rates of absenteeism would be high.(35) Notwithstanding its objections, however, the government withdrew SSE's rights to recruit in Gilé, which went to the tea planters, and obliged it to recruit labour in Chinde instead.

Whereas in 1940 most of the labour recruited from Zambézia to work on SSE's plantations was drawn from the north and northwestern parts of Zambézia; Alto Molócùè, Ile, Gilé and Namarroi, by the mid-1950s there had been a perceptible eastward shift in the company's recruiting zones. Increasingly, following the expansion of tea-production in Guruè, SSE's labour was drawn from the littoral: Quelimane, Inhassunge, Pebane, Naburi and Chinde. This move was not propitious from SSE's point of view. It lost the right to recruit in areas where it had been recruiting men since the 1920s, and it lost men whose productivity had gradually increased over the years.(36) Instead it received labourers whose output was low and who were frequently absent from work.(37) SSE's competitors, on the other hand stepped in and received labour which had been formed and disciplined by SSE.

The fact of the origins (Portuguese settlers) of the tea

planters, the reference to planters receiving agricultural credit and their personal links with members of the administration and government, all suggest that the loss of SSE's principal reserves is an indication of a shift in government policy. Whereas until 1930 the colonial state had little option but to accept and support foreign capital, after that date it was able to foster policies to encourage accumulation by Portuguese, both in the plantation sector and through forced cotton cultivation. The growth of these two sectors in turn led to a change in the balance between Portuguese and foreign capital in the region. Through its redistributive labour policies the state sought to make available labour to all those who needed it. This it did by ending the system of exclusive reserves (NB this happened also in Angonia, see above) and by readjusting supply areas to meet changed needs. As a result, the monopoly labour supply position of the largest companies in the region was inevitably eroded in favour of newer and smaller enterprises.

Tea production continued to expand in Zambézia. In 1944 a new tea-producing region was demarcated in Socone. By 1955 the Socone plantations were absorbing 5000 men a year.(38) At the same time there was a general expansion of settlement and commerce in the region, and the rapid growth of Quelimane, Mocuba and other towns in the interior.(39) On the whole the labour needs of new settlers were low. Families required domestic workers, and small enterprises seldom employed more than a few workers. Hence the growth of settlement in itself did not lead to any major reallocation of labour reserves. It did, however, eat into the labour reserves of the district, and contributed to the growing labour shortage. Thus,

whereas in 1947 there was an overall surplus of 25,718 men over the needs of the province(40) by 1957 over 93 per cent of all men eligible for a contract were being recruited. The Provincial Governor estimated that it was almost impossible to surpass this percentage "if we take into account the movement of natives who clandestinely seek work outside the district, many indeed in foreign territory, which it is impossible to stop."(41)

THE STATE'S RESPONSE TO THE LABOUR SHORTAGE: RECRUITING METHODS IN ZAMBÉZIA

Only at the end of the 1950s did the absolute shortage of labour within Zambézia lead to the need for major changes in government labour policy. Until then, the system of labour mobilisation established in the RTI of 1930 was adequate to provide the men required. The law only needed minor adjustments to ensure that it operated efficiently and took account of changing circumstances. Re-allocating recruiting reserves between employers was one aspect of government policy. Enacting additional legislation to tie up loopholes in the law and strengthen the role of the state was another.

Throughout the period of this study administrators in Zambézia were directly involved in the recruitment of labour. The most common system of recruitment was the 'concentration'. Using the census the local administrator compiled a list of men who had been without wage work for more than six months. His police were sent into the various 'chiefdoms' of the administrative district and in collaboration with the 'chiefs' and their subordinates rounded up the men involved.

The captured men were then taken to the office of the administrator where they were put to work on public works projects for a period of two weeks. They received no payment for this service which was imposed as a punishment for their 'idleness'. At the end of the period of unpaid labour-service the recruiters operating in the area were called together and the men were distributed among them.(42)

Despite the obvious advantages of such a system both from the employers' and administrators' point of view there were various attempts to end the concentration. In 1944, for example, when workers from the Mopeia region were already angry about falling wages and rising prices(43) a government inspector suggested, among other things, that the use of force in the recruitment of labour should end. The consequences of the continued use of force, would, he felt, be higher rates of absenteeism at the work place and migration to neighbouring territories.(44) In 1947 a government circular again condemned the concentration because the use of direct force was leaving the 'natives' with the idea that work was a "painful obligation" rather than a "pressing necessity for the very existence of the individual and the community to which he belongs."(45) From the reports available it is obvious that administrative opinion was divided about the labour question. Some administrators felt that labour would only become plentiful if wages and conditions were not artificially depressed by forced labour and administrative interference in recruiting, which had the effect of discouraging competition for labour. There were others who felt that an improvement in wages and conditions and freedom to opt out of wage work would result in the disappearance of the labour force. Obviously the latter viewpoint

was an ideological argument for the maintenance of a cheap labour system. It was an argument which appealed to employers. Wanting to keep the costs of labour as low as possible employers were not willingly going to agree to a system whose effect would have been to push up their costs, especially when the state had shown itself only too willing to ensure that labour was forthcoming by whatever means. In any event, the latter viewpoint won the day, for as late as 1953 the Governor of Zambézia again condemned the concentration and admitted that earlier attempts to end it had failed.(46) Despite stronger measures to control the activities of recruiters, but not the activities of the authorities, who were instrumental in organising the system, the 'concentration' was still common in Zambézia in the early 1960s.(47)

Notwithstanding the differences of opinion which emerge from reports of the 1940s and 1950s, the trend of government policy was to increase the use of coercion to call forth labour as the labour shortage increased. Thus, between the mid-1940s and mid-1950s a number of measures were introduced to tackle both ends of the labour problem. Firstly, it was necessary to make sure that men who were eligible for wage work entered an annual contract. One means of increasing men's dependence on wages was to increase the rate of the 'native' tax or to introduce additional taxes which reduced the amount of time men could spend on the production of their own crops. To this end, a new tax, the contribuição braçal, was introduced in 1943. Tax payers were required to give five days unpaid labour-service a year to the administration.(48)

In 1947, the Native Affairs Department moved to increase the penalties for men who abused the 'rest' period after a contract. The department ruled that men who were defined as 'idle', and who were therefore liable to a period of obligatory labour, could be employed on road-building without payment for periods up to six months, if the administrator had no other paid work to offer them.(49) Men, who, in terms of the RTI could be obliged to work for the administration for less than the wage they would have received with a private employer, now found that they had to work without payment if they failed to take up a contract six months after completing their last period of paid employment. Forced labour for private ends was now officially and directly sanctioned in law.

The second way in which the labour problem was tackled was by finding means of ensuring that once men had been signed on for employment they completed their contract. It was the administrator's duty to supervise men at the work place. It was also the administrator's duty to punish men who failed to complete the contract or who in other ways infringed the law. In theory, such men were supposed to be condemned to a period of correctional labour. In practise, administrators usually extended the contract period as well. In 1945, for example, the Governor ruled that the practise of the Pebane Administrator, which was designed to overcome the problem of absenteeism, was legal. The administrator sent back to the employer any man who, during the contract period, had not earned enough money to pay the tax and to buy a pair of trousers. Such men were recontracted for a further period of six months.(50) In Chinde District, men who 'volunteered' for a contract were allowed to work

for two periods of three months. Those who were forcibly recruited were obliged to work six months without a break. Those men, on the other hand, who, having volunteered for a contract, then deserted the plantations before having completed two thirds of the contract, were sent back to the workplace for a further period of three months.(51) In Lugela, the Administrator noted in his 1952 Report to the Native Affairs Department, that "in the circumscription, by virtue of an old ruling still in use, all contracts are extended by 30 days above the 180 until 180 have been worked."(52)

To facilitate administrative control of labour SSE started in the 1950s to keep its own file of workers. The company informed the local authorities when the six month 'rest' period had been exceeded. The local authorities then rounded up the men affected and sent them to the estates.(53) Similarly, SSE sent in regular lists of men who had deserted from the estates before completing their contracts to the local authorities. The authorities were responsible for capturing the men, punishing them and sending them back to the estates.(54) Part of the punishment meted out by the authorities for desertion or unsatisfactory work included the administration of corporal punishment. As late as 1960 corporal punishment was still being used to deter 'shirking', absenteeism and desertion, although according to SSE less frequently than in the past.

> It is true that the 'palmatoria' is on its way out but it is being substituted by pretty stiff prison sentences where a prisoner is employed on government work. For instance we had some trouble over absenteeism with the Quelimanes and Micuanes and I heard from Mr Amarel in Quelimane that as offenders return here they are immediately put in prison and that this has had a very sobering influence on the new Guias arriving at Marromeu.(55)

Corporal punishment, extension of the contract period worked, imprisonment and periods of unpaid labour-service are examples of some of the measures introduced by the state to deal with the growing demand for labour in Zambézia between 1936 and 1960. Yet, as has been shown, the state did not limit its action to strengthening the deterrents against 'idleness', absenteeism and desertion which were first sanctioned in the 1930 labour legislation. It did not, in other words, limit its actions to increasing the use of coercion to call forth the labour available and to cut down on labour wastage. The marked increase in direct state intervention to "attract" labour to capital (accompanied by a growing collusion between the state and capital in the labour conscription process) was only one aspect of government policy during this period.

To cope with the changed situation within Zambézia, namely, the growing demand for labour on new plantations and in the cotton sector, the state also pursued two other, interrelated, policies. Unable to expand the geographical area from which labour was drawn because of the growing demand for labour in the regions which bordered the province, the state sought firstly to re-distribute the supply of labour available within the plantation sector. This inevitably meant that the labour needs of new (Portuguese) plantations were accommodated at the expense of the supply of old-established (foreign-controlled) plantations. The latter had to bear the financial burden of establishing a recruiting network in new areas. Nevertheless, despite the comparative disadvantages of this policy for old-established plantation capital, state intervention to re-distribute labour guaranteed the labour needs of the plantation

sector as a whole. All needs could be met as long as the demand for labour did not outstrip the physical capacity of the region to supply it. The rapid spread of cotton cultivation did, however, threaten the physical capacity of the region to supply sufficient labour for all needs. The second strand of state policy was, therefore, directed towards restoring the balance between cotton concessionaries and plantation capital by controlling the conditions of cotton production and re-structuring the supply of labour to the cotton sector. Besides limiting the areas which could be sown with cotton the state also moved to reserve male labour for plantation capital and to encourage concessionaries to use female labour. In other words, the state sought to extend the labour supply to meet the needs of both sections of capital by making available a reserve army of (female) labour to cotton concessionaries. Clearly, these policies were not uniformly applied over time or over regions. Their application at local level depended on a multiplicity of factors, not least of which was the individual administrator's own attitude to the labour question and the planters and concessionaries within his district. However, at provincial level they were successful in holding off the labour crisis until the end of the 1950s.

Despite state intervention to furnish labour and regulate the supply of labour to different sections of capital in the region individual employers and concessionaries were often dissatisfied with the measures taken. Besides 'poaching' labour from each other they also attempted to safeguard their own position by negotiating with the authorities to redress the perceived imbalance in labour supply, or adopted other legal measures to protect their own sources of labour.

The example of negotiations over labour from Ile typifies the former response. SSE's cotton concession is an example of the latter. Yet, notwithstanding their complaints, none called for the ending of the system and the establishment of a free labour market. As a whole, capital in the region, whether Portuguese or foreign, invested in cotton or plantation production, was united in its support for a system of forced migrant labour run by the state. Cotton concessionaries were supplied with unpaid labour. Peasants forced into the production found themselves entirely at the disposal of the concessionary who determined the areas and amounts to be sown and the price of the crop. Planters, on the other hand were guaranteed a supply of low-paid labour. The implementation of those clauses of the labour legislation which dealt with wages and working conditions on the estates, ensured that, even with the tensions in the system and the upward pressure on wages that competition implied, migrant labour still remained cheap labour. It is to the application of the labour system on the plantations that I shall now turn. Part II of this thesis, will attempt to show, through a detailed discussion of the various aspects of SSE's labour policy, why the migrant system persisted in Zambézia in spite of a growing shortage of labour.

NOTES

(1) SSE AR., File 133A, Recruiting Angonia, Quelimane, Local, Recruiting, Marromeu, (paper discussed 10 Nov. 1937). Nevertheless, despite the attraction of higher wages in Rhodesia which planters in Zambézia could not control, they were successful in this period in inhibiting South African mining capital from expanding the geographical area of its reserve army of labour to include 'natives' from Portuguese Angonia (SSE Ar., File 133, Recruiting, Quelimane, and Angonia (1930-1939), W. Gemmill, Transvaal Chamber of Mines, Johannesburg, to Col. C.B.R. Hornung, 10 June 1938, Private; C.B.R. Hornung to W.Gemmill, 20 June 1938; J. Barros Gomes, Lourenço Marques, to Coronel C.B.R. Hornung, 15 Oct. 1938). Recovery after the depression in South Africa brought with it a return to the recruitment of 'tropical' labour. That plantation capital in Zambézia was able to prevent renewed recruitment for South Africa north of parallel 22° in Mozambique suggests the increasing strength of this sector of capital vis-a-vis mining capital. It also suggests that the policies of the Salazar regime, which sought to boost internal capital accumulation in Mozambique, were beginning to bear fruit. cf. note 72, Chapter I.

(2) SSE Ar., File 133, MT to A. Sarmento Pimental, 29 Mar. 1938.

(3) SSE Ar., File 133A, MT to Col. Hornung, 9 May 1947, No. 67/47, Recruiting.

(4) SSE Ar., File 133A, António de Noronha, M'kame to Gerente Geral SSE Ltd., 20 May 1950, No. 19/50, Recrutamento. (Translation J.H.).

(5) ibid. (Translation J.H.)

(6) SSE Ar., File 93, Labour and Recruiting, Government Side, NHDB (Du Boulay) Luabo, to Hornung and Co., 15 May 1957, No. 143/57, Labour Position.

(7) GOV. Q., Rep. Port., Prov. de Moç., Governo do Distrito da Zambézia, Acta da Conferencia dos Administradores, 28.8.1957 a 31.8.1957, p. 100.

(8) SSE Ar., File 118, Native Compound, A. Sarmento Pimental, to Gerente Geral SSE Ltd. Luabo, 28 Aug. 1937. Namagoa Plantations' policy of attraction included not complaining about absenteeism and not obliging the recruited men to work hard. The company also gave each man a blanket when he left the estate to encourage him to return to the firm after the six month 'rest' period was over.

(9) Ministério do Ultramar, Junta de Exportacão do Algodao, Reajustamento das Zonas Algodoeiras de Moçambique, de Acordo com as Disposições do Decreto No. 35:844 e com Base no Recenseamento Ecológico-Agrícola da Província, 1953, Decreto No. II:994, 1926.

(10) SSE Ar., File 44, Annual Cotton Reports, Final Cotton Report, Season 1942. For further details of the organisation of the cultivation see SSE Ar., File 44A, Details for Annual Cotton Report, 1943-1946, passim.

(11) SSE Ar., File 133, A. Teixeira Rebello to MT Gerente Geral SSE, 23 Mar. 1936 and Pinto Basto to Gerente Geral, SSE, Mopea, 16 Apr. 1936. Lopes Irmãos' cotton agent was SSE's former recruiter in Mutarara who was dismissed by the company, see Chapter III.

(12) SSE Ar., File 133, Pinto Basto to Gerente Geral, SSE, Mopea, 16 May 1936, transcribing passages of letters received from the Chefe do Posto da Morrumbala and from the Administrator of Massingire.

(13) SSE Ar., File 133A, D A /to Major N.H. Du Boulay, 11 Oct. 1960, No. 355/60, Recruiting, "The numbers recruited / in Morrumbala / have dropped considerably compared with past years and the reason seems to be the emphasis which the Administrator is putting on cotton, the concession for which belongs to Lopes Bros."

(14) SSE Ar., File 44, Final Cotton Report... 1942, op.cit.

(15) SSE Ar., File 44B, Details for Annual Cotton Reports (1946-1964), DA Luabo to J.A. dos Santos Callado SSE, LM. 26 Feb. 1962, No. 21/62/Reservada, Concessão Algodoeira, "As you know the only aim of our cotton concession in the Mopeia and Luabo zones was to avoid another firm coming to work it and thus disrupting and damaging the recruitment of labour necessary for the sugar cane plantations." (Translation J.H.)

(16) SSE Ar., File 44, Final Cotton Report, Season 1941, Luabo 30 Nov. 1942.

(17) GOV. Q, Col. de Moç., Prov. da Zambézia, Relatório do Governador, Capitão da Infantaria, César Maria de Serpa Rosa, Respeitante ao Periodo de 4 de Maio de 1943 a 31 de Dezembro de 1947, pp. 177-178.

(18) ibid., pp. 178-182.

(19) Relatório do Governador (Zambézia)...1943...1947, op. cit., Instrucções No. I, 18 Oct. 1943 (Ordem da Província No. 2 of 31 Dec. 1943), pp. 162-163; SSE Ar., File 44A, Director Provîncial da Admin. Civil, A. Mendes Gil, to Chefe da Secção de Algodão da SSE, 5 Nov. 1945, Nota No. 2886/D/11/2, Companha Algodoeira, Instrucções da Inscriçao e Registo dos Agrícultores de Algodão.

(20) AHM, NI 198, 1952-1957, Relatórios dos Agentes do Curador e Delegados de Saúde, No. 50, Circ. do Ile, Agência da Curadoria dos Indígenas da Circunscrição do Ile, Relatório do Ano de 1954.

(21) SSE Ar., File 93, MT to Hornung and Co. Ltd., 28 Apr. 1953, No. 266/53 GM, Enclosing: Administração do Concelho do Chinde, Direcção de Admin. Civil da Zambézia, Circular No. 95/C, 24 Mar. 1953. (Translation J.H.) In 1943 rice growing on the concession system also started in Zambézia. See Relatório do Governador (Zambezia)...1943...1947, op. cit., p. 183 and Leroy Vail and Landeg White, "'Tawani, Machambero!' Forced Cotton and Rice Growing on the Zambesi," Journal of African History, XIX, No. 2 (1978), p. 257 ff.

(22) SSE Ar., File 44B, DA to J.A. dos Santos Callado, SSE, LM, 26 Feb. 1962, No. 21/62/Reservada, Concessão Algodoeira and A.F.S. (Souza) to J.A. dos Santos Callado, 18 June 1962; Vail and White, op. cit., pp. 261-262.

(23) SSE Ar., File 133A, D A to Major N.H. Du Boulay, 25 Aug. 1960, No. 297/60.

(24) Fransisco Gavicho de Lacerda, A Cultura do Chá Feita pelos Portugueses na Zambézia (Lisboa, 1948), pp. 32-34. 'Credito Agrícola' was probably government agricultural credit.

(25) AHM. NI 16, A/31/ 945, Respostas ao Questíonario que Acompanhou a Circular No. 1356/A/31 de 22 5 1945, Guruè.

(26) SSE Ar., File 270, Ille Recruiting, MT to Dr. J. dos Santos Callado, 8 Nov. 1950 - Recrutamento no Ille. (Translation J.H.)

(27) ibid.

(28) SSE Ar., File 270, MT to Dr. J. dos Santos Callado, LM, 28 Oct., 1950, Recrutamento no Ille.

(29) SSE Ar., File 270, MT to Dr. J. dos Santos Callado, 22 Dec. 1950, enclosing letters of protest to the Minister of the Colonies and the Acting Governor of Zambézia.

(30) SSE Ar., File 270. CBRH (Charles Bernard Rafael Hornung) to Thurnheer, 10 Jan. 1951. Quelimane Recruiting.

(31) SSE Ar., File 270, MT to Dr. J. dos Santos Callado LM, 28 Nov. 1950, Recrutamento no Ille and CBRH to Thurnheer, Lisbon 29 Nov. 1950, No. 328/50, Quelimane Recruiting.

(32) SSE Ar., File 93, Governo da Zambézia, Ordem Geral No. 3/53.

(33) SSE Ar., File 305, Native Labour, Transport of Labour etc., EH(?) to Major J.D. Hornung, 14 Dec. 1956, No. 266/56 'Private Series', Native Labour.

(34) ibid.

(35) ibid.

(36) SSE Ar., File 184, Native Labour Organisation, Hut Tax, Usher, General Field Manager to General Manager, 29 May 1955, Re. Matabichos to Native Labour. The "Angurus" started loading cane in the early 1920s. They were then "far inferior in physique" to labour bordering on the Zambesi and also "more backward mentally." At first they did one quarter of the work of a local man then one third and finally three quarters.

(37) By 1963 SSE only recruited on the littoral when it suffered from a labour shortage because of the low output and high rate of absenteeism among workers from the coastal area (SSE Ar., File 133A, Recrutamento, 12 Aug. 1963).

(38) GOV. Q, Rep. Port., Prov. de Moç., Governo da Zambézia, Relatório do Governo do Distrito, 1.1.56 a 31.12.56, pp. 18-19.

(39) ibid., passim. See also other Governors' Reports and the minutes of the annual meetings of administrators for the 1950s.

(40) Relatório do Governador (Zambézia)...1943...1947, op.cit., p. 161.

(41) Acta da Conferência dos Administradores...1957, op.cit., p. 89. / Translation J.H. /

(42) Interview with Vasco Batalha Santos, Maputo, 27 May 1977. Mr Batalha Santos was SSE's recruiter in Mutarara between 1951 and 1960. The broad details of his account are confirmed by the administrator who was appointed to the Circumscription of Mopeia in 1953. "When I arrived here the recruitment was, in practise, done by the authorities. Periodically and on the appointed day, the native authorities brought to the headquarters of the circumscription and post all the natives whose rest period had expired and who were eligible for a new contract. It was among the mass of congregated natives that the recruiters did their work." (AHM, NI 202, 1952-1957, Relatórios dos Agentes do Curador e Delegados de Saúde, No. 54, Circ. de Mopeia, Ladislau Batalha Junior, 12 Jan. 1954). (Translation J.H.).

(43) SSE Ar., File 133A, G. Amado Mopeia to MT, 11 Nov. 1944.

(44) ibid.

(45) Repartição Central dos Negócios Indigenas, Circular No. 566/D/7, LM, 15 May 1947.

(46) SSE Ar., File 93, Gov. da Zambézia, Ordem Geral 3/53, op. cit.

(47) For example, in 1962, and after the RTI had been abolished, the Governor of Zambézia called the Administrator of Mopeia a coward in front of SSE's recruiter, and gave him instructions to travel round the bush every day bringing in those men whose 'rest' period had expired. (SSE Ar., File 133A, AFS Gerente Geral to Hornung and Co. Ltd., 3 Nov. 1962, No. 443/62/Private Series.)

(48) Rep. Port. Principal Legislação Aplicável aos Indígenas da Prov. de Moç. (Imprensa Nacional de Moc., LM, 1960), Portaria No. 4963, Approvando o Regulamento da Contribuição Bráçal Indígena, 29 Dec. 1942. In his 1943-7 Report the Governor of Zambezia strongly recommended a periodic review of the 'native' tax, which being within the means of the people was ceasing to act as an indirect means of forcing men to work. He also insisted that 'natives' should dress decently. "As an indirect way of making the native seek work and consequently to facilitate the work of the recruiters, the administrative authority must, with keen and special interest, oblige the people of both sexes to dress decently." (Relatório do Governador (Zambézia) ...1943...1947, op. cit., p. 164 and p. 117). (Translation J.H.)

(49) Província de Manica e Sofala, Direcção Provincial de Admin. Civil, Circular No. 5.842/B/15, de 8 de Setembro de 1947.

(50) AHM, NI 32, B/24/4/1, 1945-1947, Relatórios Trimestrais dos Agentes do Curador, Pebane, Official Communication from the Gov. da Prov. da Zambezia, Quelimane, 7 Nov. 1945.

(51) NI 32, B/24/4/1, op. cit., Admin. do Concelho do Chinde, Relatório da Mão-de-Obra Relativo ao Terçeiro Trimestre do Corrente Ano de 1946, Admin. Ladislau Batalha Junior.

(52) AHM, NI 199, 1952-1957, Relatórios dos Agentes do Curador e Delegados de Saúde, No. 51, Circ. de Lugela, Relatório sobre Mão-de-Obra em Geral Referente ao 2º semestre de 1952. (Translation J.H.)

(53) SSE Ar., File 93, H. Felizardo to Gerente Geral 30 Jan. 1957, Ref. Carta 7/57/Reservada, Trabalhadores Chinde.

(54) SSE Ar., File 347, Policy, Cantinas Acampamentos, Public Address System, SSE Ltd. to Administrador do Posto Luabo, 28 Sep. 1963.

(55) SSE Ar., File 184, NHDB to S.P. Hornung London, 18 June 1960, No. 229/60 Private Series, Native Wages Recruiting and General Policy. Leroy Vail and Landeg White, "Plantation Protest: The History of a Mozambican Song", Journal of Southern African Studies, V, No. 1 (Oct. 1978), p. 9, cite a young Englishman who worked for SSE briefly in 1923. "The youthful labour clerk (Portuguese) was resident magistrate and inflicted with the assistance of a band of cut-throat retainers - 'Paposo's men' - what seemed to me a terrible punishment with an instrument called a "Palmetoria' [sic]. This thing was the shape and size of a ping-pong bat but much thicker and was perforated with holes like the colander. The hand of the victim was seized and many blows were struck on the palm; then the other palm and then the buttocks. On one occasion I saw the instrument handed over to a second retainer to carry on. The result of this treatment is to leave the victim in agony which must endure for a considerable time and renders him completely collapsed. The action of the instrument is that when a blow is struck the skin is drawn up into the many holes and a certain amount of force appears necessary to pull or twist the thing away from the flesh" (PRO. FO. 371/11989 [illegible] Harris, 26 Feb. 1927).

PART II

THE IMPACT OF THE COERCIVE LABOUR REGIME, 1930-1960

i. SENA SUGAR ESTATES'LABOUR POLICY

CHAPTER V

THE ORGANISATION OF WORK AND PAYMENT AT SENA SUGAR ESTATES

The production of sugar on plantations is divided into two distinct parts; the field and specifically agricultural operations and the milling and processing of the cane in the factory. The factory must be located as close to the fields as possible since cane is highly perishable and rapidly loses its sucrose content after being cut. The construction of a factory to crush and process the cane is a costly undertaking. Thus, loss of production and inefficient use of the factory plant push up the overall costs of production. A basic aim of the sugar producer, therefore, is to extend the harvest period for as long as possible and to supply as much cane to the factory as possible within that period. In other words, through careful organisation of field operations the sugar producer seeks to ensure maximum productive use of the factory within the natural limits dictated by the climate and type of soil.(1)

It is only relatively recently that sugar producers have turned to more mechanised methods of production in the fields.(2) Thus, another important consideration in the past was to ensure the most efficient use of the large labour force needed to grow and harvest the crop.

Sugar cane is a perennial crop. The cutting of the stem stimulates the growth of secondary shoots in the dormant eyes of the

part of the plant which lies under the soil. The primary shoot is known as the overstand. The secondary shoots are called ratoons. The number of ratoons varies considerably.(3) Besides natural limitations such as soil type and climate, the number of ratoons is dictated by commercial considerations. These include the amount of fertilisation and weed/insect control considered economic; the irrigation and drainage necessary; the variety of cane used; the optimum yield of sugar per plant considered profitable and the amount of labour needed. However, by a judicious organisation of planting the estate management tries to ensure that different sections of new cane or ratoons are harvested in sequence.(4) Careful planning of planting not only ensures that a continuous supply of cane is fed into the factory during the harvest but it also enables management to rationally deploy labour and/or machinery during the rest of the year.(5) Nevertheless there are limits to the degree of rationalisation of labour use which can be introduced in the fields. These are dictated by the requirements of the crop. Unlike industrial production where a contnuous cycle of production can be established irrespective of the season, plantation production requires different inputs of labour over the period of the crop's growth. Thus, another major preoccupation of the plantation producer is to develop a system of labour use which can be adjusted to the seasonal needs of the crop. Finally, where cane production is not mechanised, a fourth and major preoccupation of the plantation producer is to find ways of containing the costs of labour.

Sugar production at SSE between 1930 and 1960 operated within the general conditions described above.(6) To ensure optimum use of

the factory and labour in the fields several agricultural programmes operated simultaneously. For the sake of clarity these programmes have been simplified and only the basic process of cultivation is described below.

The agricultural year on Sena Sugar Estates' plantations was divided into two main periods: the harvest or 'crop' from May to the end of November, when the main field jobs were cutting the cane, loading the cane onto trucks attached to locomotives to be transported to the factory and gleaning; and the period of the 'off-crop', which was further sub-divided into two periods. The first of these included the vital months of December, January and February when the land was prepared and new seed planted, and when ratoons were weeded and pests controlled. The second period, from March until the beginning of the 'crop' was the time when weeding, drainage, the making of mounds around the cane to encourage secondary shoots, and the building of fire barriers to defend the crop, took place.(7) Despite the spread of agricultural work to ensure optimum utilisation of labour in the fields the harvest still absorbed a greater number of workers than the 'off-crop' and labour needs were at their lowest between March and the beginning of the 'crop'.(8)

Land preparation and ploughing were mechanised at SSE from before the 1930s, as was the transport of the cane from the fields to the factory. However, all other field operations were manual until the latter years of the 1950s. Thus, seed preparation, planting, weeding, moulding, insect control, fertilisation, cutting and loading were all done by hand. In 1932 SSE had 14,000 hectares under

cultivation and by 1955 this figure had risen to 20,000 hectares.(9) The combination of a production process based on manual labour and the large areas under cultivation meant that labour needs were high. On average between 1930 and 1960 SSE appears to have employed approximately 13,000 to 20,000 men a day.(10) For the three years 1940-1942, the only years for which complete figures exist, the breakdown of the labour force employed on the estates was as shown on the tables overleaf.

Thus, like sugar producers in general, SSE was confronted with two major problems, which arose from the particular demands of unmechanised sugar cane production. Firstly, the company required an employment programme which would allow labour numbers to be adjusted to the particular demands of the crop, and secondly it needed to contain and control the costs of labour. It is the object of this chapter to show how the particular form of labour conscription which developed in Zambézia helped SSE to overcome these problems. The first section of the chapter will examine the effects of migrant labour use on field production. The second and subsequent sections of the chapter will examine the organisation of work and payment on the estates in more detail. They will attempt to show how, as a result of state intervention to ensure that plantation capital was provided with a cheap and powerless labour force, SSE could implement a range of policies aimed at increasing the productivity of labour and holding back wages.

WORKERS EMPLOYED ON THE PROPERTIES IN 1940, 1941 and 1942(11)

Year	Property	Remaining from last year	Contracted	Volunteers (a) Men	Boys	Specialised	Total
1940	Luabo	4605	7296	2404	1556	572	16433
	Marromeu	4112	8387	416	637	689	14241
	Mopeia (b)	297	-	498	116	180	1091
	Matilde) (c)	808	1125	39	237	-	2209
	Chinde)	-	-	1140	-	-	1140
		9822	16808	4497	2546	1441	35114
1941	Luabo	4499	3942	1814	2062 (d)	947	16291
	Marromeu	3994	6732	923	653	644	12946
	Mopeia	372	135	480	190	55	1232
	Matilde)	-	828	772	-	308	1908
	Chinde)	-	368	369	-	-	737
		8865	12005	7358	2905	1981	33114
1942	Luabo	5831	4838	3300	1626	1169	16764
	Marromeu	3513	6025	442	448	662	11090
	Mopeia	500	-	569	165	130	1364
	Matilde)	1136	450	190	181	7	1964
	Chinde)	102	-	263	-	425	790
		11082	11313	4764	2420	2393	31972

(a) Child labour was all volunteer labour because boys could not be obliged to work until they were 18 years old.

(b) The men and boys employed at Mopeia were probably employed as cattle men and on the main reception camp for incoming workers.

(c) Matilde/Chinde were not sugar plantations. At Matilde SSE had salt pans and a coconut plantation. Chinde was a port. Here the company had warehouse facilities.

(d) The numbers of volunteer workers generally increased in 1941. This was a year of severe drought. For a breakdown of the origins of volunteer workers see SSE Ar., File 94, Labour for Marromeu, SSE Ltd. Mão-de-Obra Indígena, 1942, "Mapa dos Trabalhadores que se apresentarem voluntariament a pedir serviço nos anos 1939 - 1942 nas Propriedades de Luabo e Marromeu".

ORIGIN OF THE WORKERS EMPLOYED ON THE PROPERTIES IN 1940, 1941 and 1942 (12)

Year	Property	Ile	Alto Molócuè	Maganja da Costa	Nhamarroi	Angonia	Zambeze (Mopeia)	Chinde	Marromeu	Others	Total
1940	Luabo	4121	1403	1238	1101	1914	1317	4100	25	1212	16433
	Marromeu	3430	471	2996	285	1682	1613	88	3428	248	14241
	Mopeia	21	102	12	1	-	921	-	-	34	1091
	Matilde) Chinde)	-	1172	135	247	-	-	-	-	-	-
	TOTAL	7572	3148	4381	1634	3596	3851	5874	3453	1605	35114
1941	Luabo	3627	2114	257	1249	2329	1048	3824	36	1807	16291
	Marromeu	2462	995	1347	1208	1674	1405	71	3240	571	12946
	Mopeia	-	83	-	160	-	940	4	-	45	1232
	Matilde) Chinde)	-	868	-	438	-	1	1279	50	9	2645
	TOTAL	6089	4060	1604	3055	3976	3394	5178	3326	2432	33114
1942	Luabo	2627	2167	2082	750	2512	1370	4341	-	915	16764
	Marromeu	1265	636	1144	650	1842	2537	52	-	133	11090
	Mopeia	13	67	113	2	-	1129	4	2831	36	1362
	Matilde) Chinde)	198	747	56	14	-	5	1455	-	279	2754
	TOTAL	4103	3617	3395	1416	4354	5041	5852	2831	1363	31972

THE ORGANISATION OF PRODUCTION IN THE FIELDS

The Division of Labour in the Fields

On arriving at the estates, all workers were registered at SSE's Native Labour Office. They were then distributed among the various compounds, and after settling in, were called to work. In the mornings, the men on each compound were distributed among the field supervisory staff. Assimilated and European overseers (capatazes) took charge of groups of 200 men, while 'native' capatazes were responsible for supervising groups of 100 men. These groups were then further sub-divided into groups of 25 men to each 'native' foreman (capitão).(13) The numbers in the work groups, were not, however, invariable. They depended on the type of work in hand. On weeding and harvest work, for example, a general European overseer normally supervised the work of 500 labourers.(14)

The variable numbers employed in work groups at SSE was a direct result of the organisation of production in the fields. With the exception of a small number of workers engaged in skilled work, such as, steam-plough operators, locomotive drivers, and later tractor drivers,(15) the bulk of the labour force was employed to do routine work with simple implements: the axe, hoe and cane-knife. Weeding, cutting, planting and loading, indeed every manual field task, relied more on the individual's strength and dexterity than on any skill acquired through a lengthy training process. The lack of skill needed in turn meant that work could be distributed amongst the labourers according to the needs of the season. This is not to say that where men from a particular region had developed an aptitude for certain sorts of work SSE did not attempt to organise field

production with this in mind. As has already been shown in Chapter III the company attempted to employ both men from the local prazos and men from Angonia in specific areas of production. Nevertheless, the relative aptitude of certain groups of men for certain types of work does not override the central feature of the labour process at SSE, namely, that field tasks were interchangeable.(16)

The absence of a specialised division of labour in the fields had two important and related consequences. Firstly, it meant that SSE could allocate the daily field work in the most efficient way. Changes in weather conditions affected the output of workers in the fields.(17) For example, heavy overnight rain during the harvest period slowed down the work of the cane cutters. This in turn meant that bottlenecks were created throughout the production cycle which resulted in inefficient use of the factory. These problems could be partially overcome because SSE could deploy and redeploy men in different areas of production in response to daily conditions in the fields. Secondly, SSE could organise its recruiting operations so that the numbers engaged were adjusted to seasonal needs.

Unskilled labour required: Luabo and Marromeu 1953-1955(18)

Year	Estate	Crop Period	31.11-28.2	28.2 - start of crop
1953	Luabo	7500	6850	5700
	M'meu	6400	6875	6000
1954	Luabo	7500	6200	5700
	M'meu	7500	6875	6125
1955	Luabo	7500	6200	5700
		8125	6625	6125

The operation of different contract lengths facilitated this process. While the bulk of the labour force was engaged on six month contracts, which coincided roughly with the major division of the agricultural year, the company could employ local men on shorter contracts to cover exceptional needs.(19) By paring down labour numbers to the seasonal requirements of the crop SSE could avoid supporting unproductive labour during the 'off-crop' period.

There were, however, limits to the degree of efficiency which could be implemented. Precisely because the company had no control over the weather it could never assess its actual labour needs with complete accuracy. The company had to allow itself a certain amount of leeway, and hence, had to carry a number of men in excess of its actual requirements, in order to cope with any unforeseen contingency. Nevertheless, within these limits, the general point still held true. The migrant labour system allowed SSE to adjust its labour needs to the particular demands of sugar cane production.

Another potential limitation of the migrant system was the high labour turnover which was a feature of it. A high labour turnover implied disruption to work. This in turn suggested inefficient use of labour and machinery and meant increased costs of production. At SSE, however, this problem was minimised. Firstly, the unskilled nature of field work meant that men could start working almost as soon as they arrived at the estates. The company did not have to support unproductive labour during a training period, nor did it have to support the costs of training labour which only worked for a short period of time. In so far as training was given it was given on

the job. Furthermore, as we shall see below, the company could recoup the costs of supporting inefficient workers during the initial part of their contract by withholding payment if they failed to complete the task demanded of them. Secondly, the company sought to stagger the arrival and departure of contracted men. At SSE only relatively small groups of men arrived and left the estates at any one time. This meant that men could be slotted into field production and withdrawn from it without major upheavals in the overall production cycle. Thus, by employing migrant labour, or labour on short-term contracts, SSE was able to organise labour use around the particular needs of sugar cane production. The efficient use of labour in the fields in turn meant that SSE could avoid unnecessary expenditure on labour and hence control the overall costs of production.

However, SSE was still faced with the necessary costs of maintaining the labour force in production; with field operations largely dependent on manual labour these must have absorbed most of the working capital set aside for cane production.(20) Therefore, besides attempting to reduce overall labour costs by adjusting the numbers employed to the particular demands of the crop, SSE also sought to reduce its expenditure on labour as such. It is in relation to this aspect of its labout policy that the specific features of the system of labour conscription which developed in Zambézia, come into play.

METHODS EMPLOYED BY SSE TO CONTAIN LABOUR COSTS - MANIPULATING PRODUCTIVITY

The Task System

At Sena Sugar Estates all work was divided into tasks. In order to earn a day's wage each man had to complete a specified amount of work. Some tasks were individual, such as weeding, hoeing, moulding and planting. Others were distributed among a group or gang of workers. Examples of group tasks were cane-loading, and laying the portable field railway track. Cane cutting was a task detailed to individual workers but loaders could only complete their task if cutters kept up the pace of the work. Yet, whether tasks were allocated to individuals or groups the task system as a whole was intended to encourage high productivity. Workers either had to complete the stipulated task or forego that day's wage.

There was no legal definition of what constituted a reasonable task over and above the stipulation that workers were not supposed to spend more than nine hours in the fields. Tasks were established by field managers on the basis of experience.

> Present tasks are reasonable. If they were not I should give either more or less. Tasks are given on the merits of the work and an experienced eye only acquired after years of specialising in this particular branch of business. Tasks are estimated to occupy not more than nine hours. A strong working boy can of course complete his task in less.(21)

Tasks also varied according to the conditions in the fields. In his reply to a labour questionnaire in 1931, the Head Overseer of the Marromeu Estate remarked that "it is impossible to lay down a set task for many kinds of field work. Tasks have continually to be altered to suit various conditions prevailing in the fields where the

work is being carried on." He added "I have gangs at present weeding all over the estates at tasks varying from seven men per acre to 1.5 men per acre. The difference is not due to the class of labour but to the amount of weeds in the various fields."(22) While it is obvious that tasks had to vary with conditions in the fields this very variance allowed management considerable leeway in establishing tasks. Since its aim was to make profits it was in the interests of management to wrest as large a task as possible from the worker.

There were three principal ways in which SSE's management sought to increase the production of surplus value through the task system. Firstly, as already demonstrated in Chapter III, SSE used the excuse of the international recession in the early 1930s to unilaterally increase every agricultural field task on the estates. This it did without raising wages. Indeed, these productivity increases were introduced in a period when SSE was also cutting the money wages of its labourers. Secondly, SSE attempted to use the fact that men from certain areas were more adept at certain types of field work to impose larger tasks on the men who worked with them. It also used the first group of men recruited from an area to set the pace for subsequent groups of men.

> It was decided during this crop to endeavour by gradually working up their tasks to get the same amount from them [men from Alto Molócuè in Zambézia] as we had been accustomed to expect from Charres or local prazos. In point of fact they eventually exceeded these and all our expectations at the same time. Subsequent guias [contingents] of Angurus were not such a striking lot as the first two, but the latter had already paved the way and we were able to insist on standardising the tasks for all Angurus.(23)

The use of target setters to increase the intensity of labour is reminiscent of a tactic used by employers who operated a piece rate in 19th Century England.(24) However, here the similarity between the two systems ends, for, whereas in England the worker received a wage which varied according to the number of pieces produced, in Zambézia the 'piece' was the whole day's labour. At SSE partial completion of the task did not result in partial payment of the day's wage. Men who failed to produce the whole task were marked as absent and lost the wage for the day.(25) At SSE, then, the task system allowed capital to increase the production of surplus value by appropriating unpaid labour. Yet, denying men who had turned up for work their wages was not the only way in which SSE appropriated unpaid labour from the work force. The third principal way in which SSE used the task system to increase the production of surplus value was by extending the working day without increasing the wage paid for the task. This it did in two ways.

The RTI of 1930 stipulated that 'natives' were not to work for more than nine hours a day. Any worker who had not completed his task after nine hours was to have the day's work marked for payment.(26) A government inspection of SSE's working conditions in 1956 revealed that the company had been making its workers stay in the fields until their tasks were finished. The men started work at 6 a.m., but some men only returned to the compound at 4.45 p.m. When the Inspector asked the men why they were delayed they replied that their tasks were excessive. The Inspector accepted the men's version of events and in his report criticised the firm for making the men work for eleven hours without a break.

> It is proven and accepted without question that the native who works a task seeks to finish it as quickly as possible. Nobody is taken in by the fact that the great majority of workers do not return to the compound at midday or 1 o'clock as the company erroneously asserts but at 4.30, 5 o'clock or later still!(27)

The Inspector also pointed out managers to whom he had spoken said that the tasks were the same as always." In his view this meant that the company had never attempted to find out whether the capacity of the men contracted from the different regions was the same and compatible with the task imposed.(28) This is an important point. The physical capacity of workers affected their output, as did their age and ability to adapt to the hot and humid conditions of the river delta. SSE's management was aware of these factors.

> I hope to induce Angurus now that they have become used to the work and are no longer new to take up a task of seven men loading three trucks instead of eight men as previously, <u>always providing that they are sound and physically fit and not half composed of youths</u>.(29)
> (emphasis added)

However, SSE's management did not take these factors into account when it compared the output of men from different areas. Thus, "Anguru" labour was condemned for producing only 60-80 per cent of the output of men from Angonia.(30) Yet, if the "Anguru" gang was composed of men who were debilitated, very old or very young, 75 per cent of the task of men from Angonia might have represented an increase in production even though the absolute task set by the company was not fulfilled.

The report of the Government Health Inspector is important not only because it showed that SSE had for many years been imposing tasks which coula not be completed in nine hours, without a super-human effort, but also because it highlighted the systematic deception practised by the firm with regard to meal breaks. Not only were men working continuously for 11 hours, but, including the walk to and from the compound to the fields, they were also regularly going for 13 hours without food.

The RTI of 1930 stated that men contracted to work outside the area where they lived were to receive a meal between 11 am and 1 pm and an hour's rest.(31) In 1957, another government inspection of SSE's plantations revealed that men were sometimes working for eight hours without a break and without being given anything to eat.(32) Writing to SSE's General Manager about the matter, one of SSE's Directors confirmed that this was the case.

> As you rightly point out this matter of continuous work in excess of the legal period has been raised from time to time and always by people who wanted to do harm to the company. We have, I believe, always rebutted the arguments put forward successfully, but there is no getting away from it that more and more companies are being forced to comply with the letter of the law.
> If we can comply with the law without prejudicing work in the plantations, it is of course to our advantage to do so... It occurs to me that as we are now experimenting with an issue of bread to be eaten in the fields, between you you may be able to evolve a token break from work whilst the bread is consumed, without prejudice to normal fieldwork.(33)

The implications of SSE's policy of distributing rations will be discussed in detail in the following chapter. However, it is pertinent to point out in this context that by systematically denying the labour

force the legal lunch break to which they were entitled SSE was able to increase the appropriation of unpaid labour (surplus labour) at the rate of six hours per worker, per week; and at this rate over a period of many years.

The Use of Child Labour

It was SSE's policy to encourage workers to bring their sons to the estates with them.(34) Child labour formed a significant part of the field labour force although it could not be relied on for planning purposes since the numbers of children who accompanied their fathers fluctuated considerably.(35) For accounting purposes two boys were assessed as one man. However, whereas boys were paid two thirds of a man's wages in 1942 by 1951 they were earning less than half.(36) Furthermore, boys received less food than men.(37) Yet boys produced more than half a man's daily output and sometimes did the same task as a man.

> In fact we reckon a boy at half the value of a man for many classes of work and more than that for light weeding or collecting beetles.(38)

> The main source of our supply of minors are the Angurus and the Angonis. These form a very important part of our labour force and at specialised jobs such as light weeding or the collection of beetles do every bit as large a task as their father.(39)

For producing a task which in some types of field work was as large as their father's not only did boys receive less food than their fathers and lower wages but they also received fewer items of clothing on being engaged.(40) In addition SSE saved on recruiting costs when it employed minors since children were not specifically

recruited but encouraged through their fathers to join them on the estates. Finally, boys produced proportionally more than their fathers in relation to wages. They were, therefore, the cheapest sector of the labour force at SSE.

The Effects of SSE's Strategies

Over the years, the tactics described above did result in higher productivity among the labourers employed at SSE. Thus, whereas the maximum amount of cane cut by the most productive sector of the labour force was three tons in 1930, by 1952 it had risen to four tons. Similarly, whereas in 1930 eight labourers from Zambézia ("Angurus") loaded three trucks with cane by 1956 only six men were employed on this task.

Increases in Output: Cutting and Loading 1930-1956(41)

Cane Cutting

1930	3 tons	per	man	maximum	(a)
1931	3.5 tons	"	"	"	(a)
1950	3.85 tons	"	"	"	(b)
1952	4 tons	"	"	"	(c)

Cane Loading	"Anguru" Labour	Other Labour	
1930	8 men x 3 trucks	6 men x 3 trucks	(a)
1931	5 men x 3 trucks		(a)
1950	8 men x 4 trucks	6 men x 4 trucks	(b)
1956	6 men x 3 trucks	6 men x 3 trucks	(d)

(a) SSE Ar., File 94, Labour for Marromeu, Reply to Labour Questionnaire, n.n. / Luabo / 1931, and Labour Questionnaire Reply, H.N. Usher, Marromeu, 2 Nov. 1931.

(b) SSE Ar., File 133A, Recruiting, Angonic, Quelimane, Local, MT to Col. Hornung, 12 Sep. 1950, No. 155/50 Private Series, Recruiting in Angonia.

(c) AHM, NI 194, 1952-1957, Relatórios dos Agentes do Curador e Delegados de Saúde, No. 46, Concelho do Chinde, 2º Semestre, Relatório de Mão-de-Obra, Admin. Julio dos Santos Peixe, 17 Dec. 1952.

(d)

(d) SSE Ar., File 184, Native Labour Organisation, Hut Tax, Field Manager to General Manager, 10 Apr. 1956, Derre and Morrumbala Labour.

Although productivity, seen in the task requirements, was increased over time, the imposition of larger tasks without a corresponding increase in payment sometimes resulted in discontent among the labour force (see Chapter X). When, on the other hand, increased productivity was accompanied by an additional bonus payment workers appear to have been more willing to increase their output. Speaking of the labour situation in general in 1931 the Head Overseer at Luabo noted that

> Since I have been with the company I have seen the percentage of efficiency of labour working increase from 56% to 99%, which can mainly be attributed to increased gratuities... when prazo boys received 100 réis gratuities they worked two or three days a week, when it was increased to 500 réis they worked 6 days a week.(42)

Hence, another tactic employed by SSE was to mask increases in task requirements either by lowering wages or by not raising them in proportion to their former amount.

METHODS EMPLOYED BY SSE TO CONTAIN LABOUR COSTS - MANIPULATING PAYMENT AND CONTRACT LENGTH

Basic Wages and Bonus Payments

The wage paid to plantation workers was divided into two parts. The worker received a cash wage. He also received part of his

wage in kind. This was represented by the food and shelter which the company was obliged to provide to workers resident on the estate. Together the two parts of the wage formed the direct wage paid to plantation labour.

The kind element of the wage, that is, food and shelter, was only paid to labour directly engaged in production. With the exception of men from Angonia whose families could accompany them to the estates, this element of the wage did not cover the subsistence needs of workers' families; nor did it cover the needs of workers during the 'rest' period between contracts. The cash element of the wage also failed to cover the subsistence needs of workers between contracts and the needs of their families throughout the year. As already demonstrated in Chapter II the cash element of the wage was established by the government in direct relation to the 'native' tax in force. The total wage needed to reproduce the individual labourer during the course of his life time and the labour force as a whole over generations, was therefore subsidised by the peasantry from which plantation labourers were drawn. This meant that capital could buy labour power below the cost of the total range of goods and services needed for its reproduction. It meant, therefore, that plantation capital could increase the production of surplus value by reducing the ratio of necessary to surplus labour time expended in the production process.

In addition to developing a system of labour supply which provided capital with low paid labour, the state also ensured, through the relationship between the tax and the cash element of the

wage, that workers would be encouraged to work regularly and produce what was demanded of them. Failure to earn sufficient cash to meet the tax meant that the worker was liable to punishment by the state. This negative incentive to regular attendance and production at the work place was supported by another which resulted from the particular method established by the state for the payment of the cash wage.

Contract workers only received their basic (cash) wage at the end of the contract.(43) During the contract itself men were issued with metal discs which signified that they had completed their daily tasks. These discs were handed over to the compound superintendant on Saturdays, who marked off the numbers of days worked on the company's pay sheets and on the individual's work card. The only cash paid out by SSE during the contract period were the weekly attendance and productivity bonuses to which all sections of the field labour force were entitled. These were paid to workers who had completed either five or six tasks during the week (and who had, therefore, also worked for five or six consecutive days).(44) By reducing the kind element of the wage to the bare minimum needed to keep workers alive, (see Chapter VI) SSE ensured that its workers needed cash; cash which could only be earned through regular task completion. In addition to the weekly bonuses SSE also introduced a system of bonuses which were calculated on the number of days per month or per contract that the men had worked. In both cases the bonuses were intended to stimulate regular attendance and task completion. However, the latter had the advantage over the former of encouraging men to work regularly for extended periods rather than for weeks at a time.(45)

Direct Productivity Bonuses

Sometimes SSE offered direct productivity bonuses to the labour force. For instance, in 1954, the General Field Manager suggested that all workers who loaded four instead of three cane trucks a day (in groups of six men) should receive a bonus of one escudo each. Whereas six men from Zambézia ("Angurus") loaded three trucks of cane a day at a cost of 24 escudos a truck, six men from Morrumbala and its administrative Post of Derre loaded four trucks a day at a cost of 18 escudos per truck. Both groups of workers earned the same waged.(46) The General Field Manager calculated that the bonus payment would increase the cost of loading a truck to 19 escudos, 50 centavos in the case of men from Morrumbala and Derre. It would reduce the cost of loading, in the case of men from Zambézia, by four and a half escudos per truck. Since the men from Morrumbala and Derre were expected to load 24,000 trucks against the 96,000 trucks of the men from Zambézia during the harvest, the overall saving to the company would amount to 432,000 escudos. To save £4,500 or 48,000 labour days (25 per cent of the labour required for loading from Zambézia) SSE would only need to invest £450 in bonus payments to those who already loaded most.(47)

Increasing the Length of the Contract

The principle behind the productivity and attendance bonuses was also applied to the contract itself. In 1944, for example, the Governor of Zambézia agreed to allow men contracted from his province to work for eight instead of six months. The scheme only lasted for

three years because its advantages were gradually eroded by the government, the men involved and SSE's competitors. The government insisted that the contracted men should receive an eight month 'rest' period and a double set of clothing. The absenteeism rates were high during the seventh and eight months of the contract, and SSE's competitors capitalised on the situation by retaining the six months contract. Nevertheless, during the period that the extended contract was enforced SSE made an overall saving of 25 per cent on labour costs, even though it paid its labourers an extra four escudos a month for working eight months.(48)

Attempts to increase the contract length of men from the local prazos were more successful. Whereas these men were only recruited for a month at a time in the 1890s, by 1951, following a series of extensions to the contract length at various times, they were working for six consecutive months.(49) It can be assumed that savings in the order of those described above resulted.

The extension of the contract period, even when accompanied by increased remuneration, served one of the purposes fulfilled by productivity and attendance bonuses. It led to savings on the numbers of men employed, and consequently to a reduction of labour costs. However, the use of bonuses to increase the productivity of the labour force was only a part of SSE's overall wages policies. Productivity and attendance bonuses were also introduced as a means of manipulating basic wages. It is to this aspect of SSE's policy that I shall now turn.

THE MANIPULATION OF BONUSES TO AVOID WAGE RISES

As was demonstrated in Chapter II the minimum wage levels established by the government were directly related to the 'native' tax in force. Whenever the tax was increased new minimum wage levels were imposed in order to maintain the ratio established between the two in the RTI. SSE, therefore, faced pressure on cash wages, as a result of periodic increases in basic wages imposed by the government. This was a problem which confronted all employers in Zambézia. However, it was compounded in SSE's case as a result of the physical location of its plantations. Among employers in central Mozambique SSE appears to have been unique in controlling estates which were situated in two provinces where minimum wage levels were different. Often men recruited from the same area for the same type of work were divided between the two estates and could compare their wages. Higher wages on the Marromeu estate, which resulted from the higher minimum wage in force in Manica and Sofala Province, therefore, tended to put pressure on wages in Luabo. Similarly, Government moves to increase the minimum wages of workers in Zambezia tended to have repercussions on the wages offered to workers from that province employed at Marromeu. Hence in both cases a wage rise to labour on one side of the river tended to affect the wages paid on the other side. In order to confront these problems and to hold back the cost of labour, SSE required, above all, a flexible wages policy; one that would allow it to avoid wage rises on either or both sides of the river, or to offset them against reductions in other areas. Using the bonus system and the fact that minimum wages were different on the two estates, SSE was able to counteract the threat of wage rises in several ways. Firstly, the

company gradually eroded wage differentials. Secondly, it introduced bonuses instead of an increase in basic wages when new minimum wage levels were established. Thirdly, it replaced bonuses with advances on wages in order to avoid paying higher wages. Fourthly, it attempted to avoid unilateral increases in wages by offering a rise only to the lowest paid workers engaged in a particular area of production.

Holding back the Wages of Workers employed in Manica and Sofala

Following the Agreement reached in 1932 between SSE and the Mozambique Company over the employment of labour from Zambézia on SSE's estates in the territory administered by the Mozambique Company, SSE was able to transfer labour from Zambézia to Marromeu (and Caia) at the lower rate in force in Zambézia. This SSE appears to have continued to do for the next ten years.(50) In 1942, however, the Governor General of Mozambique ruled that labour employed from Zambézia in Manica and Sofala was to receive the basic wage in force in that province. Instead of 30 escudos a month men were to receive 55 escudos a month.(51)

SSE protested to the Minister of the Colonies. It argued that the modus vivendi established in 1932 had been overridden. The company had hoped to see an equalisation of wage rates in the two provinces (meaning a reduction of wages in Manica and Sofala) when the Mozambique Company's territory passed to the direct administration of the state. Instead the difference between the basic wage rates in the two provinces had widened. SSE argued that

the tax was higher in Manica and Sofala than in Zambézia. A wage rise to labour from Zambézia working in Manica and Sofala would mean that whereas these men would be able to earn enough to meet the tax after 39 days labour men from Manica and Sofala would take 81 days to meet the tax from their wages.

> It does not seem fair... to want to introduce the same level of wages for two natives who by chance work in the same place and do the same work (one of them doing a much smaller task than the other) whose rate of taxation is so different, that is, 175 escudos compared with 85 escudos. It would be completely counterproductive not only for the firm concerned, but also, and especially, for the state itself.(52)

SSE then voiced its real fear, which was that the "massive" wage rise to labour from Zambézia working in Manica and Sofala would have to be matched by planters in Zambézia. It added, for good measure, that increasing wages without increasing the 'native' tax would encourage idleness and allow the 'native' from Zambézia employed in Manica and Sofala to avoid wage work.(53)

A compromise was eventually reached and labour from Zambézia working in Manica and Sofala received a wage rise of ten escudos (33½ per cent), which was still 15 escudos less than the increase originally envisaged.(54) However, over the years SSE gradually eroded this increase by not maintaining the additional payment, when basic wages in Zambézia were increased. Thus in 1951 SSE's General Manager wrote:

> This relationship of an extra 33½ for work at Marromeu for boys from this side of the river was not maintained as time went on, because basic wages went up from time to time and one clearly did not feel justified in maintaining such a difference as a spontaneous gesture on our part, nor was it called for.(55)

Replacing Wage Rises with Bonus Payments

In 1951 minimum wages were increased throughout Mozambique. Men employed on agricultural work in Manica and Sofala were to receive a basic wage of 100 escudos a month, while those employed in agricultural work in Zambézia were to receive 60 escudos a month. Men from Zambézia employed in Manica and Sofala were to receive the Manica and Sofala rate, as against the Zambézia rate, which they had been receiving.(56) SSE's General Manager pointed out to the company's Managing Director that if the 33½ per cent increase were maintained for men from Zambézia working in Manica and Sofala these men would receive a rise of 20 escudos a month. Instead the company hoped to leave the basic wage at 60 escudos a month and meet the increase through increased bonuses. The General Manager proposed to offer a weekly bonus of two escudos 50 centavos for six consecutive days worked and a special daily cutting and loading bonus of 60 centavos which, if the men worked every day of the contract and completed every task would bring their earnings up to 85 escudos 60 centavos per month. This was still below the new basic rate of 100 escudos a month that they were supposed to earn.(57) SSE's General Manager urged the company's directors to adopt this solution.

> I strongly recommend this course as an essential compromise measure, which, if accepted, will tend to help us maintain, if not increase, numbers from Mopea/ Marral for Marromeu and should satisfy the authorities. On the other hand it follows automatically that the proposals will be framed in such a way as to propose that it should cover a free hand on our part to transfer other contracted labour for Luabo to Marromeu as and when required for this or that period, by paying them the said monthly bonus of 15 escudos extra for a full 26 days worked.(58)

In the meantime, the Administrator of Mopeia had suggested an alternative scheme. This maintained the weekly bonus but replaced the daily bonus, which was payable regardless of the number of days worked, with one linked to attendance over the whole contract. The Administrator proposed the introduction of the following scale:

Days worked/tasks completed	Bonus
170 - 180	1$ per day
150 - 170	0$ 70 per day
120 - 150	0$ 50 per day (59)

Men who did not work for 120 days or who did not complete 120 tasks would not receive the bonus. This proposal not only allowed the company to avoid the wage rise but it also related the bonus much more directly to attendance, as the General Manager was quick to point out to SSE's representative in Lourenço Marques.

> I must confess that the proposal has been well thought-out... and because there are always a lot of days lost during the course of a contract, it would in fact give almost the same as we have proposed with, however, one additional advantage, that is, it is an incentive for the natives not to miss work.(60)

Advances on Wages

In 1942, SSE's doctor complained to the Provincial Director of Civil Administration that the pay sheets of men from Angonia, who were about to be repatriated, contained two columns called "local bonuses". Some of the men involved had asserted that they had only received one of the bonuses. After making enquiries the doctor found that the sum of local bonuses registered in one column equalled

the amount of the weekly attendance/productivity bonus. He wrote, "that is, the ignorance of the interested parties is abused; they are given a bonus in the work-place which is the same as that given to the rest of the workers, but this is then deducted from the total amount of the wages which they will receive when they return to Angonia."(61)

SSE admitted that this was the case when it in turn wrote to the Provincial Director but it also managed to suggest that resisting a wage rise was in the workers' own interests. SSE's General Manager wrote that in 1936 the wage payable to men from Angonia working in the territory of the Mozambique Company had been increased to 60 escudos a month. The previous wage of ten shillings a month (50 escudos) remained in force in Zambezia. As a result of this discrepancy all workers from Angonia wanted to work at Marromeu, or wanted to receive the Marromeu rate in Luabo.(62) This SSE was not prepared to consider. It therefore decided to adopt a solution which involved standardising wages on both sides of the river. Men from Angonia working in Marromeu received 60 escudos a month

> without the weekly bonus, and the money received as such was considered as an advance to be discounted at the end of the contract, as was done with... advances in the district for the hut tax which gave a wage which was almost equal to that at Luabo where they continued to receive the weekly bonus (freely).(63)
> (emphasis original)

The General Manager then presented the arithmetic in a form which graphically illustrates how the former bonus was turned into an advance to avoid a wage rise.

Luabo			Marromeu		
	50$ 00 x 12 months	= 600$ 00		60$ 00 x 12 months	= 720$ 00
plus	1$ 00 x 52 weeks	= 52$ 00	minus	1$ 00 x 52 weeks	= 52$ 00
		652$ 00			668$ 00

He added that this solution had been accepted by the workers with the knowledge of the Governor of the district and the Agent of the Curator (of Native Affairs) in Angonia. It had been practised and maintained since then (1936) "openly and without subterfuge, perfectly within the ambit of the ruling norms."(64)

It was not only field workers from Angonia to whom SSE applied this tactic. Following a national wage rise in 1950 the rate for industrial work was increased to 130 escudos a month in Manica and Sofala and 90 escudos a month in Zambézia. Men from Zambézia employed on industrial work in Marromeu were only to receive 90 rather than 130 escudos. Nevertheless, the General Manager instructed that "all and any gratuities" paid to men employed on industrial work at Marromeu, wherever they came from, "shall cease as from the same period onwards."(65) He suggested that the men should receive advances on their wages in place of the previous bonuses. This was permissable under the Native Labour Regulations which allowed the employer to advance between 25-50% of the basic wage in the work place.(66)

> What will now be necessary is for someone in authority to clearly explain to the boys concerned that by order of the Government their wages have been put up, and it now embraces all previously paid gratuities, also that in order to still give them ready cash for local purchases per end of a month, the company will instead be giving them local advances in future, but only to those that had worked their full 24 days per month.(67)

SSE's General Manager then discussed the possible extension of the scheme to other sections of the labour force and in unequivocal terms

stated the company's policy.

> I must add that such modified procedure is fully legal and I discussed the issue the other day with the Chinde Administrator, and in regard to a similar procedure to be adopted at Luabo; he promptly replied that it had his full approval and that nobody could possibly object to it; actually in each case the boys concerned will get a larger amount of cash in the long run, but it is obviously our bounden duty to counteract any wholesale increase in wages at this stage by limiting other proviledges, or such as the suspension of weekly and other gratuities which have been given by the company on a purely voluntary basis, and in your case for the time being affecting factory Crop gangs and Gombe [loading, unloading and mooring] boys.(68)

In 1953, SSE did take this policy one step further. It abolished bonuses for all workers from Zambézia whether they worked at Marromeu or Luabo. Instead the company replaced the bonus with compulsory advances of up to 25% of the basic wage. However, the policy was not successful partly because recruiters for other firms (which had not followed suit) were able to attract the men SSE was hoping to recruit, and partly because the men themselves expressed their dissatisfaction by signing on with other employers.(69)

Narrowing Differentials between Grades of Workers

The final method employed by SSE to resist wage rises consisted of giving an increase in basic payment to the lowest paid workers employed in a particular area of production. The wages of other workers employed in the same area were not raised. An example of this occurred in 1949 when men employed on SSE's river steamers complained to the company's General Manager that their wages were lower than those of other men doing similar work. They added, moreover,

that they were not receiving bonuses. In response the General Manager ruled that all steamer crews would receive a weekly bonus and that the monthly wage of the lowest grade would be increased. No other grades were to receive increases.(70)

In this instance it was in SSE's interests to narrow the differentials between the various grades (based on skill) of river steamer workers. In effect by narrowing differentials it reduced the wages of the most skilled members of the crew. This is very different, therefore, from the examples cited above, where men were employed at different rates for doing the same work. To the degree that SSE could not avoid offering higher basic wages to men from Manica and Sofala when the government increased minimum wages, it was in the company's interest to allow the wages of men from Zambézia to fall as far behind those of men from Manica and Sofala as possible. It could then attempt to substitute more highly paid labour from Manica and Sofala with lower paid labour from Zambézia. The following table, which plots changes in the minimum monthly wages imposed by the government between 1950 and 1960 gives some idea of the savings which could be made by SSE through transferring labour from Zambézia to Marromeu.

Changes in the minimum monthly wage levels imposed by the government, 1950-1960(71)

Year	Province	Minimum monthly wage agriculture	Minimum monthly wage industry
1950	Zambézia	60$ 00	90$ 00
	Manica & Sofala	100$ 00	130$ 00
1954	Zambézia	80$ 00	110$ 00
	Manica & Sofala	-	-
1957	Zambézia	90$ 00	120$ 00
	Manica & Sofala	120$ 00	160$ 00
1960	Zambézia	110$ 00	150$ 00
	[illegible]	140$ 00	180$ 00

The Effects of SSE's Strategies on Wages

Over the years, the wages of all sections of the labour force at SSE were increased by the government, as the table above demonstrates. Whereas the minimum wage for agricultural workers in Zambézia was 30 escudos a month in 1930, by 1960 it had risen to 110 escudos a month.(72) However, SSE always tried to find ways of resisting these increases. By offering bonuses instead of wage rises as such the company gave itself a margin of manoueverability which enabled it to withdraw the bonuses when a statutatory wage rise was announced. Alternatively SSE could replace the bonus with an advance on wages. Advances had the advantage, from the company's point of view, of appearing as bonuses. In the short-term, at least, they had the effect of reducing the overall wages bill.(73)

The following table illustrates the effects of SSE's policies and shows how the application of the strategies described above led to a narrowing of the differentials between different groups of workers over time. Whereas in 1940 men from the areas bordering on the estates in Manica and Sofala (Sena)(74) and contract labour from Zambézia ("Angurus") were earning half the wage of a man recruited from Angonia, by 1950 the gap had narrowed to three fifths.

Monthly Wages

	Angoni	Sena	Anguru
1940[a]	60$ 00	30$ 00	30$ 00
1942[b]	50$ 00	30$ 00	30$ 00
1944[a]	75$ 00	45$ 00	40$ 00
1948[a]	90$ 00	60$ 00	45$ 00
1950[a]	100$ 00	60$ 00	60$ 00

(a) SSE Ar., File 133A, Recruiting, Angonia, Quelimane, Local, MT to Col. Hornung, 12 Sep. 1950, No. 155/50, Recruiting in Angonia.
(b) SSE Ar., File 184, Native Labour Organisation, Hut Tax, P. Viana Rodrigues, to Admin. Concelho do Chinde, 30 Mar. 1942, No. 85/42/HO, Ref. Nota No. 372/15/2 de 14 de Março de 1942, Resposta à Nota da [illegible]nto dos Salários aos Indígenas.

Yet these figures understate the real situation for two reasons. Firstly, the productivity of men from Angonia was always higher than that of men contracted from Zambézia Province. For example, referring to the wages paid to men from Angonia in 1950, SSE's General Manager pointed out that men from Angonia produced more than men from Zambézia "at all times". He assessed the output of two men from Angonia as equivalent to that of three men from Zambézia.(75) Secondly, men from Angonia were recruited for a year at a time, whereas local men worked for shorter periods; and never for more than six months. The cost of recruiting labour from Angonia was, therefore, proportionately less than that of recruiting men from Zambézia.

Other Tactics Employed by SSE to Reduce Wages

Before leaving the subject of wages two further points need to be made about SSE's policy. Firstly, the company attempted to increase the amount of unpaid labour appropriated from its workers by making men work on days when they were entitled to a rest. Thus, on at least two occasions SSE was accused of making men work on national holidays without payment, and of not giving men a day's rest in lieu of a Sunday worked.(76) Secondly, it was in the company's interests to have as many tasks as possible defined as agricultural work because agricultural workers received a lower minimum wage than men employed on industrial work.(77) On one occasion, at least, it was successful in this. In 1949, the authorities in Manica and Sofala agreed that men recruited from their province for railway work in the fields could be defined as agricultural workers. They continued to receive the agricultural rate of 100 escudos a month instead of the

new industrial rate of 130 escudos a month. The authorities, however, did not agree to SSE's petition that men who worked on the banks of the river loading, unloading and mooring steamers should also be defined as agricultural workers.(78)

SSE's POLICY WITH REGARD TO 'NON-NATIVE' WORKERS

Strictly speaking this part of the thesis is concerned with the effect of SSE's policies on the African labour force. However, it is pertinent to point out in the context of wages that SSE also sought to apply its wage-reducing policies to other sectors of the labour force, and in so doing acted with the full complicity of the authorities.

Workers from Cape Verde

In 1948 as a result of severe famine conditions in Cape Verde the Portuguese government planned to move over 20,000 people from the islands to the other African colonies. Employers in Zambézia were urged by the government to accept some of the people affected. Dependent as they were on administrative support for recruiting labour; support which the authorities threatened to withdraw if the employers did not co-operate, the major companies in Zambézia were forced to comply with the government's wishes.(79) They were reluctant to do so for a number of reasons: the heavy cost of transport and food; housing difficulties; the physical weakness of the Cape Verdians and their lack of experience of field work.(80)

The main reason for the companies' reluctance, however, was the fact that the Cape Verdians were not defined as 'natives'. Hence employers feared that they would have to pay higher wages to the Cape Verdians than they paid to labour from Zambézia.

The employers' fears were partially allayed when the Colonial Office agreed that the Cape Verdians could be covered by the Mozambique Native Labour Regulations, and would therefore receive the same wages as 'natives' contracted in Zambézia.(81) This illustrates a point made earlier in Chapter II, namely, that the category of 'native' worker was no mere semantic distinction. The powers given to individual colonial governors to define, who within their colony, was to be included in the 'native' category had important practical and economic implications. In the case cited here it meant that wages could be reduced.(82) In the event the men from Cape Verde received a slightly higher wage than men from Zambézia although this wage was agreed "without prejudice to other, higher wages which might be given to workers from the Province of Zambézia."(83)

"Mistos and Assimilados"

SSE employed a number of coloured (mixed race) and 'assimilated' African workers [mistos and assimilados]. Assimilated and coloured people were socially and economically distinct from the African labour force because they were not liable to pay the 'native' tax, nor could they be contracted under the Native Labour Regulations. They were, in fact 'non-natives'. At SSE the coloured and assimilated workers formed a stratum of permanent skilled labour. They were

exclusively employed either as craftsmen in various areas of production or as clerks and typists.(84)

As 'non-natives' the "mistos and assimilados" were entitled to the same pay and conditions as their European counterparts. However, the law governing their situation was liable to various interpretations; interpretations which usually favoured the employer. For example, employers were allowed to discount part of the wage paid to this group of workers on the grounds that they had difficulty in finding employment. In asking for permission to reduce the wages of the assimilated and coloured workers SSE's reasons were somewhat different from those put forward by the government.

> Excellency, Sena Sugar Estates, Ltd. has in its service... coloured and assimilated people, who, because of less preparation and their natural habits, have a very low level of productivity, linked, moreover, to a much lower level of needs in terms of food and clothing...(85)

The company then went on to ask, whether, in view of this situation, it could discount 30 per cent of the legal wages to which this group of workers was entitled.(86)

Towards the end of the 1950s the colonial government was becoming alarmed about international response to its labour policies. There were suggestions that the wages of coloured and assimilated workers should be brought into line with those of Europeans employed in the same work.

> If you remember the Portuguese have in the past run their native affairs on a somewhat different basis to other countries and have always managed to withstand outside interference on this subject... The position has completely changed and from the way Dr. Juvenal de Carvalho talked there is something near panic existing today in Government circles. He no longer spoke of any

> discount from the basic European salary but talked only of equalising the Assimilado with the European. He stressed time and time again that the only way in which it would be possible in the future to keep out foreign Commissions of Investigation would be for the Province to put its own house in order most quickly and on a basis which other countries have adopted.(87)

One strategy discussed within SSE to counteract this change in policy was to equalise the wages of some coloured and assimilated workers while maintaining the reduction for others. In this way the company hoped to deflect criticisms of racial prejudice and yet still maintain its policy of reduced wages for most of the assimilated and coloured workers.

> Thus, if we could modify the petition made, in the sense of not deducting from all [of them] the maximum which the law permits, but different percentages, according to their greater or lesser aptitude for the work, and even not making any deduction for two or three, I think we would be able to avoid accusations of racial prejudice and be more likely to get a favourable solution [to the problem.](88)

At the same time the government-backed 'union' was trying to force the government to decree that every "assimilado" should be a member and earn the basic wage for the job. SSE's response to this development was to try "to organise our affairs so that only the ones who are of use to us go into the syndicate and receive their due rise in salary and that either with the approval of the government or without it we try to get rid of the ones who are no good to us."(89) SSE was here relying on the fact that many of the coloured and 'assimilated' workers were probably unable to produce legal proof of 'non-native' status, without which they could not join the union. However, the company feared that with the new rulings many of the people concerned would acquire proof, join the union and automatically become entitled

to the full rate for the job. In reference to this possibility SSE's General Manager wrote to one of the company's Directors "I will always have this in mind and try to get rid of them as soon as possible, but, as you know, this can only be done very gradually, and in a way that does not attract attention, to avoid any reaction from the Quelimane Governor and other authorities."(90) SSE's position was clear. If it could not continue to employ lower-paid coloured and assimilated workers in place of higher-paid Europeans it wanted to dismiss as many of the 'Assimilados' as possible, and rely exclusively on skilled European labour.

There are striking parallels between SSE's policy towards the "mistos and assimilados" and its policy towards African labour from Zambézia employed at Marromeu. In both cases the company sought to replace more highly paid labour with lower-paid workers. These policies, and the company's policy towards workers from Cape Verde, were, in turn, only possible because of the support capital in Zambézia received from the state. It was the state, through the coercive labour regime, which first established the conditions in which companies like SSE were able to manipulate the wages and working conditions of the labour force. It was the state which established the racial categories which could be used by employers to divide the labour force and reduce wages. It was the state, which having established the conditions in which exploitation could occur, then encouraged capital to manipulate the law to increase the exploitation of the labour force.

The role of the state in the labour conscription process in

Zambézia also helps to explain the persistence of migrant labour as the dominant form of labour use at SSE despite a growing shortage of labour in central Mozambique from the mid-1930s onwards. Seen as a whole, the institutionalisation of migrant labour by the state served three interrelated purposes. Firstly, the state established the conditions in which plantation capital could operate a low wage policy. Secondly, a part-proletariat was a particularly appropriate form of labour use for plantation capital. The numbers of workers employed could be adjusted to the seasonal demands of the crop. This allowed management to deploy labour economically over the agricultural year and hence to avoid unnecessary expenditure on labour. Furthermore, reliant on a labour process which involved a minimum of training and a low level of specialisation, plantations could rationally allocate labour in the fields on the basis of the daily work in hand. Thirdly, state control of labour supply gave rise to a particular organisation of work and payment on plantations which allowed capital to reduce the overall cost of labour still further. The migrant system meant that individual men were expendable. As one worker was exhausted so another would come forward to take his place. Since migrant workers were also powerless, and were forced to accept the conditions of their employment under threat of punishment, this meant that capital could seek to increase the appropriation of surplus value (unpaid labour) by extending the working day and increasing the intensity of labour within it. At SSE, this occurred through manipulation of the task system. The company set tasks which could not be accomplished within the limits of the legally established normal working day. The company further pursued this policy by denying labourers the legal lunch break to which they were entitled. Finally,

in relation to the task system, SSE sought to gradually increase the productivity of the labour force by increasing the daily task without increasing wages. In all three cases, its ability to do so rested on the complicity of the authorities.

The manipulation of tasks was not the only means through which SSE tried to reduce overall labour costs. SSE also sought to mask increases in productivity by a policy of reducing cash wages. This it did by manipulating basic wages through bonuses payments and by offering advances on wages. Again, the success of its policies depended on the support it received from the authorities. The ability to manipulate cash wages was especially important for SSE which operated plantations in two provinces where minimum wages rates were different. Not only, therefore, was migrant labour cheap labour for plantation producers, but, because of the special and particular conditions in which the supply of labour was organised and maintained to plantations, plantation capital in Zambézia was given wide powers to ensure that it remained cheap labour. Yet, notwithstanding the collusion of the authorities over the wages paid to workers on plantations and the conditions in which they laboured, at times, SSE ignored even the minimal restrictions placed on it by the state in its attempts to reduce the cost of labour. In this context it is pertinent to cite the conclusions of the 1956 Government Inspection of SSE's plantations, referred to above. Having reviewed the living and working conditions of the African labour force employed at SSE the Inspector wrote:

With cold objectivity, although animated by the best of intentions towards the firm, there is no doubt that the impression received from this visit was, frankly, bad and painful.
We are left with only one firm conclusion and that is that the native worker is seen as no more than a simple, cold and inanimate part of a huge machine. A part which is lubricated, a machine which is supplied, but with the only aim that it produces the return which is expected of it, and which is substituted with ruthless indifference when it is worn out or useless.(91)

NOTES

(1) P.P. Courtenay, Plantation Agriculture (G. Bell and Sons Ltd., London, 1969), passim.

(2) J.A. Mollett, "The Sugar Plantation in Hawaii: A Study of Changing Patterns of Management and Labour Organisation" (Hawaii Agricultural Experiment Station, College of Tropical Agriculture, University of Hawaii in Cooperation with the Agricultural Experiment Stations of the Western States, Agricultural Economics Bulletin, July 1965), passim; Phillips Foster and Peter Creyke, "The Structure of Plantation Agriculture in Jamaica" (Agricultural Experiment Station, University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland, Miscellaneous Publication 623, May 1968), passim; John Davidson Shillingford, "Financial, Potential and Welfare Implications of Sugar Cane Harvest Mechanisation on Jamaican Plantations" (unpublished Ph.D.thesis, Cornell University, 1974), p. 127 and passim; ILO, Committee on Work on Plantations, Third Session, Geneva 1955, Possible Measures within the Countries and Industries Concerned for Stabilising Employment and Earnings of Plantation Workers (ILO, Geneva, 1955), p. 45: "Attempts to mechanise harvesting processes in certain crops have failed because of technical difficulties or adverse effects on the quality of the product. It may, therefore, be assumed, that for some time to come a large number of processes on many plantations will continue to be carried out by hand. Thus the efficiency of a plantation may depend to a substantial extent upon the efficiency of the labour employed." The conclusion will examine the factors affecting the mechanisation of field operations at SSE.

(3) Noel Deer, Cane Sugar: A Textbook on the Agriculture of the Sugar Cane, the Manufacture of Cane Sugar, and the Analysis of Sugar-House Products, (Norman Rodger, London, 1921), p. 136.

(4) The harvest date is critical since the cane produces an optimum amount of sucrose which thereafter rapidly declines. The amount of sucrose also depends on the age of the cane, (Deer op. cit., p. 136). In Zambézia the yield of sugar also depends on when the cane was planted. In 1976 cane planted in July, which was first cut 14 months later gave a yield of 90 tonnes per hectare, while cane planted in December-January which was first cut 18 to 20 months later gave a yield of 160 tonnes per hectare, (interview with L. Duarte, General Field Manager, SSE, 4 Mar. 1977).

(5) Because of the various planting programmes and ages of the ratoons the different sections of cane will require attention at different times of the year. In some parts of the world two harvests of cane are possible, and in Peru, because of climatic factors, the harvest can be extended indefinitely, (Courtenay, op. cit., pp. 87-90). For the implications of labour use in the Peruvian sugar industry where "unlike almost

(5) (continued)
all other sugar industries... there is virtually no seasonality of production" see Chris Scott, "Labour Process, Class Conflict and Politics", Development and Change X, No. 1 (Jan. 1979), pp. 57-89. In Zambézia only one harvest occurs in the dry season between approximately May and November. In this respect sugar production in Zambézia can be compared with sugar production in Jamaica (see Shillingford, op. cit.).

(6) For an overview of plantation production see Courtenay and Deer above. See also George L. Beckford, Persistant Poverty: Underdevelopment in Plantation Economies of the Third World (Oxford University Press, New York, 1972), and for a detailed but concise account of the main features of sugar production in every country of the cane-producing world see Dudley Smith, Cane Sugar World (Palmer Publications, New York, 1978).

(7) The harvest period at SSE sometimes started in April and/or ended in December, (SSE Ar., File 184, Native Labour Organisation, Hut Tax, HNU (Usher) General Field Manager to General Manager 12 May 1954, Your letter no. 11/54 Mgt Refers, Labour Supplies; Interview with L. Duarte, General Field Manager, SSE, Luabo, 4 Mar. 1977.

(8) SSE Ar., File 184, HNU General Field Manager to General Manager 12 May 1954, op. cit., see p. 159.

(9) SSE Ar., File 94, Labour for Marromeu, Article from The Beira News, 22 June 1932; Sena Sugar Estates Ltd., O Que é O Que Vale Económica e Socialmente, Exposiçao das Actividades Económicas de Moçambique Commemorativa da Visita de Sua Excelência o Presidente da República, General Fransisco Higíno Graveiro Lopes, Agosto 1956 (LM 1956).

(10) SSE Ar., File 204, Native Diet and Rations, MT SSE Mopea, Observaçoes feitas a pedido do Exmo. Snr. Major Serpa, Director dos Negócios Indígenas no Território da Companhia de Moçambique sobre a Viablidade de Substituir a Raçao Indígena por Assúcar em Vez de Idêntica Quantidade de Ceriais, 27 June 1933, (13,000 workers a day); SSE Ar., File 204, SSE Ltd. to Governador Geral da Prov. de Moç., Luabo, 15 Dec. 1956 (average 20,000 men); SSE Ar., File 10, (Obsolete), Native Settlement, Wheat Experiment, SSE Ltd., Relaçao da Mão-de-Obra Recrutada durante o Ano de 1961, monthly average, Luabo, 10,100 men and boys (including 1810 specialist workers), Marromeu 9,883 (including 1810 specialist workers). Overall labour needs were much higher. In 1928 SSE employed 25,472 men, in 1929, 24,112 men and in 1930, 19,839 men, (SSE Ar., File 94, The Beira News, 22 June 1932, op. cit.). SSE's Labour Office gives the following figures for the numbers employed during the first four years of the 1960s:

1960	37,418
1961	34,227
1962	34,228
1963	25,788
1965	27,450

(SSE Ar., Sena Sugar Estates Ltd., Relatório Anual, Serviços de Mão-de-Obra, 1964 and 1966).

(11) SSE Ar., File 94, SSE Ltd., Mão-de-Obra Indígena 1942, Trabalhadores que Prestam Serviço nos Anos de 1940, 1941 e 1942 nas Propriedades.

(12) ibid., SSE Ltd., Origem dos Trabalhadores Empregados nas Propriedades em 1940, 1941 e 1942.

(13) SSE Ar., File 184, P. Viana Rodrigues to Admin. Concelho do Chinde, 30 Mar. 1942, No. 85/42/HO, Ref. Nota No. 372/15/2 de 14 do Março de 1942, Resposta à Nota da Repartição Central dos Negócios Indígenas sobre o Pagamento dos Salários aos Indígenas. cf. Shillingford op. cit., p. 42, cutters and loaders in Jamaica were mobilised in gangs of 40-100 workers.

(14) SSE Ar., File 184, Resposta à Nota da RCNI... 30 Mar. 1942, op. cit.

(15) In 1952 20,900 agricultural workers were employed on the Luabo Estate. Besides these there were 121 ploughmen, 157 locomotive operators and 116 tractor drivers, (AHM, NI 194, 1952-1957, Relatórios dos Agentes do Curador e Delegados de Saúde, No. 46, Concelho do Chinde, 1952, 2º Semestre, Relatório de Mão-de-Obra, Adm. Julio dos Santos Peixe, 17 Dec. 1952).

(16) SSE Ar., File 94, Reply to Labour Questionnaire, n.n. [Luabo 7, 1931 and Labour Questionnaire Reply, H.N. Usher, Marromeu, 2 Nov. 1931; Interview with L. Duarte, General Field Manager, SSE, 4 Mar. 1977. According to Beckford the low level of skill required is a general characteristic of plantation production. "It bears emphasis that the special factor combination that distinguishes plantation production from other kinds of farming is the bringing together of as many unskilled labourers as is economically profitable with each of a few highly skilled supervisor-managers who direct production. As Jones succinctly puts it 'the plantation substitutes supervision-supervisory and administrative skills - for skilled labour, combining the supervision with labour whose principal skill is to follow orders'." (Beckford, op. cit., p. 6, quoting W.O. Jones "Plantations" in International Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences, XII (1968), p. 154). At SSE it should be pointed out that 'gangers' i.e. foremen, and field supervisors were themselves not trained in the agriculture of cane production. Their function was only to supervise labour working in the fields. Only in the 1960s did SSE start to introduce training programmes for foremen.

(17) SSE Ar., File 94, Labour Questionnaire Reply, 2 Nov. 1931, op. cit.

(18) SSE Ar., File 184, HNU General Field Manager to General Manager, 12 May 1954, op. cit. The totals given here are the book numbers of unskilled labour required. Actual daily needs were considerably less. An explanation for the disparity between the book numbers required (or numbers of men who had to be employed to put the appropriate number of men in the

(18) (continued)
fields) and the actual numbers needed is given in the text below. In addition, book numbers had to accommodate other demands on unskilled labour and had to allow for high levels of absenteeism, (although 'absenteeism' at SSE did not necessarily mean that men did not turn out for work. What is described as absenteeism often covered men who had failed to complete the daily task, see p. 164).

(19) SSE Ar., File 133, Recruiting, Quelimane and Angonia (1930-1939), MT Acting General Manager to Estate Manager Luabo, 20 May 1931, Prazo Labour Recruited by Mr Pinto Basto, from 1931 'prazo' labour was recruited for three months at a time. The volunteer workers employed by SSE could also be used to cover exceptional needs, especially volunteer workers engaged locally, whose contracts were made for a month at a time with the option of renewal (SSE Ar., File 184, Resposta à Nota da RCNI... 30 Mar. 1942, op. cit.).

(20) Without access to SSE's detailed budgeting and accounts it is impossible to support this point empirically. In 1956 besides the costs of purchasing seed, fertilizer and pesticide , the fixed costs of field production included the costs of purchasing and maintaining 30 locomotives, 1700 cane trucks, 70 tractors, 30 ploughs and disc harrows, 24 steam engines, 2 diggers, 2 groups of pumps and 350 kilometres of railway track. Against the cost of this capital equipment, which could be spread over a number of years, SSE had to support an annual bill of 60.800.330$ 00 on labour. This figure excludes the cost of maintaining health services for the work force. It also excludes the costs of employing supervisory staff (Sena Sugar Estates Ltd., O Que é O Que Vale Económica e Socialmente... op. cit.). According to Courtenay, op. cit., pp. 49-50 "it is not unusual for labour costs to represent 60 per cent of a plantation's total operating costs..."

(21) SSE Ar., File 94, Reply to Labour Questionnaire, 1931, op. cit.

(22) SSE Ar., File 94, Labour Questionnaire Reply, 2 Nov. 1931, op. cit.

(23) ibid.

(24) "In the Engineering Trade of London, a customary trick is the selecting of a man who possesses superior physical strength and quickness, as the principal of several workmen, and paying him an additional rate, by the quarter or otherwise, with the understanding that he is to exert himself to the utmost to induce the others, who are only paid ordinary wages, to keep up with him." Karl Marx, Capital, Vol. I (Lawrence and Wishardt, London, 1967) p. 554, note 3.

(25) The task system is not unique to plantation production in Mozambique. In its Report on Living and Working Conditions and Productivity on Plantations the ILO notes that "there is a large variety of systems of wage payment; but two of them seem

(25) (continued)
to predominate; viz. payment by time and payment by results. The latter system is more common, specially for field work... Payment by results is to be found in two principal forms: piece work and task work. It seems that, in general, task work is more widely applied than piece work." The report concludes, "under the system of payment by results the intensity of labour effort, particularly during the peak season, is at its maximum. Thus, any rise in labour productivity, is, on the one hand, the result of the intensification of labour effort, and on the other, achieved at the expense of the non-observance of standards for hours and some other conditions of work." (ILO, Committee on Work on Plantations, Third Session, Geneva, 1955, Living and Working Conditions and Productivity on Plantations (ILO, Geneva, 1955) pp. 96-97.) cf. Marx, op. cit., p. 554, "Given the piece wage, it is naturally the personal interest of the labourer to strain his labour-power as intensely as possible; this enables the capitalist to raise more easily the normal degree of intensity of labour. It is, moreover, now the personal interest of the labourer to lengthen the working day, since with it his daily or weekly wages rise." As was stated above, the 'piece' at SSE was the whole day's labour. Here, then, the incentive for men to work hard was even greater than under the piece work system described by Marx, for there was no partial payment for partial task completion.

(26) RTI, Art. 102, p. 31 and Art. 104, p. 32.

(27) SSE Ar., File 118, Native Compound, Secretaria Distrital de Saúde, Zambézia, Cópia da Informação no. 26 destes Serviços e do Despacho de 25 do corrente, do Exmo. Snr. Governador do Distrito, nela Exarado, Assunto: Sobre as Condiçoes de Trabalho dos Serviçais Indígenas. Da Inspecção a Sena Sugar Estates Ltd. no Luabo, Manuel Saraiva Junqueiro, Herdeiros, e Chá Moçambique Lda. no Guruè, 4 Sep. 1956. (Translation J.H.).

(28) ibid. (Translation J.H.).

(29) SSE Ar., File 94, Reply to Labour Questionnaire, 1931, op. cit.

(30) SSE Ar., File 133A, Recruiting, Angonia, Quelimane, Local, HNU General Field Manager to General Manager, 7 Oct. 1950, Task Efficiency, Native Labour.

(31) RTI, Art. 212, p. 63.

(32) SSE Ar., File 204, DA to NHDB, 2 Dec. 1957, No. 206/57 Private Series, Dr. Miranda Guedes' Visit.

(33) SSE Ar., File 204, NHDB to DA, 9 Dec. 1957, No. 259/57, Native Diet, Fruit and Vegetàbles, re. 205/57 and 206/57.

(34) "Every encouragement is also being given to bring increasing numbers of minors... the return for w.e. 5.4.47. shows 753 more minors than last year." (SSE Ar., File 133A, MT to Col. Hornung, 9 May 1947, No. 67/147 Private Series.)

(35) SSE Ar., File 93, Labour and Recruiting, Government Side, Gen. Field Manager to General Manager Luabo, 29 June 1953, Labour in General. (For numbers of boys employed at SSE between 1940 and 1942 see p. 156).

(36) SSE Ar., File 184, HNU General Field Manager to General Manager, 15 July 1954, Future Labour Requirements, Your Letter No. 81/54 Mgt. Refers; SSE Ar., File 184, Resposta à Nota da RCNI... 30 Mar. 1942, op. cit., SSE Ltd. Discos de Marcaçao de um Dia de Trabalho Distribuidos Diáriamente aos Trabalhadores E. Whereas the basic monthly wage for a man who voluntarily sought employment was 30 escudos a month, that of a boy was 20 escudos a month. Men however, could increase their earnings by working for bonus payments which were not paid to boys at the same rate; SSE Ar., File 94A, Labour for Marromeu, Sena Sugar Estates, Limited, Luabo, Salários e Gratificaçoes aos Trabalhadores Indígenas, Luabo, 11 de Outubro de 1951, volunteer men who stayed for more than six months earned a basic monthly wage of 65 escudos, boys earned a basic wage of 30 escudos a month... The figures cited above relate to boys over 14 years of age. However, SSE also employed boys under 14, who earned less than those over 14 (SSE Ar., File 94A, Gerente da Feitoria, Marromeu, to Horacio de Souza, Caia, 17 May 1943, No. 69/43, Recrutamento de indígenas nas Circunscrições de Sena, Chemba e Mutarara). Whereas boys over 14 earned 30 escudos a month, boys under 14 earned 25 escudos a month in 1943.

(37) SSE Ar., File 204, Nova Tabela de Raçoes de Acordo com o Circular Dando o Despacho de 25 de Junho de Sua Exa. O Snr. Governador Geral, 11 Aug. 1952.

(38) SSE Ar., File 93, General Field Manager to General Manager, 29 June 1953, Labour in General.

(39) SSE Ar., File 133A, MT to Col. Hornung. 12 Sep. 1950, No. 155/50, Private Series, Recruiting in Angonia.

(40) For example in 1944 whereas adults from Mopeia received one singlet, one pair of shorts and a blanket, minors only received a singlet and a blanket (SSE Ar., File 133A, General Manager to Acting Manager SSE Ltd Mopeia, 7 Dec. 1944, No. 94/44 Mgt).

(41) cf. Courtenay op. cit., p. 87. In 1962 Courtenay states that the average amount of cane cut by one man in Cuba (average for 160 Centrales) was 2½ - 3 tons; Shillingford, op. cit., p. 67ff., states that the amount of cane cut per man on nine Jamaican estates ranged between 1.72 tons and 4.06 tons. He notes, on the other hand, that West Indian cutters in Florida averaged 8.59 tons per day in the same year (1971). He attributes the greater productivity in Florida to better wages, morale, management and the better selection of workers.

(42) SSE Ar., File 94, Reply to Labour Questionnaire, 1931, op. cit.

(43) Half of the cash wage was paid in the work-place, the other half was paid in the administrative district where the worker was contracted. The only exceptions to this general rule were i) men contracted on a verbal contract (normally for domestic work) and ii) men contracted with the intervention of the authorities for work in their own district for a period not exceeding three months (RTI, Arts. 182-184, pp. 53-54).

(44) SSE Ar., File 184, Resposta à Nota da RCNI... 30 Mar. 1942, op. cit.

(45) ibid. In 1942 volunteer labourers (men) received a bonus of 10 escudos for each month of 26 days worked when they stayed at the estates for six consecutive months and 20 escudcs for each month of 26 days worked when they stayed at the estates for 12 consecutive months. See also SSE Ar., File 94A, SSE Ltd., Luabo, Salários e Gratificações aos Trabalhadores Indígenas,... 11 Sept. 1951, op. cit. In 1951 "Prazo" labour from Luabo received a bonus of 27 escudos for more than 4½ months spent on the estates; contracted men from Zambezia received a bonus of 12 escudos a month for a minimum of 160 days worked and boys received a bonus of five escudos a month for remaining at the estates for more than six months.

(46) This led to discontent among the men from Morrumbala and Derre. SSE's General Field Manager remarked "they know that they have always done so and also that Mopeias and Marrces do the same task, but there again, Mopeas and Marraes at Marromeu earn 100 escudos instead of 80 escudos." (SSE Ar., File 184, Usher, General Field Manager to General Manager, 29 May 1955, Re: Matabichos to Native Labour.) This quotation illustrates another aspect of SSE's wages policy which will be examined in detail below, namely, that SSE sought to reduce wages by paying labour at Luabo less than labour at Marromeu for doing the same work.

(47) ibid.

(48) SSE Ar., File 133A, MT to Col. Hornung, Sep. 1947, No. 67/47, Private Series, Recruiting.

(49) Companhia do Assucar de Moçambique, Relatórios e Contas das Gerências de 1895 e 1896 (Imprensa Moderna, Lisboa, 1897), p. 49, men worked for 24 days at a time; SSE Ar., File 133, MT to Estate Manager, Luabo, 21 May 1931, op. cit., "prazo" labour was recruited for two months at a time with a two month interval; SSE Ar., File 184, Resposta à Nota da RCNI... 30 Mar. 1942, op. cit., "prazo" labour received an extra bonus if it stayed on the estates for four and a half months; SSE Ar., File 133A, Notes and Considerations Re. Future Native Labour Requirements covering Luabo and Marromeu and Mainly in Reference to Angurus Contract Labour, MT General Manager Luabo, 12 Oct. 1944, men from Luabo were now recruited for six months instead of four and a half months; SSE Ar., File 94A, Sena Sugar Estates Ltd., Luabo, Salários e Gratificações aos trabalhadores indígenas, 11 Oct. 1951, op. cit., men from all the prazos were now recruited for six months at a time.

(50) The 1932 Agreement was in fact illegal since Decreto 16:475 (6 Feb. 1929) designated Zambézia Province as a labour reserve with a ban on the recruitment of men from there to work in neighbouring provinces. (See Chapter II). Sympathetic, local governors overcame the ruling by treating men contracted in Zambézia as volunteer labour if they passed from Luabo to Marromeu. For example writing to a recruiter in 1938, SSE's General Manager told him not to worry if passes were refused for men from Zambézia whom the company wanted to send to Marromeu. Given SSE's agreements with the local authorities in Zambézia, men could always pass over to Marromeu from Luabo without passes (SSE Ar., File 133, MT to Sarmento Pimental, 7 Feb. 1938). This situation persisted until 1942. "Six month Anguru contract labour has always been engaged as if they were all coming to Luabo, and 'Marromeu' never appeared on the contracts or paysheets - it was a subterfuge of which all and sundry were well-aware, since it suited everyone that as much labour from the Quelimane District should be employed" (SSE Ar., File 94, MT to Col. CBR Hornung, 2 May 1942, No. 45/42 Private, Native Labour, Increased Wages). The matter seems to have come to a head in 1942 because SSE's competitors were struggling against an increasing labour shortage and resented the company's ability to substitute more highly paid labour from Manica and Sofala with lower-paid labour from Zambézia. SSE's General Manager writing to Col. Hornung in the same year, noted that a former governor of Zambézia had "arranged that we should be allowed to send labour from this side of the river to Marromeu as and when we pleased, but without specifically contracting them for Marromeu, it being considered that the natives, provided each with an individual pass, were virtually going to Marromeu as volunteers, which was the only and effective means of stemming the ever present opposition towards our employing Quelimane labour at Marromeu with evidently advantageous results from the economic point of view but also ever-increasing jealousy on the part of those who could not, only to mention the Buzi company. In this manner, contract Angurus, Mopeas and Marrães have regularly been working at Marromeu, and the next Quelimane Governor, who since has been transferred to Benguela, similarly endorsed the ruling given by Capt. Ferreira de Carvalho." (SSE Ar., File 94, MT to Col. CBR Hornung, 28 May 1942, No. 56/42 Private, Marromeu Native Labour - Increased Wages).

(51) SSE Ar., File 94A, MT Gerente Geral SSE Luabo to Ministro das Colónias, 11 July 1942.

(52) ibid. (Translation J.H.)

(53) ibid.

(54) SSE Ar., File 94A, MT to Col. CBR Hornung, 3 Dec. 1951, No. 230/51, Private Series, Labour from Mopea/Marral working at Marromeu.

(55) ibid.

(56) ibid.

(57) ibid.

(58) ibid.

(59) SSE Ar., File 94A, MT to Dr. J. dos Santos Callado, SSE Lourenço Marques, 11 Feb. 1952, No. 12/52, Reservada, Salários Indígenas a Pagar em Marromeu a trabalhadores Oriundos do Distrito de Quelimane.

(60) ibid. (Translation J.H.).

(61) SSE Ar., File 94, O Director Provincial, Direcçao Provincial de Admin. Civil, Prov. da Zambézia, to Gerente Geral, SSE, Luabo, 14 May 1942, No. 1862/B/15/2/5 (quoting a letter from Dr. Saboya Ramos). (Translation J.H.).

(62) SSE Ar., File 94, MT Gerente Geral SSE, to Director Provincial dos Serviços de Admin. Civil, Quelimane, 20 May 1942, No. 123/4/HO, Ref. Nota No. 1862/B/15/2/5 de 14 de Maio "the natives do not understand that for the same work for the same boss and for the same contract period, wages on the Marromeu property, on the right bank of the river Zambesi were 60$ 00 a month, when on the Luabo property on the left bank of the same Zambesi they continued to stay at 50$ 00 a month. They demanded to be transferred to Marromeu or the payment of a wage of 60$ 00 in Luabo." (Translation J.H.).

(63) ibid. (Translation J.H.).

(64) ibid. (Translation J.H.).

(65) SSE Ar., File 94A, MT to Estate Manager Marromeu/Caia, 15 May 1950 No. 28/50 MGT, Increases in Basic Minimum Wage to Native Labourers.

(66) ibid.

(67) ibid.

(68) ibid. See also SSE Ar., File 94, MT General Manager to Acting General Manager M'meu/Caia Estate, 25 Sep. 1943, No. 108/43 Mgt, Native Wages Manica and Sofala. In 1943 the industrial wage rose from 75$ 00 to 82$ 50 a month. SSE, therefore, abolished the weekly bonuses and introduced advances on wages instead. At the same time the Administrator of Marromeu agreed that workers [presumably agricultural] working in the district where they were recruited could receive 60$ 00 a month instead of 66$ 00 a month.

(69) SSE Ar., File 184, Memo Dealing with the Question of Regular Conditioned Advances to Native Labourers on the Estates, in Lieu of Gratuities, the Abolition of that System and the Proposed Reintroduction of Weekly Gratuities with a System of Special Gratuities for Work in Excess of Normal Tasks, MT, Luabo, 30 Apr. 1955.

(70) SSE Ar., File 184, MT General Manager to Manager SSE Ltd., Chinde, 9 Aug. 1949, No. 69/49 Mgt, Re: Native Crews, River Steamers; SSE Ar., File 184, MT General Manager to Manager, Transport Dept. Chinde, 16 Aug. 1949, No. 100/49 Mgt, Present Scale of Wages to River Steamer Crews, Weekly Gratuities to Same.

(71) SSE Ar., File 204, Memo from General Manager to Mr Teles, 22 Mar. 1961, Salários Indígenas Mínimos em Vigor em 1952 e seus Sucessivos Aumentos até a Presente Data (22 Mar. 1961). NB. the difference between the minimum wages in Manica and Sofala and Zambézia was narrowed over the years.

(72) For wages in Zambézia in 1930 see SSE Ar., File 94, G. Hornung Director SSE Mopea, to Governador da Companhia de Moçambique, Beira, 9 July 1932.

(73) In the case of workers from Angonia, cited above, this tactic was successfully applied for six years between 1936 and 1942. (See pp. 178-180 above).

(74) Since men from Sena were resident in the Province of Manica and Sofala they should have been earning the higher minimum wage in force in that province. That they were apparently not doing so is probably explained by the fact that until 1930 SSE also sub-leased some prazos on the south bank of the river. Hence men from Sena might have been classified as "prazo" labour.

(75) SSE Ar., File 133A, MT to Col. Hornung, 12 Sep. 1950, op. cit.

(76) SSE Ar., File 138, The Case of Dr. Saboya Ramos, Saboya Ramos to Max Thurnheer, 29 May 1937, Particular; SSE Ar., File 94, Agência da Curadoria dos Indígenas da Circ. Civil de M'meu, to Gerente Geral da Feitoria, SSE, M'meu, 17 Sep. 1942, Serie de 1942, No. 35/813.

(77) See p. 182 above. The distinction between agricultural work and industrial work appears to have been arbitrary, Repartição Central dos Negócios Indígenas, Notas - Circulares Nos. 1.701/B/15/12 e 1.758/B/15 de 26 e 31 de Maio de 1950, "... the work of natives employed on the felling of trees for transformation into wood for sale and other uses must be considered as 'industrial' for the purposes of wages. In the case of tree-felling the only object of which is to clear the land for agricultural purposes... the work will be considered 'agricultural';" Repartição Central dos Negócios Indígenas Circular No. 926/B/15/2 de 27 de Março de 1950, in the District of Lourenço Marques and Province of the Sul de Save, work on the railways and roads was defined as agricultural work.

(78) SSE Ar., File 94A, MT to Estate Manager M'meu/Caia, 15 May 1950, No. 28/50 MGT, op. cit.

(79) SSE Ar., File 232, Labour from Cape Verde and Namarroi, Dr. Armindo Monteiro to Col. CBR Hornung, 6 Apr. 1948, No. 14/48.

(80) ibid.

(81) SSE Ar., File 232, MT to Col. Hornung, 3 Aug. 1948, No. 110/48, Private Series, Cape Verde Labour.

(82) See Chapter II, note 6.

(83) SSE Ar., File 232, APR / Paiva Rapozo 7 to SSE Ltd., London, 23 June 1949, No. 114/49, Re: Cape Verde Labour. (Translation J.H.). The Cape Verdians were initially expected to work for four years. In fact, however, they only stayed in Zambézia for two years. In 1950 a combined petition to the Government from emmployers in Zambézia led to their repatriation. The petition emphasised the disruptive affect Cape Verdian labour was having on the 'native' workers (SSE Ar., File 232, MT to Hornung and Co. Ltd., 20 July 1950, No. 366/50 GM; SSE Ar., File 232, Companhia do Boror, Dr. Souza Neves, Sociedade Agrícola do Madal, João Bonone, Companhia da Zambézia, Breyner & Wirth Lda., Sacadura Bota to Governador Geral, Lourenço Marques, 14 June 1950).

(84) SSE Ar., File 329, Mistos and Assimilados, SSE Lourenço Marques to Governador Geral de Moçambique, 2 June 1956, Relação dos Trabalhadores Mestiços e Assimilados ao Serviço da Sena Sugar Estates Ltd.

(85) ibid.

(86) ibid.

(87) SSE Ar., File 329, NHDuB to Col. CBR Hornung, 16 Oct. 1958, No. 239/58 Private Series, Native Policy.

(88) SSE Ar., File 329, J. dos Santos Callado to Director SSE Luabo, 24 Oct. 1958, No. 70/58/Reservada "Estritamente Confidencial" Assunto: Assimilados. (Translation J.H.).

(89) SSE Ar., File 329, NHDB to Col. JD Hornung OBE MC, 4 Nov. 1958, No. 269/58, Private Series.

(90) SSE Ar., File 329, DA to Major Du Boulay, 5 Jan. 1959, No. 3/59 Private Series, Assimilados.

(91) SSE Ar., File 118, Secretaria Distrital de Saúde, Zambézia, Cópia da Informação No. 26... 4 Sep. 1956, op. cit. (Translation J.H.).

CHAPTER VI

SENA SUGAR ESTATES' FOOD POLICY

A distinction of the migrant labour system is that part of the wage that capital pays to labour is not received in its money form. Whereas under the conditions of generalised commodity production where a full proletariat exists the individual worker is usually responsible for supporting the costs of providing housing and sustenance for himself (and his family) from the wage he receives, (1) under a migrant system part of these costs fall to capital. For the period that the worker spends on the estates away from his own home the employer is responsible for providing food and shelter.

The separation of the total wage into one part which is paid in cash and another part which is represented by food and housing presents itself to the worker as two separate things. While the cash wage appears as payment for his labour, the food and housing he receives is made to appear as a 'gift' from the company. This means that a struggle on the wages front is not necessarily related to a struggle to improve social conditions. To the employer, on the other hand, the cash and kind components of the wage are seen as but two halves of the same whole, and failure to hold back the expenditure on one can be offset by attempts to reduce the expenditure on the other. Attempts to increase the appropriation of surplus value are therefore not confined simply to the production front, through the manipulation of wages and productivity. They are also extended to

attempts to reduce that part of the wage represented by food and housing.

This chapter will examine the ways in which SSE's management sought to further cut the cost of labour by reducing its expenditure on the kind element of the wage represented by food. The first part of the chapter will examine the source of foodstuffs provided to the migrant labour force. The second part will examine the content of the diet. Finally, the third part of the chapter will examine the form in which the rations were distributed.

SENA SUGAR ESTATES' FOOD PURCHASING POLICY

Securing Produce directly from the Peasantry: the Companhia do Comércio de Moçambique

Before the First World War the SSF had established a trading company, run as part of the sugar company, whose main aim was to acquire peasant produce to feed the plantation labour force.

> The whole aim and object of this business from the start has been the purchase of Native Foodstuffs for consumption of the labour working on the Sugar Estates.(2)

The Companhia de Comércio de Moçambique (CCM) was originally a wholesale trading company. However, by the Second World War, following various reorganisations, the business was "exclusively retail."(3) The CCM controlled a series of stores along both banks of the river Zambesi, and others inland, which sold general trade goods and sugar from the plantations and bought peasant produce.

There were probably two reasons for the change in the nature of the business. The first was that buying produce directly from the producers lowered the cost by cutting out the middleman. Linked to the first reason was the second, the increasing importance of raw sugar as an item of local trade. This was a trade which the CCM was soon able to monopolise through its favourable arrangements with SSE.

Raw sugar was much sought after by the local people as a fermenting agent for making beer.

> The very enhanced sales during last year are of course mainly due to the large sums of money that the natives received in connection with cotton, and not being educated or forced towards elevating their own standards of living in other directions, raw sugar, respectively drink, is the nearest thing to turn the surplus money into. It certainly sounds enormous expressed in figures if one thinks of it that 2,700 tons of raw sugar sold by us on the Zambesi last year represent practically 50,000 in hard cash.(4)

Through its subsidiary company SSE was able to sell sugar in the retail stores and thus capture much of the peasant trade in the area. This had important consequences for its capacity to control food supplies. The CCM bought sugar from SSE on credit and at cost price(5) whereas the company's competitors, the Asian traders of the interior(6) were obliged to buy sugar from CCM retail stores for cash and at retail prices if they wished to retain their general trade.(7) Nevertheless, despite the importance of raw sugar sales as a means of capturing the market in peasant produce and despite record sales of raw sugar during the 1944 'crop', in 1945 SSE decided to stop selling raw sugar in its CCM stores.(8) The decision was taken reluctantly in anticipation of the extension of a government ban on the sale of raw sugar.(9) SSE feared that the replacement of

raw sugar by white sugar, which lacked the fermenting agent, would lead to a general decline in trade and hence to a drop in the supply of peasant produce acquired through the CCM stores. However, sales of white sugar were higher than anticipated, and the income from the sale actually increased because white sugar commanded a higher retail price than raw sugar.(10) Furthermore, since SSE was still the only supplier of sugar in the region its monopoly position was not affected by the change. Indeed the company recognised the importance of retaining and expanding the local market, even if it meant losing out on higher prices obtainable elsewhere in the short-term:

> Our policy must be to encourage sales to the natives and consequently I do not agree to your suggestion to restrict our sales during the current year so as to make more available to the Ministry. The price which we receive from the Ministry today is considerably better than what we obtain for local sales, but we have to think of the future, and I do not believe that the present Ministry price will be maintained when there is over-production in the world, as there is sure to be in the next two or three years.(11)

This policy of encouraging local sales was pursued and in the late 1950s the company was still the principal supplier of sugar in the region. In 1958 it was supplying 17 stores in the Circumscription of Marromeu alone with sugar.(12) By selling sugar, the CCM and through it SSE, continued to receive peasant produce. In Mopeia, for instance, where the CCM enjoyed a monopoly of trade and drew custom from both sides of the river, its stores had been buying thousands of tons of produce for years and had been making good profits "mainly because they do not lack a product much sought after by the natives - sugar - which the CCM disposes of freely."(13)

As a result of its control of the distribution of sugar through the CCM stores SSE was assured a supply of whatever peasant produce was available locally. However, the quantity of peasant produce provided by the local trade fluctuated from year to year. In part, the climate was responsible. The weather in the region around the estates was unpredictable. According to an Agricultural Department Survey of 1927 the rains either came too early or too late, and it was either too wet or too dry to produce adequate harvests. Furthermore the Zambesi was subject to frequent flooding which destroyed African crops and left the "natives without resources and they are forced to suffer long periods of famine".(14) There were also periodic droughts. In 1941, for example, peasant crops "suffered terribly" where they did not fail completely because of the worst drought on record for decades.(15) 1954 too was a bad year and peasant crops were once again either ruined or non-existant because of the acute drought conditions.(16) The spread of forced cotton cultivation also contributed in part to the irregularity in the supply of locally produced foodstuffs. As cotton cultivation increased so the supply of foodstuffs for sale declined.(17) A third reason for the uncertain supplies of peasant produce was the development towards the end of the 1940s of government-controlled grain-marketing boards. The establishment of fixed markets "practically prohibited them [the peasants] the free sale of their holdings at the various trading stores... as had been the custom for ever so long."(18)

The inability of the CCM stores to buy up and thus supply all the produce necessary to feed the labour force led to a suggestion by SSE's directors in 1942 that a total of 11 stores

should be closed.(19) The directors felt that their closure would not bring a loss to the company since in the first six months of the year they had only supplied 176 tons of grain out of the total of 4,854 required.(20) The directors also feared that as shipping became easier the cost of merchandise imported from England would drop and the CCM stores would be left with expensive stocks which they could not sell. A drop in the cost of merchandise to the 1939 level would not cover the CCM's debt to SSE.(21) In his reply SSE's General Manager pointed out that the debt referred to was 'disturbing' but temporary since it coincided with the height of the 'native' buying season, May/June/July, when ready cash was needed to buy 6,000 tons of maize and mapira at an average price of £6 a ton. The General Manager was anxious to keep the stores open not only because they showed an average nett profit of 15 per cent but also because their closure would cause great inconvenience to SSE staff and labour. He feared that the bulk of the business would go to the CCM's competitors and not to the CCM's other stores of which only two would remain in the vicinity.(22)

In other words, although the CCM stores had been established originally to acquire local peasant produce to feed the labour force, their activities had expanded as SSE itself had expanded. At least in the General Manager's eyes, the expansion of the general trading business was as important as the securing of locally produced foodstuffs. In his appeal to keep the 11 stores open he was quite explicit. He pointed out that while the reminder by the director that the stores only existed to buy native foodstuffs(23) was correct, they also performed other essential functions.

> It is incomprehensible at this stage of development not to consider the labour force which you employ in relation to the purchases of essentials that they are able to make on or in the neighbourhood of your plantations, and by closing all the Marromeu stores, for instance, they would be completely at the mercy of the remaining Banyans [Asian traders], who would then put their prices up etc. We have also at this stage an ever increasing half-caste population that is actually employed by us, or better class natives who definitely and exclusively depend upon what they can get at our stores. The CCM, although they had unavoidably to increase their retail selling prices, are definitely today still the cheapest selling concern throughout the colony, a point which can be translated into a function that is definitely in our interest and beneficial in the long run.(24)

Nevertheless, SSE did try to expand its specifically food-buying activities when the opportunity arose, by cutting out middlemen and extending its control over the local trade. To this end, when the Native Grain and Buying Markets were abolished in 1950 the company considered opening a store in Morrumbala. This was an idea which had been mooted before but rejected after the advent of the Grain Purchasing Board.

> We are consequently back to where we were before, and the question of doing something towards securing a major share of the Native Foodstuffs grown in the Morrumbala District has accordingly come to the fore.(25)

There were two main reasons for the choice of Morrumbala. The first was that the district had an annual potential of 3-5000 tons of produce per annum.(26) Secondly, Mutarara District had been the main supply area, but from 1941 it had been incorporated into Manica and Sofala Province and all grain transactions had been controlled by the Beira Maize Board whose prices were higher.(27) Thus Morrumbala had become the major supply area close to the estates, and the company wanted to secure a "permanent footing there". In 1949, the company

had bought 1,500 tons from third parties and wanted to increase its purchases, but lacked transport to be able to do so. By setting up a CCM store, SSE could justify the use of its own lorries to supply the estates with the produce acquired. The General Manager suggested that the lorries might also transport cotton and workers to the estates.(28) The scheme had the administrator's approval since the only trading stores in Morrumbala were controlled by the Lopes Brothers or their relatives, who, in the eyes of the administrator were "rather exploiting the natives". The administrator therefore welcomed competition.(29) SSE's London management company was persuaded by the General Manager. Its members approved the decision to open a store in Morrumbala on the grounds that "it will enable us to lay our hands on considerably more foodstuffs without the interference of third parties."(30)

It was clearly in SSE's interest to directly control as much of the buying of foodstuffs for the labour force as possible, and thus avoid the extra costs incurred in buying through other traders and merchants. However, the sheer numbers of workers involved, the irregular climate, the effects of both labour demands and forced cotton growing on food-crop production meant that the peasant produce acquired locally was not sufficient to feed the labour force. Despite the network of CCM stores which were able to control the local trade because of their monopoly control over sugar, and the financial backing they received from SSE at the critical buying season,(31) SSE still had to rely on other merchants in areas beyond the immediate vicinity of the estates.

Acquiring Foodstuffs through other Traders

Apart from the area around the estates SSE's three main supply areas of foodstuffs were Angonia, Milange(32) and Morrumbala.(33) Occasionally the company also bought maize from Niassa.(34) Angonia was the site of the company's former Prazo, and in Milange the Hornung family controlled a tea plantation.(35) In both areas, therefore, SSE had long-established links with local merchants, and in Milange at least it was able to reduce overheads by using the same agent to supply foodstuffs to both the tea and sugar estates.(36) In Morrumbala, besides buying through its own store, the company also bought maize directly from the plantations controlled by the Lopes Bros.(37) Although there is no direct evidence for the earlier period, a letter written in 1972 throws some light on the arrangements SSE made with merchants and/or European producers such as Lopes Brothers. As with the local Asian traders, SSE's monopoly control over the supply of sugar appears to have been instrumental in assuring the supply of foodstuffs from these sources. In return for guaranteed supplies of sugar SSE expected to receive "some form of reciprocity... possibly in the form of maize flour at competitive prices on both sides of the river... This will reduce the stocks of maize which we will have to pay for and hold."(38)

Even when SSE acquired its food supplies through third parties it was still in the company's interest to exercise as much control as possible over the price of the commodities purchased. This it did partly by establishing reciprocal arrangements of the type described above, and partly by 'shopping around'. Thus, one of the reasons SSE used "three main suppliers in Angoniland"(39) was to avoid

purchasing grain from the Beira Cereals Board whose prices were higher. Writing about the supply of maize for the Marromeu Estate in 1953 SSE's General Manager noted that sufficient amounts of maize beans were available from the suppliers in Angonia. 2,000 tons would be delivered in May and June of 1953. "In this manner we have been successful in cutting out more expensive purchases from the Beira Maize Gremio and with the latter's full consent since we are paying them a small tax."(40)

The other way of ensuring that foodstuffs were not too costly was by attempting to control the price paid to the producer. The minimum buying prices for peasant produce were established by the colonial government.(41) On one occasion at least, in 1952, the authorities asked SSE, as an interested party, about the prices it thought should be established. The Company's General Manager suggested the following:

Buying from the Natives	Price per kilo	Selling price per kilo(42)
Maize and mapira [sorghum]	1$	1$ 50
Mealie meal (maize flour)	1$ 80	2$ 20
Kaffir beans	1$ 50	2$
Meixeira [millet]	1$ 50	2$
European type beans	1$ 80	2$

On another occasion, purchasers of peasant produce in Milange made a joint representation to the local authorities asking for a reduction in the buying price of maize from 1 escudo to 75 centavos a kilo.(43) SSE's General Manager, in a letter about the matter to the company's Agent in Milange, asked if there were any similar steps being taken to bring about a reduction in the price of cassava paid to the peasants. He added:

> As you say, the whole movement is something in the right direction, for it was high time that steps were taken to bring down costs in this or that direction, and to bring down the cost of native food is clearly a major consideration, which again is only possible by paying less to the natives.(44)

Summarising the company's food-buying policy in 1953 SSE's General Manager wrote that the policy was to continue as before. The CCM stores were to buy what they could on both sides of the river. The company's agent in Milange was commissioned to buy maize, sorghum, cassava and beans, but he was always to try and obtain lower prices. Maize for the Marromeu plantation was to come from Angonia, thus cutting out the more expensive Beira Maize Board.(45) The reduction of the cost of food, was the prime consideration in the formulation of food-buying policy.

Thus through its control of the local sugar trade, network of trading stores, reciprocal agreements with other traders and European producers, and attempts to reduce the price of food crops, SSE attempted to secure a cheap supply of foods for the labour force on its plantations.

THE CONTENT OF THE DIET

The Regulamento do Trabalho dos Indígenas of 1930 which was the cornerstone of all legislation on African employment conditions until 1962 stipulated that workers resident on plantations and other private enterprises in the colony were to receive a daily diet of 800 to 1000 grammes of flour made from maize, cassava, rice, beans or

any other vegetable substance with equal food value; 250 grammes of meat or dry fish, and sufficient salt and oil for cooking the rations. No mention was made of other protein foods or fresh fruit and green vegetables. The meat and fish ration could be altered according to local circumstances. Fresh meat could be substituted by 150 grammes of dried or pickled meat if the former was difficult to obtain. Furthermore, the ration could be altered "in accordance with the preferences of the natives and local resources" if proposed by the local authorities of the region with the Medical Inspector's approval.(46)

Throughout the period of this study workers at SSE received the flour ration to which they were entitled. Flour was cheap and came from local producers. Flour was also a commodity over whose price SSE was able to exercise some control. Similarly, salt was issued regularly, since SSE itself produced salt. Besides producing sufficient salt to feed the labour force SSE also produced a small surplus which it marketed in its trading stores.(47) The provision of meat and fish, however, did constitute a problem, mainly because they were the most expensive items in the diet. Writing to the Administrator of the District of Mopeia in 1937, A.A. Azevedo of SSE listed the prices of the items which made up the daily rations of the labour force:

maize		67.2	centavos	a kilo
flour		78.4	"	"
beans		95.2	"	"
peanuts	1 escudo	12	"	"
salt		56	"	"
dry meat	2 escudo	80	"	"
fresh meat	2 escudo	46	"	"
dry fish	2 escudo	30	"	"
fresh fish	1 escudo	37	"	" (48)

Meat and Fish

Meat was expensive mainly because it was costly to produce locally. Zambézia Province lay within the tsetse zone. Traditionally Africans did not raise cattle, but limited their animal husbandry to the keeping of small animals: goats, pigs and fowl.(49) Cattle appear to have been introduced by Europeans as a source of meat, manure, and as work animals.(50)

Besides being susceptible to attack by tsetse fly cattle were also vulnerable to a number of other diseases and parasites. In addition, the problem of finding strains of cattle which could adapt to the climate and region were considerable. However over the years, these problems were gradually brought under control. By the mid-1940s there were some 29,988 cattle in European hands in Zambézia, of which SSE owned approximately 4000.(51) From its herd SSE slaughtered three steers a week for (European) staff consumption.(52)

Despite the difficulties, then, it was possible to raise cattle in Zambézia. However, it was not until 1957 that the expansion of the herds was seriously considered as a way of providing fresh meat for the labour force. It was only considered then because of the growing labour shortage.

> With the warnings of labour shortages in the future, and the general difficulty and expense of our recruiting, we feel that our herds of cattle should in the future be turned to the greatest possible advantage in attracting native labour. We believe and would appreciate your confirmation, that an issue of fresh meat is about the most popular food with most of the tribes and if this could be maintained at Luabo the propaganda value

> would be considerable. Furthermore, we believe that the size and rate of increase of the herds at present is insufficient to contemplate such a course however desirable it may be.(53)

The reason for the failure to develop the herds as a source of meat for the labour force was economic. Whereas beef could be sold to the European staff, albeit at subsidised prices, and also sold to others outside the company, the provision of fresh meat for the labour force was a cost to the company with no visible return.

As for fish supplies, the fishing industry in Zambézia was rudimentary and under-developed throughout the period. In his 1943-7 Report, the Governor of Zambézia noted that the fishing industry was run by a small nucleus of Indo-Portuguese in Quelimane, while "a dozen natives" operated from Chinde and other places along the coast.(54) Small boats and canoes, made locally, were the only craft in use. The most common fishing methods consisted either in the use of a type of seine net operated by small boats close to the shore, or a net dragged along the shore by two men.(55)

The fish which SSE gave its workers was in the main dry fish imported from Angola through the port of Chinde.(56) Meat was mostly supplied by local game hunters. For example, one consignment of 25 tons was made up of 200 buffaloe, 33 elephants, 20 hippopotami, 66 waterbuck and 66 zebra.(57) Yet neither food was issued in the quantities stipulated by law. In 1937, for example, instead of a daily helping of 250 grammes of fresh meat, men were receiving 150 grammes a week.(58)

In 1942 the Central Department of Native Affairs altered the diet introduced in 1930. The new diet included 100 grammes of groundnuts which were formerly lacking. However, the meat and fish ration were reduced. When these items were difficult to obtain employers were allowed to substitute them with either beans or groundnuts. Meat and fish only had to be offered on three days out of seven. In effect this meant that the amount of fish and meat included in the 1930 diet had now been reduced by a kilo a week.(59) Nevertheless SSE still complained about the new diet. It argued that it could not put it into immediate effect because of meat and fish shortages.(60) Meat was in short supply because there was not enough ammunition available to shoot wild animals. Dry fish was in short supply because of the difficulties of transporting it by sea. Fresh fish was hard to find because of the shortage of string to make nets. All three shortages were blamed on war-time conditions.(61)

In the years that followed other changes were introduced in the diet. Sometimes the meat and fish ration was increased, at other times it was decreased. However, these changes and the legal diet itself bore little relation to the food actually provided by SSE. For example, in 1957 a new diet was introduced which stipulated that workers were to receive 400 grammes of fresh meat a week.(62) Yet SSE's General Manager noted in 1961 that the company never managed to obtain fresh meat.(63) A year later N.H. Du Boulay wrote to a fellow director about the changes SSE should introduce into the diet in line with new government recommendations. He remarked that the rations issued were not imaginative enough. Workers were receiving an unbroken weekly diet of flour, groundnuts, beans, fish and salt. Meat was

difficult to obtain because shooting game was unremunerative and dried meat was expensive and of doubtful quality.(64) The Director was trying to organise the introduction of fresh meat into the diet, which he knew would be popular with the labour force. This letter was written five years after the decision was taken in principle to expand the company's cattle herds in order to supply fresh meat to the labour force, and five years after a regulation requiring the introduction of a diet which included regular issues of meat.

Between 1930 and 1960 SSE systematically avoided giving their labourers the meat and fish ration to which they were entitled by law. Notwithstanding the company's argument that meat and fish shortages prevented the inclusion of these items in the quantities stipulated, the main reason for their absence from the diet was economic. The production costs associated with developing herds of cattle or other meat-supplying animals, and stocking local streams and rivers with fish would have pushed the overall cost of labour to a point which the company considered unworkable. However, SSE did not only avoid giving its workers meat and fish. The company also resisted proposed changes in the diet designed to increase the variety of foodstuffs offered and to improve its overall quality. Once again, the company's resistance to the proposed changes was ultimately founded on economic arguments.

Fresh Fruit and Green Vegetables

The original diet stipulated in the 1930 Labour Legislation made no mention of fresh fruit or green vegetables. By the end of

the 1930s, however, the authorities were beginning to worry about the effect of the diet issued on plantations on the health of the labour force. Many workers were being admitted to hospital suffering from the effects of vitamin deficiency.(65) To overcome this problem the provincial authorities ordered plantations to start planting fruit trees. In 1942 SSE was ordered to plant bananas, mangoes, paw paw and cashew trees. (66)

In an attempt to evade carrying out the new instructions SSE immediately sent a petition to the provincial authorities which explained its food policy.

> This company wishes to bring to the notice of those in authority that the rations distributed to its native workers were always considered sufficient. They are as varied as the region permits. They also obey the agricultural policy of this district. Agricultural produce is acquired from the natives of the region. Moreover the wishes of the natives themselves are satisfied. They receive the foods which they most like, for example, beans and maize.(67)

In its letter to the authorities SSE also implied that the diet it offered was fully adequate for the workers' needs. It compared the diet recommended by the League of Nations for work in cold climates with that given for "light" work in tropical climates. It then compared the diets issued by the Rhodesian and South African mines with the diet recommended by the Native Affairs Department and that given by SSE. SSE's argument was based exclusively on the calorie content of the four diets. It ignored the nutritional value of the diet and specifically the lack of vitamins, which was the point of dispute. From its comparisons SSE concluded that the Native Affairs Department recommended such an "excess" of calories that work on the mines was considered less arduous than agricultural work in Zambézia.(68)

SSE also asserted that the 'natives' obtained as much fruit as they needed from trees growing on the edges of the cane fields and from plots that they cultivated themselves.(69) As a demonstration of the adequacy of the diet SSE then listed the average weights of its workers from different regions. The average weight of men from Ile was 51.51 kilos, from Alto Molócuè 52.84 kilos and from Angonia, 59.23 kilos. Yet, out of a sample of 1,474 men only 311 weighed over 60 kilos.(70) Finally, SSE enclosed copies of its ration sheets. These included foods available in the region and therefore fulfilled the demands of the law. Despite the fact that 15 separate tables were attached the diet contained no fruit or green vegetables. It was composed of maize/cassava flour, peanuts, beans, fish, coconut and one issue of meat and sugar a week. However, not all of these foods were issued daily. The first three tables appended give a clearer indication of three possible daily diets.

A	maize flour	900	grammes	B	maize flour	900	grammes
	meat	300	"		peanut	125	"
	salt	20	"		beans	160	"
					salt	20	"
C	maize flour	900	"				
	peixe	150	"				
	beans	160	"				
	salt	20	"				

Alternatively workers returning from the fields might have received ration D. After a hard day's work, and having eaten nothing during the day they were presented with a handful of beans and nearly a kilo of flour, and salt.(71)

In 1945 an amended diet introduced by the Native Affairs Department included fruit and vegetables. Workers were to receive

150 grammes of fruit and vegetables three times a week.(72) SSE did not implement the diet. It did, however, send its own diet sheets to an expert at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine for analysis. The expert pronounced the diet "very deficient in Vitamin A and riboflavin" and added that it could not be considered adequate without a fair quantity of fresh vegetables.(73) Nevertheless SSE ignored the expert's advice just as they had ignored the advice of local doctors, and continued to avoid giving their workers fresh fruit and vegetables.

In 1956 the colonial government again published a new diet which insisted on the provision of 250 grammes of fruit and vegetables daily. The new diet was to be put into immediate effect. SSE's Assistant General Manager immediately had talks with the Zambézia Company and the Madal Company, both of whom agreed that it was impossible to supply 250 grammes of fruit and vegetables daily. SSE's Assistant General Manager then spoke to the Governor of Zambézia. The Governor affirmed that other companies had not supplied the fruit and vegetables and were not intending to do so "counting with the authorities passively."(74) The Governor agreed that SSE could not supply the ration and agreed that it should present a petition to the Governor General. SSE's Assistant General Manager then saw a representative of the Buzi Company. The Buzi Company did not intend to implement the law. Finally, the Assistant General Manager saw the Governor of Beira, whom he knew well, having been his father's Aide de Camp. The Governor of Beira "quite agreed" with SSE. He had never thought about the matter and had no intention of enforcing the law. Writing to the London Management Company about the matter

SSE's Assistant General Manager added:

> While I was in Beira I had the opportunity of seeing, on more than one occasion, Eng. Jorge Pereira Jardim, former Under Secretary of State for Commerce and Industry, and at present Director of Lusalite in Beira and M.P. for Moçambique. We talked about the subject, and he said the Government could not take the fruit and vegetables off the ration list; they had to stay there for International reasons, U.N.O., Anti-Colonialism etc.; but everybody knew that it was impossible to comply with the issuing of rations of fruit and vegetables.(75)

A statement was prepared for the Governor General. In it the Assistant General Manager emphasised the impossibility of supplying 250 grammes of fruit and vegetables daily. With an average work force of 20,000 men a day SSE would require 5 tons of fruit and vegetables daily. Not only would the company require more labour, which would aggravate the existing shortage, but the cost of rations would increase 'extraordinarily'. He added that fruit and vegetables were not available locally and that the company would, therefore, have to grow them. He said that SSE would increase its orchards and vegetable gardens, but asked whether part of the ration could be substituted by flour, beans or peanuts, or any other product the Governor General suggested, bearing in mind that workers were able to eat cane freely and that there were some fruit trees on the compounds.(76)

The statement prepared for the Governor General was explicitly designed as a stalling mechanism. The Assistant General Manager felt that it would be several months before a decision was reached, if ever, because the statement had to be passed up the bureaucratic hierarchy through the local administrator. Furthermore, by making the statement, SSE had covered itself against possible attacks by

interfering administrative officials because it appeared to be doing something:

> I have written the 'exposição' [statement] which will be handed in here to the Posto, to go to Quelimane through the Chinde Administrator,... I think a copy ought to be given to the Marromeu Administrator. In this manner all the Authorities concerned will know that the subject is going to be appreciated at higher levels, and this should act as a brake should they intend making trouble, which I do not think they do. It will also stop any interference from the Medical Authorities...
>
> I am sure that many months will pass before the Governor General gives a 'despacho' [official communication] on our 'exposição', if he ever gives one, as I will not be surprised if it should be forgotten in some drawer, but at least we are safeguarded in connection with the question of native rations if any Administrative or Medical Authority ever thinks of causing trouble.(77)

In 1957 SSE received an answer to its petition. The Governor General gave the company three months in which to fulfill the law. 250 grammes of fruit and vegetables were to be supplied daily and could not be substituted by flour, peanuts or anything else.(78) In a letter to SSE's Lourenço Marques representative one of the company's directors wrote that SSE had cultivated enough sweet potatoes to feed about 500 men. It employed 10,000 men at Luabo and about the same number at Marromeu. With these numbers to feed the company would need to produce about 200 tons of fruit and vegetables a year. He added that one did not have to be an "agricultural engineer" to calculate the organisation and work that such a project would involve. The director then raised what he saw as the company's chief negotiating point.

If the Governor General continues to insist on the rigorous fulfilment of the Decree, it is clear that Colonel Hornung will have to, to defend the company's interests, raise in Lisbon, in Ministerial spheres, the possibility of a future decrease in our production.

As you well know, we have undertakings and agreements with the various Ministries in Lisbon, interested in the supply of sugar to the Empire, which it is our obligation to fulfill.(79)

In the final letter on the subject the director wrote to the Managing Director of SSE that the company was looking at ways of growing fruit trees outside the cane fields, near the compounds, taking in as little cane land as possible. "It is very doubtful even at the end of a year whether or not it would be possible to fully comply with the law, which was obviously made for small farmers around big towns."(80) SSE never, in fact, provided fruit as part of the rations and vegetables were only rarely included.(81)

Even if SSE was simply uninformed before the 1940s about the foods necessary to make up an adequate diet, thereafter it continued to deprive its work force of fruit and vegetables and to cut down on the issue of meat and fish, in spite of the fact that both the colonial authorities and an independent expert of the company's own choice had confirmed the necessity of distributing these items. SSE's work force continued to receive a monotonous and unbalanced diet until well into the 1960s. Paring down the cost of rations, and providing workers with only sufficient food to keep them alive and working was part of a deliberate strategy evolved by SSE to keep the costs of labour low.

THE DISTRIBUTION OF RATIONS IN THEIR MOST ECONOMICAL FORM

The Advantages of Uncooked Rations

The 1930 Regulamento do Trabalho dos Indígenas allowed employers to distribute uncooked rations to their labourers.(82) From SSE's point of view there were clear advantages in doing so. Firstly, the company was able to avoid investment in kitches, cooking utensils and canteens. Workers received their uncooked rations from a store located in the compound. They then took them away to their own huts to be cooked. Secondly, the company avoided investment in cutlery and crockery, which the workers themselves provided. The workers also had to provide a container in which to receive the rations. Only in 1962 did SSE seriously consider providing a container for rations, and then only because of pressure from the authorities.

> We were previously criticised because the labour either receive their rations in their hat, a dirty handkerchief or their shirt tails. None of this is very hygienic and it also necessitates the flour getting mised [sic] up with everything else.(83)

Yet it was at a loss to know what kind of receptacle to provide. Paper bags were rejected as being "far too expensive."(84) Thirdly, the company avoided employing cooks. When, between 1929 and 1931 there was a short-lived experiment with cooked food, SSE needed one cook for every 60 workers.(85) On the basis of the numbers employed during the 1935 'crop' SSE would have needed 160 cooks. By abolishing cooked food it could avoid employing 160 men who were not engaged in direct production.

The fourth advantage of providing uncooked food emerged from the task and payment system, and was probably the most important. Workers received their daily rations in the evening, after they had finished

work.(86) This system of distribution had two implications. It meant that SSE could avoid giving its field workers a break during the day. Thus, as already demonstrated in Chapter V, it could appropriate an hour's unpaid labour from each man in lieu of the break. The dimensions of this appropriation can be derived from the following figures for the period between 1948 and 1952. Each day represents one day's labour, hence it also represents one unpaid hour of labour.

Labour days	Marromeu	Luabo (87)
1948	1,425,818	2,197,803
1949	1,589,615	2,388,719
1950	1,480,785	2,588,955
1951	1,401,622	2,275,945
1952	1,563,723	2,615,538

The distribution of the day's rations after work also meant that only workers who had successfully completed their daily task received the food disc which allowed them to collect their rations. Not only did this act as an additional and very direct incentive to regular task completion but it also meant that the company did not have to support the costs of maintaining workers who did not produce the stipulated task. It meant, therefore, that SSE avoided supporting men who were absent from work. It also meant that men marked as absent but who had actually turned out to work were denied both the wages for the labour time they had expended and food. The distribution of uncooked rations at the end of the day was therefore another means by which SSE sought to appropriate additional surplus value from its labour force.

1945, Changes in the Law: the Provision of some Cooked Food

In 1945 the Native Affairs Department issued a Circular which called on employers to issue partly cooked food to their labourers. According to SSE's General Manager, the Governor of Zambézia did not like the Circular and only intended to introduce it gradually. The Governor of Manica and Sofala on the other hand, insisted on the letter and spirit of the law being carried out immediately. Nevertheless, it was only in 1947, two years after the Circular was issued and two years after the publication of a new diet which included the provision of a cooked breakfast, that SSE started to issue cooked porridge to labour working in Marromeu.

The 1945 diet(88) stipulated that workers were to receive porridge made from 150 grammes of maize flour and 75 grammes of sugar in addition to the uncooked rations which comprised the other two daily meals. In his letter to the Estate Manager of Marromeu instructing him to implement the new ruling the General Manager wrote that the early morning porridge would be made from 100 grammes of flour and 50 grammes of low grade sugar per head. He added:

> All this implies that the existing distribution of raw food rations continues and shall not suffer any specific change but it is clear that in so far as mealie meal is concerned, the individual ration issue does not necessarily and in all cases amount to the standard quantity of 900 grammes but probably less...(89)

It is not clear when a cooked breakfast was provided at Luabo, but the fact that the maize ration was reduced by 20 per cent in September 1947 suggests that it was probably shortly afterwards.(90) "If a start must be made then an early morning meal should first be introduced with a slight reduction in raw rations issued to compensate for it."(91)

Aware of the implication of issuing breakfast before the day was worked, the General Manager instructed that a new set of tickets were to be issued to labour with its task and raw food tickets the evening before to prevent those who had not worked receiving the porridge.

> It stands to reason that in addition to the normal ration disc against which they will exchange the raw food ration as heretofore, each labourer concerned will also have to be given a separate ticket or token that will entitle him to porridge the following morning, failing which you would have all and sundry lining up for the porridge meal with no guarantee as to a day's work following thereupon(92) (emphasis added)

When SSE was forced to provide a breakfast for its labour force in 1947 it was worried that it would also be obliged to provide a second cooked meal. "If... we are compelled to issue another meal of sorts at midday then the only feasible answer would be either biscuits or chappaties made of mealie flour which it would be necessary for each overseer of a gang to requisition from the compound to which his gang belongs."(93) In the event, the "Beira Governor" did not insist on a second cooked meal and the Governor of Zambézia was content to let things stay as they were.(94) For ten more years SSE's labour force continued to receive uncooked rations. Apart from the 'breakfast' of maize porridge and a cup of tea, the men ate nothing until they had finished their task and returned to the compound in the late afternoon.

In 1958 the issue of cooked food was again raised by the authorities. This time SSE could not afford to ignore the rulings on a second cooked meal. The company was already in trouble with the authorities over the fruit and vegetable issue. It was in further

trouble because it had been accused of exchanging food discs for cash in the company stores and finally it had just been the subject of a critical report by the Labour Inspectors.(95) Nevertheless the company avoided implementing the spirit of the law. It decided to evade the legislation by issuing a "token meal" of bread in the fields; a meal, which as we have already seen did not prevent the workers from continuing with their tasks. "The natives should be told when the loaf is issued, at 10 am. that they must have one hour's rest, and as they certainly will refuse, the local authorities should be taken to the spot, so as to certify that we wanted to comply with the orders received, but that the natives would not agree to them."(96)

In 1962 SSE was forced to undertake another experiment to see if the labour force would prefer a cooked meal in the fields to the bread distributed after 1957. The work force responded with a "blank refusal".(97) Some men felt that if they were given a hot meal in the fields it was because the company expected them to stay in the fields longer; others because they could eat their bread in the intervals between tasks. Hot meals meant taking plates to the fields which would get lost. SSE therefore decided against making any change.(98) Workers were still only receiving bread or another porridge in the fields as late as 1970.(99)

For 27 years SSE managed to avoid the law which stipulated that workers were to receive three meals a day. When the authorities finally clamped down on the company it was able to manouevre in such a way that the letter of the law was adhered to but its spirit ignored.

Workers were given a bread roll to eat in the fields, and thus technically, they received a second meal. They were still given no break and the excessive tasks continued. Indeed the task system and the ticket system remained unchanged and the appropriation of an hour's unpaid labour in lieu of the break continued.(100)

The Disadvantages of Uncooked Rations

Apart from the advantages already demonstrated, there were also disadvantages in issuing uncooked rations. Firstly, estate management recognised that men who received their only substantial meal of the day late in the afternoon were often too hungry and tired to prepare their meals properly. Thus it was not uncommon for men to receive their rations, "stir some mealie flour into cold water and drink it."(101) The General Field Manager added "provided native prejudice could be overcome, the cooking of rations, efficiently managed, would give good results from the point of view of the health and productive capacity of our labour."(102) Yet, despite this apparent advantage, SSE consistently avoided changing to cooked rations. Its reasons, as I have already tried to show, revolved around the additional costs involved in running canteens, employing cooks, providing cutlery and crockery, and allowing workers meal breaks. Related to these, was the fact that the company did not necessarily stand to save on labour costs by employing a healthy work force. Chapter VIII will show that men who were genuinely sick seldom sought hospital treatment, and that the treatment provided was minimal. Men on the other hand, who were debilitated through undernourishment but who nevertheless turned out for work were denied food and payment if they failed to complete their

tasks. From them SSE appropriated unpaid labour. The only cost which accrued to the company from maintaining such workers on its books was the cost of housing. This was a fixed cost which had to be supported whether the men were healthy or sick. Obviously there was a limit after which an unhealthy work force became a liability to the company, It had at least to cover the cost of recruiting workers and had to ensure that they entered production. However, it can be assumed that the diet the company offered was sufficient, on average, to sustain workers in production for the duration of the contract. SSE was not concerned about the long-term health of the labour force. What happened to men after they had completed their contracts was not of interest to the company.

A second advantage of introducing cooked food, according to SSE's General Manager was that it would lead to a saving on flour.

> A kilo of cooked mealie flour does not by any means represent a kilo of raw flour. The average labourer cannot eat a full kilo of flour daily. At Marromeu when rations were cooked the consumption per Anguru was only about 800 grammes daily and even so there was considerable wastage of cooked food thrown away after meals.(103)

Related to the saving on flour was the possibility of reducing absenteeism "since to obtain his food the labourer must go to work or go to hospital. He cannot build up a reserve of cooked food."(104)

The monotony of the diet, and the large quantities of flour which made up the bulk of the daily diet meant that men were seldom able to eat all the rations distributed. By cooking together in groups, or by saving some of the excess flour, men were able to build up a reserve of food which they either used for trade to supplement

their diet and buy small luxuries or kept against the days when they did not work.

> The natives themselves of course infinitely prefer the issue of raw food since, the ration of flour being in excess of their daily needs and messing as they do five or six together, they cook only about three fifths of the flour and build up a reserve of the remainder which they use for barter or keep for days when they do not feel inclined to work. In addition to this, food discs have a definite monetary value and are used as currency when sufficient stock of poço [food] has been accumulated.(105)

Ironically, the incentive value of the ticket system, whereby the worker only received food after the task had been completed, was in part undermined by the distribution of too much food of a certain kind. Day to day absenteeism which the distribution of excessive quantities of flour encouraged disrupted field work and upset labour calculations in the short term. In the long term, the company recouped some of the losses disruption implied, for men who did not complete their contracts were made to work an extended contract and/or lost the wages owed to them.(106) Once again, therefore, it can be assumed that on balance the company preferred to support the costs of retaining a proportion of unproductive labour to incurring new costs that the introduction of cooked food would have entailed. Furthermore, the disadvantages of distributing uncooked food were also in part offset by the company's policy of buying back food tickets from the labour force.(107)

One advantage of offering a monotonous diet and offering a diet which only just kept the labourer alive and working was that workers were encouraged to work for the weekly cash bonus which was

then spent in the company stores on the purchase of items which were lacking in the diet. By extending this policy to include the buying back of food tickets SSE consolidated its trade hold over the labour force. The money the worker received for the food ticket, which he then spent in the company stores was spent on items whose selling price already included a profit margin for the company. Thus, the three escudos which the worker received for his food ticket(108) was spent on items whose actual cost was less than three escudos. The company, through its stores was able to pocket the difference and thus give the worker less than the cost of the food he might otherwise have consumed.

There have been various references made in this section to the reaction of the workers themselves to a change from uncooked to cooked food. The General Field Manager, in his assessment of the advantages and disadvantages of the two systems placed considerable emphasis on this factor. "To sum up - in a change from raw to cooked rations - probably the most serious obstacle would be the prejudice of the natives themselves."(109) Uncooked rations allowed the workers the only control over their lives that they were able to exercise on the plantations. Not only were they able to decide when to eat, with whom, and how much to eat, but they were also able to vary their diet by bartering excess flour for other foods. In addition, they could sell or exchange their food tickets without the necessity of working an extra task to acquire the money to do so. The labourers also preferred uncooked food because they did not have to pause midday to eat a meal. They rightly felt that an hour's break which would have accompanied a cooked midday meal would have been appended to the working

day rather than deducted from it. For these reasons the men themselves opposed cooked food. SSE had never, however, shown itself to be over-concerned with the effect of its policies on the work-force. Thus its apparent concern for the workers' reaction to cooked food needs to be explained.

Although labour was directly coerced into wage work by the colonial authorities private companies were still obliged to maintain recruiters and at least go through the motions of engaging labour independently. In practice, going through the motions usually amounted to picking up a contingent of men at the 'concentration' held outside the district administrative offices. There was always the danger, however, that the unwillingness of men from an area to go to a particular firm might have resulted in an enquiry into conditions in the work-place by the more enlightened colonial officials, and/or that administrators might have insisted on more rigorous recruiting by the firm. In other words, the more men who were prepared to sign up with the company directly, or as a result of the 'concentration' the less interference from the authorities, the less work for recruiters, and of course, as a result, the less the expense. There was no point in SSE denying its own interests simply because they coincided with the interests of the workers.

Like its policy over the organisation of work and payment, SSE's food policy was dictated by the primary need to reduce the cost of labour. To this end SSE's food policy contained three principal elements. Firstly, the company sought to secure a cheap supply of foodstuffs from the local peasantry. This it did either directly

through the trading stores of its subsidiary company or indirectly through third parties. Secondly, SSE tried to exclude more expensive items of food from the diet. Not only, therefore, did the firm avoid giving the foods stipulated by law; a law which was weighted in the employer's favour, but it also resisted changes in the law designed to improve the quality of the diet. This it did in the full knowledge that the work force was under-nourished. When SSE was unable to avoid implementing new legislation it introduced token changes to pacify the authorities. In this respect the company's policy is strikingly similar to the policy it pursued with regard to 'coloured and assimilated' workers, (see Chapter V). When these tactics failed SSE made covert threats to the authorities, implying that it would cut back the production of sugar. Thirdly, SSE distributed the rations in the most economical way. Despite certain advantages accruing from the provision of cooked food SSE persisted in the distribution of uncooked rations. Apart from the savings made on kitchens, cooks and the like, the distribution of uncooked rations at the end of the day meant that only men who had completed the task demanded of them were given food. By ensuring, in this way, that that part of the indirect wage represented by food was only paid to labour engaged directly in production, SSE cut wages to a level related to the direct subsistence needs of the individual workers during the contract period. Yet, this was not the only advantage of distributing uncooked food. By withholding food, and hence that part of the wage represented by the daily ration, from workers who had worked but nevertheless failed to complete the stipulated task, SSE established an additional incentive to regular task completion.

It is in relation to this aspect of the company's

policy that the second object of a monotonous diet becomes clear. Workers could barely survive on the food provided by the company. If they wished to vary their diet they had to work to earn the weekly cash bonus. This was then used, in part, at least, to purchase items lacking in the diet; items which could most easily be purchased in the company's stores. Through the stores and the mark-up on the goods sold, SSE recovered part of the money paid out in bonuses. By allowing workers to sell their food discs in the same stores, SSE reduced the overall cost of rations since the price of the items exchanged for the discs already included a margin of profit for the company.

At no time, except over the issue of cooked food, did SSE show any concern for the labour force. Even here the company's 'concern' was motivated primarily by its own self-interest. Like pack-animals, workers at SSE had to be fed. They were fed just enough to keep them alive, for unlike pack animals, from SSE's point of view the working life of a labourer was approximately six months. After six months he was replaced by another man. The long term effects of the inadequate diet offered were of little interest to SSE. Similarly, as far as SSE was concerned, the quality of life on the plantations themselves was irrelevant. The company's primary, and indeed, only consideration, was to derive as much profit as it could from the exploitation of the labour force. By reducing expenditure on food it helped to fulfill this aim.

NOTES

(1) There are, of course, many instances where housing and other non-money wages are also provided by the capitalist even where the labour force is fully-proletarianised. For a discussion of themes related to this see Philip Corrigan, "Feudal Relics or Capitalist Monuments?: The Dialectics of Unfree Labour and the Division and Circulation of (the Commodity) Labour-power. An Excursion." (Durham University, Political Economy Group, May, 1975).

(2) SSE Ar., File 287, Povoação Comercial Luabo, Luabo Trading Stores, CBRH to Thurnheer, 1 Dec. 1942, No. 189/42.

(3) SSE Ar., File 287, MT to Col. Hornung, 14 Jan. 1942, No. 9/42, Private Series, CCM Finance.

(4) SSE Ar., File 153, Sugar Sales on the Zambesi, MT to Col. C.B.R. Hornung, 29 Jan. 1943, No. 14/43, Raw Sugar Sales to Natives. See also: SSE Ar., File 153, MT to Col. C.B.R. Hornung, 28 Dec. 1943, No. 122/43 Private, Raw Sugar Sales on the Zambesi.

(5) SSE Ar., File 153, MT to Hornung, 28 Dec. 1943, op. cit.; SSE Ar., File 153, MT to Manager CCM, 9 Oct. 1943, No. 168/43 MGT, Re: Meeting at Administrator of Mutarara's on 7th Oct.

(6) Asians dominated the trade of the interior of Zambézia Province despite attempts by the government in the 1940s to break their control of trade and boost European competition. "The expansion of Asian commerce, in whose hands almost all trade with the natives is concentrated, has greatly contributed to the situation where the development of European commerce, principally outside the major urban centres, has not gone beyond one or two stores in one or two localities of the Province." The writer added that since 1944 the government had refused to grant licences to Asians who wished to open new stores or to sell their stores to other Asians. (GOV. Q, Col. de Moç., Prov. da Zambézia, Relatório do Governador, Capitão da Infantaria, César Maria de Serpa Rosa, Respeitante ao Período de 4 de Maio de 1943 a 31 de Dezembro de 1947, p. 194). In his 1958 Report the Governor of Zambézia remarked on the effects of this policy. "On the nationalisation of trade, if on the one hand we see an increase of 162 shops belonging to national [Portuguese or Portuguese-origin] traders, between 1954 and 1958 we note, on the other hand, that there were 22 fewer stores in Asian hands" (GOV. Q, Rep. Port., Prov. de Moç., Governo da Zambézia, Relatório do Governador do Distrito, 1.1.1958 - 31.12.1958, p. 297). (Translation J.H.)

(7) SSE Ar., File 153, MT to A.F. Souza, Quelimane, 13 Nov. 1944, No. 75/44 Reservada. The large sales of raw sugar on the Zambesi and the CCM's high turnover meant that the Asian traders had to purchase sugar if they wished to attract customers. They were only able to buy sugar at wholesale prices from the CCM if they purchased quantities over a ton, and then they had to pay in cash on the spot (SSE Ar., File 153, MT to CCM, 9 Oct. 1943, op. cit.).

(8) SSE Ar., File 153, MT General Manager to Hornung and Co. 24 Jan. 1945, No. 39/45, Sugar Sales on the Zambesi.

(9) SSE Ar., File 153, MT to Col. C.B.R. Hornung, 29 Jan. 1943, No. 12/43, Raw Sugar Sales to Natives.

(10) SSE Ar., File 153, MT General Manager to Hornung and Son, 28 Sep. 1945, No. 443/45 G.M., Sugar Sales on the Zambesi; SSE AR., File 153, MT General Manager to Hornung & Co., 8 Oct. 1945, No. 458/45 G.M., Sugar Sales on the Zambesi.

(11) SSE Ar., File 287, MT to Col. Hornung, Luabo, 19 Oct. 1950, No. 196/50, Private Series, Native Foodstuffs from Morrumbala District.

(12) SSE Ar., File 153, Gerente da Propriedade de Morromeu J.E. Adkins, to General Manager, Luabo, 16 June 1958, No. 45/58 Mgt.

(13) SSE Ar., File 287, Ladislau Batalha Junior, Circunscrição Admin. de Mopeia, to Gerente da CCM Mopeia, 13 May 1958, No. 336/D/7. (Translation J.H.)

(14) DSAF, Repartição de Agrícultura, Delegação de Quelimane, Trabalho Apresentado à Comissão Encaregada de Estudar as Questões Indígenas no Distrito de Quelimane, pelo Engenheiro Agrónomo Delegado, Monteiro Grilo, 17 Jan. 1927, p. 6. (Translation J.H.)

(15) SSE Ar., File 44, Annual Cotton Reports, Final Cotton Report, Season 1941, Luabo, 30 Nov. 1942.

(16) SSE Ar., File 287, MT to Hornung and Co., 6 Feb. 1954, No. 74/54 G.M., Re: CCM Affairs, Future Policy.

(17) See Chapter IV.

(18) SSE Ar., File 287, MT to Col. Hornung, 19 Oct. 1950, No. 196/50, Private Series, Native Foodstuffs from Morrumbala District.

(19) SSE Ar., File 287, CBRH to Thurnheer, 1 Dec. 1942, No. 189/42; SSE Ar., File 287, Memo for General Manager, Ref. Col. CBR Hornung's letter 189/42 dated 1 Dec. 1942.

(20) SSE Ar., File 287, CBRH to Thurnheer, 1 Dec. 1942, op. cit.

(21) ibid.

(22) SSE Ar., File 287, MT to Col. Hornung, 12 Feb. 1943, No. 16/43, Private, CCM.

(23) SSE Ar., File 287, CBRH to Thurnheer, 1 Dec. 1942, op. cit.

(24) SSE Ar., File 287, MT to Col. Hornung, 12 Feb. 1943, op. cit.

(25) SSE Ar., File 287, MT to Col. Hornung, 19 Oct. 1950, op. cit.

(26) ibid.

(27) ibid.; SSE Ar., File 117C, Native Foodstuffs, Max Thurnheer. Writing from Rome, 14 Jan. 1953, Native Foodstuffs.

(28) SSE Ar., File 287, MT to Col. Hornung, 19 Oct. 1950, op. cit.

(29) ibid.

(30) SSE Ar., File 287, CBRH to Thurnheer, 2 Nov. 1950, No. 271/50.

(31) "The reason given for the increased turnover is that the bumper cotton crop has put much money into the hands of natives... (but we are inclined to think that what Huber [Manager, CCM] says is of equal importance) i.e. competition from other traders has been heavily reduced as they have insufficient stocks. The reason for this in turn, is that they have not had anybody to back them in finance, such as has been the case with the C.C.M. backed by the S.S.E." (SSE Ar., File 287, CBRH to General Manager, 30 Dec. 1941, No. 380/41 'General' (H. and Co. Ltd.), CCM Finances.

(32) SSE Ar., File 117C, Max Thurnheer from Rome, 14 Jan. 1953, op. cit.

(33) SSE Ar., File 117C, Gerente Geral SSE Ltd. to Lopes Irmãos Lda., Megaza, Morrumbala, 30 June 1950, No. 1431/50/HO, Milho da Vossa Plantação.

(34) SSE Ar., File 117C, MT, Luabo, 1 Dec. 1951, Native Foodstuffs.

(35) B.M. Collin, J.P. Hornung: A Family Portrait (The Orpington Press Ltd., Orpington, Kent, [1970]), p. 159 and pp. 161-162.

(36) SSE Ar., File 117C, MT to A.A. Azevedo, c/o Sociedade Chá Oriental, Milange, 23 May 1952, No. 1046/52, HO., Price of Maize.

(37) SSE Ar., File 117C, Gerente Geral SSE Ltd. to Lopes Irmãos, 30 June 1950, op. cit., SSE ordered 200 tons of maize from Lopes Bros. on this occasion; SSE Ar., File 117C, Max Thurnheer from Rome, 14 Jan. 1953, op. cit., on this occasion, SSE's General Manager wrote that several hundred tons of maize had been purchased from Lopes Bros.

(38) SSE Ar., File 153, J.P. Kemball to London, 25 Sep. 1972, No. 380/72 Private, Sugar Sales, Milange Area.

(39) SSE Ar., File 117C, Max Thurnheer from Rome, 14 Jan. 1953, op. cit.

(40) ibid.; It was illegal to transfer stocks (of food) from the north to the south bank of the river. The Beira Maize Board aimed to control all foodstuff transactions on the south side of the river, although they lacked the organisation to do so effectively. "They are clearly out to track us down for any illegal transfers on our part and which were never contemplated." (SSE Ar., File 117C, MT, 1 Dec. 1951).

(41) See, for example, Relatório do Governador (Zambézia)...1943...1947, op. cit., p. 160, Tabela dos Preços Fixados nos Mercados Locais, no Ano de 1947, para a Compra e Venda de Géneros de Produção Indígena.

(42) SSE Ar., File 117C, MT to Manager SSE Mopeia, 25 Mar. 1952, No. 33/52 Mgt., Minimum Prices for Native Foodstuffs.

(43) SSE Ar., File 117C, MT to A.A. Azevedo, 23 May 1952, op. cit.

(44) ibid.

(45) SSE Ar., File 117C, Max Thurnheer from Rome, 14 Jan. 1953, op. cit.

(46) RTI Art. 211, p. 63.

(47) SSE Ar., File 208, Salt, passim.

(48) SSE Ar., File 133, Recruiting, Quelimane and Angonia (1930-1939), A.A. Azevedo, SSE Mopea to Admin. of Circ. Civil do Zambeze, Mopeia, 6 June 1937.

(49) Relatorio do Governador (Zambézia)...1943...1947, op. cit., p.187.

(50) DSAF, Prov. de Moç., Repartição de Agrícultura, Relatório da Delegação de Quelimane (Primeiros Elementos para o Esboço Económico-Agrícola do Distrito de Quelimane) 1924 pp. 67-71.

(51) Relatório do Governador (Zambézia)...1943...1947, op. cit., p. 184. The Report states that of this total SSE owned 20,250 head of cattle. SSE's own files, on the other hand state that SSE owned 4632 head of cattle with an additional herd of 70 head in Angonia (SSE Ar., File 193, Cattle, 1935/48, Luabo, 21 Feb. 1946, SSE Ltd., Mapa Geral da Existência de Gados e as suas Percentagens 1946.)

(52) SSE Ar., File 193C, Cattle, A.E. Dorman, Some notes on the Livestock Section of SSE Ltd. July-August 1971, Appendix B, Some Notes on the Cattle of SSE (Based Almost Entirely on Information Supplied by the Cattle Manager). See note 53 for the reason this slaughter must have been for European consumption.

(53) SSE Ar., File 193A, Cattle, 1949-1958, NHDB to General Manager 12 Nov. 1957, No. 551/57 General (H and Co. Ltd), Grazing land for cattle; SSE Ar., File 193A, DA Acting General Manager to Mssrs. Hornung and Sons, 17 Dec. 1957, No. 731/57 GM, Grazing Land for Cattle. The letter states that to issue 200 grammes of meat three times a week to 8000 'natives' the company would need to slaughter 30 animals weekly (average weight 160 kilos), that is, 1,560 animals a year. "To do this, and also slaughter approximately 1,140 head of cattle for the staff (Luabo and Marromeu) we must increase our herds to about 15,000 head. In 1960 about 100 head could be slaughtered for consumption by the natives, and by 1966 the goal of 1,560 could be obtained."

(54) Relatório do Governador (Zambézia)...1943...1947, op. cit., p.189.

(55) ibid., p. 190.

(56) SSE Ar., File 117C, Max Thurnheer from Rome, 14 Jan. 1953, op.cit.

(57) SSE Ar., File 117C, J.E. Adkins Gerente da Feitoria Marromeu to General Manager 26 Aug. 1953, No. 72/53 Mgt., Dried Meat Supplies.

(58) SSE Ar., File 133, to Chefe da Secção dos Serviços e Negócios Indígenas, Direcção Provincial da Admin. Civil, Quelimane, n.d., n.n., /but probably 1937 since the letter is filed with the 1937 correspondence and relates to the same matters/. In addition workers received 80 grammes of dried meat and 150 grammes of dry fish per week.

(59) SSE Ar., File 204, Native Diet and Rations, P. Viana Rodrigues SSE to Admin. Concelho do Chinde, 18 Mar. 1942, No. 78/42/HO, Notes from the Luabo Chefe de Posto Transcribing Circular No. 285/B/8 from the RCNI Fixing the Rations to be Given in the Following way and to be Practised from the Beginning of March. cf. RTI, Art. 211, p. 63.

(60) SSE Ar., File 204, P. Viana Rodrigues to Admin. Concelho do Chinde, 18 Mar. 1942, op. cit.

(61) SSE Ar., File 94, Labour for Marromeu, SSE Ltd., Mão-de-Obra, 1942, "the shortages of meat and fish are overcome by the provision of sugar, beans and groundnuts..." (Translation J.H.)

(62) SSE Ar., File 204, Memo. from General Manager to M.R. Teles, 22 Mar. 1961, Salary Changes 1952 to Present and Rations Changes 1952 to Present.

(63) ibid.

(64) SSE Ar., File 347, African Policy, Cantinas Acampamentos, Public Address System, NHDuB to Col. J.D. Hornung OBE MC, 27 Mar. 1962, No. 112/62, Private Series, Policy.

(65) SSE Ar., File 204, Abel da Costa Ferreira Admin. do Concelho do Chinde to Gerente Geral SSE, 26 Jan. 1942, No. 129/B/15, Enclosing Circular No. 185/B/15 of 7 Jan. 1942 from the Direcção Provincial de Admin. Civil.

(66) ibid.

(67) SSE Ar., File 204, P. Viana Rodrigues to Admin. Concelho do Chinde, 18 Mar. 1942, op. cit. (Translation J.H.) The RTI stated that "the food will be made up of goods of good quality and whenever possible from those to which the natives are accustomed... The daily ration... can be modified by the Governor General according to the preferences of the natives and local resources..." (Art. 210, pp. 62-63). (Translation J.H.)

(68) SSE Ar., File 204, P. Viana Rodrigues to Admin. Concelho do Chinde, 18 Mar. 1942, op. cit.

(69) ibid. cf. RTI, Art. 211, 1°, p. 63, "...it must be understood that the distribution of fruits or other products which grow almost spontaneously in the work place can never be considered as part of the ration." (Translation J.H.)

(70) SSE Ar., File 204, P. Viana Rodrigues to Admin. Concelho do Chinde, 18 Mar. 1942, op. cit.

(71) ibid.

(72) Repartição Central dos Negócios Indígenas, Alimentação dos Trabalhadores, Arts. 210, 211, 212 do RTI, LM, 16 July 1945.

(73) SSE Ar., File 204, SSE and H. and Co. London to General Manager Luabo, 14 Mar. 1946, No. 851/46 General, H and Co. Ltd., Native Rations, Enclosing: Macdonald, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, Ross Institute of Tropical Hygiene, 12 Mar. 1946 and AWS Douthwaite, London, SSE and Hornung and Co. to General Manager Luabo, 12 Nov. 1945, Tropical Ulcers (Reporting on Macdonald's findings).

(74) SSE Ar., File 204, REH to Major J.D. Hornung, 15 Dec. 1956, No. 267/56 Private Series, Composition of Rations to Native Labourers, Enclosing: Assistant General Manager Luabo, 14 Dec. 1956, Native Rations.

(75) ibid.

(76) SSE Ar., File 204, [REH] SSE to Governador Geral da Prov. de Mocambique, 15 Dec. 1956.

(77) SSE Ar., File 204, REH to Hornung, 15 Dec. 1956, op. cit.

(78) SSE Ar., File 204, NHDB to Callado, 25 May 1957, Estritamente Confidencial, Composição de Raçõ̃es Indígenas.

(79) ibid. (Translation J.H.)

(80) SSE Ar., File 204, NHDB to Col. Hornung, 25 May 1957, No. 85/57 Private Series, Composition of Native Rations.

(81) SSE Ar., File 347, NHDB to Col. J.D. Hornung, 27 Mar. 1962, op. cit.; SSE Ar., File 204, JPK Gerente Geral to Presidente do Instituto do Trabalho, LM, 31 Oct. 1970, No. 648/70/HO. The letter asks for permission to alter the diet issued to the labour force because of the difficulties of obtaining certain items, e.g. fruit and vegetables, in the hot season. In the diet appended to the request no mention was made of fruit at all and vegetables were only provided when they were available.

(82) RTI Art. 210, op. cit.

(83) SSE Ar., File 347, NHDB to Col. Hornung, 27 Mar. 1962, op. cit.

(84) ibid.

(85) SSE Ar., File 94, Labour Questionnaire Reply, H.N. Usher Marromeu 2 Nov. 1931.

(86) SSE Ar., File 184, Native Labour Organisation, Hut Tax, P. Viana Rodrigues to Admin. Concelho do Chinde, 30 Mar. 1942, No. 85/42/HO, Ref. Nota No. 372/15/2 de 14 do Março de 1942, Resposta à Nota da RCNI sobre o Pagamento dos Salários aos Indígenas.

(87) SSE Ar., File 204, Native Food, Morromeu and Luabo, n.d., n.n., [filed with 1953 correspondence].

(88) RCNI, LM, 16 July 1945, op. cit.

(89) SSE Ar., File 204, MT to Estate Manager M/meu/Caia, 27 Mar. 1947, No. 18/47 MGT, Issue of Cooked Food by Way of Separate Early Morning Ration to Your Labourers.

(90) SSE Ar., File 204, Luabo, 9 Sep. 1947, Circular, Alimentação dos Serviçais. The flour ration of adults was reduced from 900 to 650 grammes and of boys from 650 to 500 grammes.

(91) SSE Ar., File 204, HNU General Field Manager to General Manager, 18 Feb. 1947, Native Labour, Cooked Rations Versus Issue of Raw Food.

(92) SSE Ar., File 204, MT to Estate Manager M'meu/Caia, 27 Mar. 1947, op. cit.

(93) SSE Ar., File 204, HNU to General Manager, 18 Feb. 1947, op. cit.

(94) SSE Ar., File 118, Native Compound, MT to Estate Manager M'meu/Caia, 14 July 1947, Beira Governor's Official Visit to Marromeu; SSE Ar., File 204, MT to Hornung and Co. Ltd. London, 4 Sep. 1947, No. 387/47 GM, Cooked Rations for Native Labour.

(95) SSE Ar., File 204, DA to NHDB 2 Dec. 1957, No. 206/57 Private Series, Native Rations, Dr. Miranda Guedes's visit.

(96) SSE Ar., File 204, [DA] Luabo, 12 Dec. 1957, No. 218/57 Private Series, Native Rations.

(97) SSE Ar., File 347, NHDB to Col. Hornung, 27 Mar. 1962, op. cit.

(98) ibid.

(99) SSE Ar., File 204, JPK to Instituto do Trabalho, LM, 31 Oct. 1970, op. cit.

(100) Interview with L. Duarte, General Field Manager, SSE, Luabo, 4 Mar. 1977.

(101) SSE Ar., File 204, HNU to General Manager, 18 Feb. 1947, op. cit. cf. Charles van Onselen, Chibaro: African Mine Labour in Southern Rhodesia, 1900 - 1933 (Pluto Press, London, 1976), p. 51, note 137. Readers interested in comparing the diet issued on the Rhodesian mines and the mines' food policy with that of SSE might refer to van Onselen, pp. 40-45.

(102) SSE Ar., File 204, HNU to General Field Manager, 18 Feb. 1947, op. cit.

(103) ibid.

(104) ibid.

(105) ibid.

(106) See Chapter II.

(107) SSE Ar., File 204, NHDuB to Col. C.B.R. Hornung, 13 Apr. 1957, No. 58/57 Private Series, Food Tickets, Enclosing Copy of Representation We Made to the Chinde Admin. which will be Passed to the Quelimane Governor.

(108) ibid.

(109) SSE Ar., File 204, HNU to General Manager, 18 Feb. 1947, op. cit.

CHAPTER VII

HOUSING AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS AT SENA SUGAR ESTATES

By law private employers were obliged to provide housing for workers whose home was not in the immediate vicinity of the work-place.(1) At SSE the housing provided consisted of huts grouped in compounds among the cane fields. Partly as a result of the large numbers of workers employed and partly as a result of the type of short-life housing provided, the numbers of huts needed was high. This in turn meant that the numbers of men employed on housing construction and maintenance was high. For instance, in 1931, a standard hut, consisting of a frame of wooden poles covered by thatched straw, required 22 men for initial construction.(2) Over the three year period of the hut's life a total of 32 men were needed to build and maintain the hut.(3) The break-down of labour employed on hut-building and maintenance on the three estates was as follows for the year 1931:

	Mopeia	Marromeu	Luabo	Total(4)
Head boys			3	3
Carpenters	64		46	110
Bricklayers		45		45
Gangers			325	325
Beach gang				72
Unskilled men	14,666	16,258	22,342	53,266
boys		71		71
Total	14,730	16,446	22,716	53,892
Daily average	47.2	52.7	72.8	172.9

The estimated cost of 53,892 labour days was £2,500, or, as the writer of the report put it, the interest at 6 per cent on a capital of £41,666.13.4.(5)

Besides the cost of employing labour which did not contribute directly to production, investment in housing (building materials, social and sanitary facilities) was also an investment which did not offer any direct return. Whereas the food provided for the labour force at SSE was only given to men who produced the daily task demanded of them, housing had to be provided whether the men completed their tasks, and indeed, whether they worked, or not. Hence, even more than in the case of food, it was in SSE's interests to reduce its expenditure on housing as far as possible. This chapter will examine the ways in which SSE tried to limit its investment in housing. The first part of the chapter will examine the company's policies with regard to the permanent compounds on the plantations. The second part will look at SSE's approach to the problem of the transit camps it was obliged to maintain on the major routes to the estates.

WORKERS' HOUSING ON THE PLANTATIONS

Building Materials: the Choice of Housing

The typical hut of the 1930s was the thatched straw hut described above. Grass and reeds were gathered around the plantations. Most of the wooden support poles were taken from timber felled in the forests of SSE's concession. The cost of building materials was, therefore low. However, against the advantage of cheap building materials several disadvantages had to be weighed. Firstly, the wooden support poles were susceptible to attacks from white ants and had to be replaced frequently.(6) Secondly, as local forests were depleted of wood SSE would have to seek wood from

further afield and transport costs would increase.(7) Thirdly, straw huts required continual maintenance and only had a life of three years, after which they had to be completely rebuilt.(8) Fourthly, the men occupying the huts contributed to their deterioration. According to the Luabo Estate Manager the greatest damage to huts was caused by the occupants pulling out the roofing poles to use as firewood.(9)

As a result of the disadvantages of the straw huts, as early as 1931, SSE sought alternatives. One possibility was to use all-iron portable buildings. This idea was rejected because it was felt that the huts would probably be too hot for the climate.(10) Another possibility was to use metal-frames covered with straw which was held in place by binding wire. This solution, it was felt, would prevent damage to the huts, since the binding wire would make it difficult for the men to pull the straw from the sides and roof, and the metal frames could not be used as firewood. Given an occasional coat of tar these huts could last for many years. Considerable savings could therefore be made on the cost of maintaining these huts.(11)

SSE's Managing Director, with whom these possibilities were discussed was not, however, convinced that the metal-framed huts were cheaper than wooden-framed huts. Writing in 1931 he pointed out that the original cost of a straw hut in Luabo was 14 shillings. The cost of maintaining the hut for three years amounted to 18 shillings. The total cost of a grass hut (building and maintenance) for three years was 107 shillings. At Marromeu the original grass

hut cost 16 shillings to build. Repairs over three years cost 20 shillings. The total cost of a straw hut for ten years was 120 shillings.(12) On the other hand the cost of an iron-framed building amounted to 115 shillings and eight pence for ten years; 74 shillings and eight pence to purchase, transport and erect the frame and thatching at four shillings a year. The Managing Director also pointed out that whereas the calculations estimated labour costs at a shilling a day, they were in fact less and nearer to nine pence. Thus, iron-framed buildings were even more expensive than his calculations suggested since their price was fixed irrespective of local labour costs.(13) Nevertheless, in 1931, 66 iron-framed huts were built, apparently on an experimental basis, at a total cost of £234.18.3.(14)

A third alternative to the straw hut was a brick dwelling. However there were objections to this type of construction on health grounds. Firstly, white ants soon entered the walls which crumbled away and became a source of infection and lodging for insects of all sorts. Secondly, the floors of brick huts, which also harboured insects, could not be changed, whereas the floors of straw huts could be changed by resiting the structure.(15) Nevertheless, brick huts had one major advantage over iron-framed huts. They could be constructed entirely from local materials and paid for in escudos. Iron-frames, on the other hand, had to be imported, and a new currency decree made this disadvantageous.(16) SSE's local management therefore decided to build 100 brick huts on an experimental basis in 1933 despite the health risks.(17) However, four years later the experiment was condemned as a failure, largely on health grounds,

and the question of iron-framed buildings was again raised.(18) Yet, by the time a decision was taken to erect more permanent dwellings using imported frames the price of the latter had risen.(19) Thereafter the Second World War and the general difficulties of obtaining materials seems to have led to a postponement on building plans.(20)

After the war the company continued to discuss alternative types of housing, but it also continued to prevaricate and postpone a decision. Although the cost of straw huts rose as labour costs increased(21) the high initial capital outlay on new housing seems to have been the major reason for the lack of new building programmes. This, at least, was the reason advanced by the Administrator of Chinde for the company's lack of action. He noted in 1952 that all previous administrative reports had remarked on the provisional nature of the accommodation provided by SSE. Yet despite these repeated criticisms in 1952 all of the 2350 huts on the nine Luabo compounds were made of straw. SSE justified this situation on the grounds that it could not construct more permanent dwellings because of the nature of the subsoil and the threat of frequent flooding. The Administrator felt that this was simply an excuse.

> In my opinion and looking at the problem superficially, it seems to me that the justification is a mere expedient for avoiding greater expenses. In truth, 2,350 brick-built huts... could not, I think be built for less than 11,750 contos; that is, taking as the basis (of the calculation) a minimum estimate of 5000 escudos per hut.(22)

SSE continued to prevaricate until 1954 when the Governor of Zambézia finally insisted on improvements in accommodation.(23) In that year SSE gave an undertaking to build permanent housing for

its workers. The programme was to begin in 1955 with 300 huts a year until all the straw huts on the Luabo compounds were replaced.(24) Yet, eight years later, in 1963, Hornung and Company "regretted" that the old-fashioned straw hut still predominated on both estates. SSE's Management Company felt unable to improve the amenities of the African labour force unless it received higher prices for its sugar.

> The SSE's contribution to the evolution of possibly the largest concentration of labour in Mozambique is coming to a standstill because the value of their produce does not suffice to meet the additional expenditure which we all know should be undertaken in the general interest. One simply must presume that the Government have weighed up the facts and considered that there is no great urgency to increase the value of the sugar produced despite the general advantages which the increased profitability of the company would produce.(25)

On only two of the eight Luabo compounds and one of the seven Marromeu compounds were there any brick huts. Major rebuilding was out of the question because of the company's limited budget. As SSE's General Manager remarked: "We cannot indulge in this kind of investment without reducing costs to the very minimum."(26) Thus, despite the inadequacy of the straw huts and the existence of more suitable types of housing most workers at SSE in the mid 1960s were still living in huts similar to those occupied by their predecessors in the 1930s. Notwithstanding frequent plans to replace the straw huts nothing was done to improve housing on the estates because improving housing ultimately meant increasing labour costs, and hence the overall cost of production.

The Lay-out of the Compounds and the Provision of General Facilities

Between 1930 and 1960 the number of compounds on SSE's plantations varied as some were demolished and resited and others were enlarged or reduced in size. Over the 30 year period however there were between six and nine compounds on each estate.(27) The numbers of men living in each of the compounds also varied. For example, in 1939, SSE's doctor stated that there were 3500 people living on one of the Marromeu compounds.(28) In 1956 there were 609 workers living on the Caoxe compound in Luabo, although the total numbers were probably higher since some workers were accompanied by their families.(29) In 1965 it was estimated that on average 1000 workers lived on each of the Luabo compounds.(30)

The huts on the compounds were arranged in straight lines at a set distance from each other.(31) The dimensions of the huts changed little over the years. For example, in 1931, a round straw hut had a diameter of 12 feet. The walls were six feet high. The conical roof gave the hut a maximum height of 12 feet where the roof reached an apex in the centre of the hut. Within this space five men were expected to sleep and live out the free hours of the contract.(32) In 1944, eight men were housed in a hut whose diameter was approximately 16 feet (4.20 metres) despite the fact that the law forbade the lodging of more than six men in a hut and insisted on a surface area of four metres per man.(33) The brick huts built in the 1950s had a surface area of 16 square metres.(34) There is no record of how many men they housed but since they appear to have been based on the provincial governor's recommended design it

is reasonable to assume that they accommodated the numbers he suggested, namely, five or six men.(35)

Workers whose wives accompanied them to the estates were given a hut to themselves of the same type as that given to single workers. Only in the 1960s were houses specifically designed for men with families. Originally these were planned to have an inside area of four times three metres. However, anxious to reduce the cost of these houses SSE asked the builder for a discount price. He agreed to build 60 houses for 15,800 escudos each instead of the original 19,200 escudos, providing one or two modifications were made. These included a reduction in size to 3.50 times three metres.(36)

No furniture was provided inside the huts. Indeed, the straw huts had neither hearths nor windows, although both were later provided in the brick huts.(37) Not until the 1960s was mosquito netting placed over the windows of huts that had them, despite the fact that malaria was endemic in the region.(38) The floors of the huts seem to have consisted of beaten earth.(39) It is not clear whether SSE provided straw mats for the workers to sleep on or whether the men brought mats to the estates with them, but whichever, it was only in the 1960s that metal beds were provided.

In conformity with the Código de Trabalho Rural, which in 1962 replaced the Código (and Regulamento) do Trabalho dos Indígenas, SSE ordered 2000 beds made of a sheet of solid steel.(40) No mattresses were provided for the new beds. The provision of mattresses was not written into the law and SSE felt unable to provide them without formal compulsion. "No action whatsoever

should be taken about providing mattresses unless we are absolutely forced to do so, as the cost is so high."(41) The beds alone cost £30,000 for something under 20,000 workers, with mattresses as well the total cost would have risen to over £100,000.(42) Instead, SSE investigated the possibility of using stretched tarpaulins or beds without mattresses. This the company did without informing the authorities, in case the latter insisted on the provision of mattresses.(43)

By law kitchens were also supposed to have been provided where six to 12 workers could cook together.(44) However, the law was ignored and there were few kitchens on the compounds. Writing in 1962 about changes to be implemented on the compounds in line with the government's new labour policy, one of SSE's Directors noted that apart from two kitchens in Luabo and two in Marromeu which had been improved in preparation for a visit by inspectors of the International Labour Organisation, the kitchens on the other compounds were a disgrace. He added:

> All kitchens should be completely mosquito-proofed with a cement floor which can be washed daily and have a sheeted roof. Within a year of the thatched roof being renewed an endless stream of insects and dried grass is falling into the food being cooked below.(45)

In general the men were expected to cook their rations wherever they could, either inside or outside the huts.

Not until 1962 was the idea of providing electric light mooted. The decision, was, however, postponed, although management recognised that electric lighting would become a necessity within five years.(46) In 1962 one of SSE's Directors wrote that illumination

could be disregarded for the time being "because rising at four in the mornings the compound population is perfectly happy to eat at dusk and sleep immediately after."(47)

There were few trees on the compounds. Some planting of fruit trees had been ordered in the 1940s following government pressure but little was done after this. Apart from a grass hut where workers could meet, a weekly scribe who read and wrote letters for workers on some compounds, and the occasional showing of a heavily censored film, there were no recreational facilities provided. Workers were expected to work, eat and sleep and to make their own amusements if they had either the time or inclination for leisure activities.(48)

Sanitary Arrangements on the Compounds

It was not until the 1960s that SSE seriously turned its attention to providing adequate running water on the compounds, although the company's management had long been aware of the inadequacy of the arrangements that existed. For instance, in 1943, following a general inspection of the compounds on the Marromeu Estate SSE's General Manager declared himself surprised at their poor state of repair. He placed the blame for this situation on the company's management rather than on the compound manager and ordered that things must change completely.(49) The General Manager recognised that all the work could not be completed in one year but insisted that the problem of water supply was to be tackled immediately. Bore holes were to be sunk and concrete cement rings were to be

placed around the wells.(50) The General Manager then ordered a report on the compounds and called for an estimate of the work to be done. He listed the following as priority areas: water supply, suitable drainage, brick huts for first aid assistance, the planting of fruit trees and strips of pineapples and the building of a limited number of latrines.(51)

In 1945 the list of necessary repairs and an estimate of their cost was presented to the General Manager. Four out of the six Marromeu compounds required reconstruction. Three required wells and two needed to be resited, one because of lack of water in part of the compound and overcrowding, the other because there was no water at all on the compound. Water was brought to the compound in a tank. Four compounds needed levelling and drainage. The other improvements were those outlined by the General Manager in 1943. The total cost of the necessary work was estimated at £2,330.(52) Despite this estimate, in 1962, the water supply on the compounds was still inadequate. In some instances one well supplied the whole compound.(53) Two years later the situation was little different. Only two compounds had water laid on with drinking fountains and sinks for washing clothes. The other 13 compounds on the two estates still relied on wells and consequently had neither drinking fountains nor sinks.(54)

Following a visit to the estates by the government Labour Inspectors in 1962 SSE's management was obliged to improve the sanitary arrangements on the compounds. Referring to the problem of water supply Major Du Boulay, in a letter to the company's Managing

Director, remarked that each compound should be provided with a well. The well could be supplied with a hand driven pump since there were a number of men on the compounds who did not work in the fields and who could therefore maintain the water supply.(55) It is instructive to compare this observation with one made earlier by the company's General Manager. Writing to the engineer in charge of building a new transit camp at Mopeia in 1959 he instructed that an engine-driven pump was to be installed to supply the well. The water tank supplying the camp could only be filled in five hours with the existing hand pump. This was most inconvenient since at times there were "hundreds" of natives in the compound.(56)

The lack of piped water on the compounds meant that water for washing and lavatories which flushed were also not provided. For much of the period of the study men were expected to wash in rivers and streams and to defecate and urinate where they could. "We did not have latrines and we washed in the river... We fetched water from the River Mapancane. There were a lot of crocodiles there and many of us were eaten."(57) The testimony of these former workers at SSE is supported by the evidence of the company's own doctor. Referring to sanitary arrangements in the fields he noted in his report covering the period January to June 1939 that "some lavatories were improvised along the railway line, next to the cane fields, where the water flows relatively quickly towards the interior of the plantation and joins some other small rivers, in order not to leave the cane fields infected."(58) In the same year the doctor criticised the sanitary arrangements on the compound adjoining the Marromeu factory,

> The water of the Zambesi flows upstream and downstream from the factory almost imperceptibly in a slow backwash, accumulating for this reason a great quantity of organic matter etc., exactly in a spot super-inhabited by 3,500 natives. And it is in this water that the natives wash and according to their habits, after their ablutions wash their mouths!!!...(59)

In 1942 the same company doctor again criticised SSE. On this occasion he took the company to task over the complete lack of hygiene and sanitary facilities in the flour mill at Marromeu. He noted that the men worked 12 hour shifts in the mill. The shifts changed weekly so that the men worked one week of nights and the next of days. The night shift was locked in the mill and the supervisor kept the key. Having remarked on the obvious fire-risks attendant on such a procedure the doctor then pointed to some of the other dangers involved.

> If by chance any worker needs to defecate it is there that he does it using a sack or a rag (generally a sack) to keep the excrement until he has finished his shift... afterwards he is obliged to pick up the sack and throw it away.
>
> In cases where a worker has to pass water, it is obvious that he cannot go out. He has to do it there as well, but this cannot be picked up and thrown away when work is over because it is a liquid and therefore it stays inside the... building where there are tens of bags of flour... it is beyond understanding that a place where flour is milled, a product which is handled for human consumption, also serves as a urinal and a place for defecation.(60)

Not until the 1950s is further mention made of the provision of lavatories in SSE's records. However the evidence that emerges in that period suggests that during the intervening years little had changed. In 1956, for instance, a government inspection which

was initiated after the discovery of an "excessive" mortality rate at SSE, revealed the inadequacy of the sanitary arrangements on the estates. SSE was told to initiate a latrine-building campaign among the workforce and a design of a simple pit latrine with a grass shelter was sent to the company. In a revealing statement the Government Medical Officer wrote that firms which did not provide lavatory facilities for their workers would be reported to the authorities.(61)

The next reference to lavatories and washing facilities was made in 1962. Again, it seems that little had been done to improve the situation after the 1956 inspection. Referring to changes the company would have to introduce as a result of the Government's new policy towards African workers one of SSE's directors remarked that "money must be spent on lavatories and showers for the compounds." He added "This, however, is expenditure which has been legally necessary for some years but it has been put off by the company and the authorities have closed their eyes to the problem."(62) Elsewhere discussing the same matter the director reiterated this point. Sanitary arrangements depended on the legislation but this was not strictly enforced and itself depended on the personal interpretation of the senior medical officers who carried out inspections. He added, however, that following a visit from the ILO Inspectors SSE's arrangements had been criticised. The criticisms were valid. The latrines provided at SSE were "somewhat rustic" and inadequate in number. They were also often inconveniently sited, serving only one side of the compound.(63) The company would therefore have to make improvements. Legally one lavatory was supposed to be provided

for ten men. According to the Director this was far too many and also far too expensive an undertaking, for the compound population ranged fron 1000 to nought over the crop cycle. The Director therefore decided that lavatory accommodation for 300-400 men would be 'ample'. He added that if this was provided SSE would have more facilities than any other large employer of labour in Mozambique.(64) Since a decision had already been taken to provide 30 showers on each of the compounds(65) it was decided to adapt the "normal simple type of latrine" in the same building as the shower room. These would be sited in three blocks on each compound "taking account of the prevailing wind and drainage." Each block was to have its own well and manual pump and an adequate water supply was to be kept in the roof.(66) Elsewhere in an unsigned document written in the same year it was noted that the company would not be able to rely on wells to supply the showers and lavatories with water. Wells occasionally failed, even when there were enough for this purpose. Instead boreholes would have to be sunk which supplied overhead tanks through diesel operated pumps.(67) However, despite these plans, two years later in 1964, SSE's chief labour inspector wrote in his annual report that the Luabo compounds still did not have enough lavatories and one compound still had the old sort, namely a fenced area containing a pit in the earth.(68)

THE TRANSIT COMPOUNDS

Besides the permanent compounds situated on the estates SSE also maintained a number of transit camps along the main routes taken by workers on their journey to and from the plantations. By law

these camps had to be situated in places where large numbers of 'natives' normally gathered to await transport and to rest from their journey.(69) Apart from the injunction that the camps had to have "sufficient capacity for the shelter and lodging of workers in transit"(70) the law did not regulate the accommodation to be offered, nor did it discuss the sanitary facilities to be provided. Furthermore, the law governing the numbers of men to be housed in the same building was specifically waived in the case of transit camps.

> In the dwellings to be built a type of small detached house, arranged in regular lines, will be adopted, it not being permitted to house more than six workers in the same compartment, except in the case of camps for workers in transit or buildings designed to receive contingents who will be distributed to the different work-places.(71) (emphasis added)

The lack of legislation governing the conditions in transit camps meant that employers were not obliged to provide even the minimal facilities available in the permanent camps. The following two sections will examine the effects of this legislation, or rather the lack of it, on SSE's transit camps.

The Journey to the Estates

The outer radius of SSE's recruiting zone in Zambézia was about 320 kilometres from the estates as the crow flies. From the District capital of Angonia it was about 400 kilometres to Marromeu as the crow flies. By law private firms were obliged to use rail and river transport to carry their workers to and from the workplace if these means of transport were available.(72) Two rail lines were

used by SSE's recruiters. One took men from Angonia to Dona Ana in the Mutarara District where they transferred to the company's river steamers to complete their journey. The other took men from Mocuba to Nicoadala in Zambézia. Nevertheless men still had to walk from their own homes to the rail head and from Nicoadala to Mopeia if they came from central or northern Zambézia; a distance of approximately 120 kilometres.(73) Only in the 1940s were lorries introduced to take the workers between the main recruiting areas and the railway or steamers and the last leg of the journey from Nicoadala to Mopeia. However, the lorry service was unreliable. In part the weather was responsible. The dirt roads of the district were affected both by heavy rains during the wet season and intense heat during the dry season. Often impassable during the rains the roads were bumpy and dusty in the summer.(74) Hence, long after the lorry service was introduced there were often considerable delays in providing workers with transport, which not infrequently resulted in men walking part of the journey to and from the estates.(75)

One of the stretches of road most affected by the weather was that between Mopeia, where SSE's main reception camp was situated, and the railhead at Nicoadala. Here the introduction of lorries had led to the gradual running down of the transit camps which had formerly provided overnight shelter for workers who walked this stretch of the journey. By 1952 these camps were "in a very poor state of repair." Of the six camps,"grass sheds", along this stretch of the road only two had been purpose-built as compounds. The others were cotton markets whose installations had been modified to serve as overnight resting places for workers in transit.(76)

Another casualty of the introduction of the lorry service was the main transit camp at Nicoadala. The site on which this was to have been constructed had been abandoned by SSE after criticism on public health grounds.(77) In its place the company built a new camp some 12 kilometres from the town. However, the unreliability of the lorry service and its frequent failure to co-ordinate with the arrival and departure of trains often meant that workers had to spend several days waiting in Nicoadala for transport or travel back and forth to Licaure until the train arrived. After one particularly distressing delay in 1945 the Provincial Governor of Zambézia ordered SSE to abandon the Licaure compound and resite the camp in Nicoadala. The Governor supported his order with evidence which showed that 300 men had arrived in Nicoadala on 16th December 1944. It was raining heavily and there was no train. The next train was due on the 20th December. The men, who had left the estates six days earlier, therefore either had to wait another four days in Nicoadala without shelter or make a further return trip to Licaure.(78) SSE's representative in Quelimane, in his reply, said that the company would certainly consider building a camp in Nicoadala like those along the road to Mopeia. The Governor rejected this proposal. He wanted to see the construction of a more permanent building because the example he cited was not the first occasion on which men had been obliged to spend several nights in Nicoadala waiting for a train which only left on Wednesdays and Saturdays.(79) This was confirmed by SSE's General Manager, who confessed that better organisation was needed to ensure that men did not arrive in Nicoadala on days when the train was not running.(80)

SSE's justification for not building proper transit camps was based on its view that the workers only spent one night in the shelter provided, and that this shelter, therefore, only needed to be temporary and rudimentary. The introduction of the lorry service allowed the company to avoid further investment in many of these camps. However, since the lorry service operated erratically and was often unco-ordinated with the rail service the end result was that workers either had to wait for several days in places where no shelter was provided or spend nights in camps which were unfit for human habitation.

Conditions in the Camps

Following a government inspection of the main reception camp at Mopeia in 1951 the authorities ordered SSE to make immediate improvements in the sanitary arrangements and living conditions offered. In their report the inspectors criticised almost everything about the camp. They wrote that it consisted of a brick shed covered by a corrugated iron roof. It was completely lacking in furniture and did not even contain bunks for the workers. The roof was not lined which meant that there was a great difference between the day and night-time temperature. The camp had no lavatories, instead there was an open ditch which workers were expected to use. There were no kitchens and the building could not accommodate the numbers of men who gathered there and who stayed there at any one time.(81)

SSE replied to the inspectors' criticisms one by one. In so doing it admitted that the conditions described were the conditions

which existed. Nevertheless, the company tried to suggest that the conditions were not as bad as the inspectors suggested. Thus, referring to the lack of space within the building SSE's General Manager remarked,

> It [the building] has ample space to shelter, at any one time, the maximum number of natives who happen to be passing through Mopeia... if we take into consideration the existence of wide verandas and the possibility of sheltering a large number of natives on the ground, that is, under the main floor, whenever necessary, for protection against the sun and rains.(82)

In reply to other points made by the inspectors SSE's General Manager tried to suggest the company itself recognised the inadequacy of the existing arrangement but was hampered by the 'natives' wishes. For instance, in relation to the difference between the day-time and night-time temperature, the General Manager wrote:

> Obviously there are, as in all identical cases, differences in temperature between night and day, which, besides, are generally found in all other buildings in these parts, but the undeniable fact must be borne in mind that the natives... normally opt to sleep in the open, sheltering inside the hangar only in the rainy season, when by force of circumstances the temperature inside drops automatically.(83)

Replying to the criticism about the lack of kitchens the General Manager wrote: "in fact it has been the habit and custom of the natives in transit to cook in groups here and there, which they choose themselves, but we are the first to admit that it would be useful and advisable to have a kitchen for that purpose."(84) Nevertheless, no immediate action was taken, for two years later the local administrator remarked on the deficiencies of the camp in his annual report. He noted that the building could not accommodate the 200 or 300 men who stayed there for two or three days at a time. SSE had been told to enlarge the building but

continually made excuses to avoid doing so. One of these excuses included the argument that the verandas were wide enough to afford workers shelter. The Administrator, did, however, remark that the showers and sanitary facilities were adequate.(85)

Not all the transit camps were like the camp at Mopeia. The state of the transit camps varied individually and over time. Thus, for example, in the same year that the Administrator of Mopeia criticised the conditions in the camp at Mopeia the Administrator of Mocuba visited the transit camp there. He wrote that 20,000 workers passed through it annually. The food provided was adequate. The camp had good dormitories, a first aid post and food stores. It also had showers with hot and cold water.(86) Like the Mocuba camp the new camp in Nicoadala was also given a favourable report by the local Administrator in 1953. He wrote that 5000 'natives' passed through it each year on their way to Luabo from Nhamarroi, Pebane, Ile, Lugela, Maganja da Costa and Mocuba. There were 200 workers in the camp at any one time. The camp had good showers and lavatories. The food given met the legal requirements, although this only after an inspector's report had led to improvements in the diet. The compound had a kitchen and a refectory. It also had water.(87)

The favourable reports on conditions in the Nicoadala and Mocuba camps, were not, however, representative of general conditions. Both camps were atypical in that they were the most important of SSE's transit compounds. They received a continual flow of workers throughout the year, and over the year as a whole accommodated a very large number of men. Thus, to the degree that SSE could not

avoid improving conditions when rebuilding was undertaken it could in part offset the cost of the facilities provided against the large numbers of men using the camps. This was not, however, the case with smaller camps. Here the costs of installing permanent buildings, kitchens, lavatories and showers were proportionately much greater when only a few men used the camps at any one time. Thus until the 1960s, conditions on the smaller compounds which served individual catchment areas rather than a wide recruiting zone remained much as they had been in the 1940s and 1950s. As late as 1962 there was no compound at all in Baixo Licungo. When workers needed to shelter from the rain they spread out over the verandas of shops. In Mugeba too no shelter was provided for recruited men. All that existed there was a brick house for the African auxiliary and a hut for the compound guard. Similarly, in Pebane, Mualama, Naburi, Morrumbala and Mutara there were no facilities for recruited men. Finally, in Angonia the few huts which existed were not used by contracted workers. Here, as in many of the places mentioned above there was urgent need for a new compound.(88) Thus, despite the law which ordered that shelter was to be provided for workers in transit and despite the pressure exerted at various times by the authorities, SSE was content to allow its migrant labourers to sleep in the open without any protection from the rain, without cooking and sanitary facilities, until well into the 1960s.

Like its policies with regard to the provision of food, SSE's policy towards workers' accommodation was shaped around the need to reduce labour costs. By cutting down on the expenditure on housing SSE indirectly cut the wages of the labour force, for housing costs

were part of the total wage paid to the company's workers. In pursuit of this aim SSE's policy revolved around the provision of just enough shelter to keep the work force alive and at work, and at the same time just enough shelter to satisfy the authorities. Besides seeking to build only the cheapest type of accommodation possible, SSE also sought to house as many men as possible within the huts constructed, for the more men who could be accommodated in the same space the less the cost of housing and ultimately of labour. This reasoning was also applied to the sanitary and recreational facilities on the compounds. The former simply did not exist and the latter were rudimentary in the extreme. Effectively, SSE managed to avoid providing lavatories, showers and even an adequate supply of drinking water on the compounds until the 1960s. As a result its compounds were overcrowded, unsalubrious and generally forlorn in appearance. Indeed, so depressing were they, that in 1962 the authorities insisted on immediate improvements "to remove the gloomy air of concentration camps that they generally have."(89)

Yet, if conditions were bad on the permanent compounds on the estates, they were, if anything, worse on the transit camps. Resting on the argument that only temporary shelter was needed for workers in transit, for much of the period under study SSE avoided the construction of anything other than grass sheds. The introduction of lorry transport worsened the plight of workers, for the company could use the excuse of transport as a reason for further neglecting the existing camps. Only on the large and permanent 'showpiece' transit camps, and even then, only during the 1950s, were facilities matching those on the permanent compounds provided. On the smaller

camps in the interior of the province no facilities at all were provided for many of the workers in transit.

SSE's policy of deliberate neglect was only possible with the tacit approval of the authorities. However, at times, even the authorities were shocked at the conditions on SSE's compounds and insisted on changes. To avoid undertaking improvements, which would have increased costs, SSE stalled the authorities with tactics which should by now be familiar. These tactics were of three main types. The first consisted of informing the authorities that the company was about to do something and initiating small-scale programmes. In this way SSE could postpone the day when real changes were introduced.(90) The second involved the use of arguments which stressed the company's policy of providing the facilities that the workers themselves demanded. The third emphasised the limitations imposed on the company by the environment. An argument of this type was the one which emphasised the poor drainage and sub-soil. It should be noted, however, that these limitations did not prevent the construction of a sugar factory nor the construction of two-storey brick houses for European staff both of which were adjacent to African 'temporary' housing. When these arguments failed SSE invoked as a defence of its policies the low prices it received for its sugar on the protected Portuguese market. The reasons for the occasional concern of the authorities, especially when the whole organisation of 'native' policy was designed to further employers' interests, is beyond the scope of this study. However, the effects of this tacit approval of SSE's policies was the existence in the mid-1960s of housing and sanitary conditions on its estates which had been condemned as early as the 1940s.(91)

NOTES

(1) RTI, Art. 214, p. 64.

(2) SSE Ar., File 118, Native Compound, n.n. to General Manager, 15 Dec. 1931, Native Huts.

(3) SSE Ar., File 118, M. Durante Estate Manager Luabo to Col. C.B.R. Hornung Mopea, 22 July 1931. In the first year 14 men were needed to erect the hut and four men to repair it, during the second year six men were needed to maintain the hut and during the third year eight men.

(4) SSE Ar., File 118, Native Labour employed on Straw Barracks 1931, Mopea, 18 Feb. 1932.

(5) ibid.

(6) SSE Ar., File 118, Mr Nurse Marromeu to Col. Hornung Luabo, 22 July 1931.

(7) By 1937 the timber situation was critical and the company was unable to acquire the amount of wood required at reasonable cost (SSE Ar., File 118, General Manager to SSE London, 9 July 1937, Steel Frames for Native Huts).

(8) SSE Ar., File 118, CBR Hornung to Captain G. Hornung, 23 July 1931, Iron Frames for Native Huts.

(9) SSE Ar., File 118, JAK (Knip?) to General Manager Mopea, 28 Oct. 1931 Grass Huts. The company took punitive action against workers whose huts were found damaged. "Regarding the destruction of the huts by natives, by pulling grass from roof and sides and occasional upright poles for lighting fires. Since my arrival at Luabo the procedure adopted has been, any hut found partly destroyed, the labour occupying such hut were sent, after their daily task had been completed, to cut the necessary grass or pole and replace, and only after which were they given their food and pay ticket." (SSE Ar., File 118, Durante to Hornung, 22 July 1931, op. cit.).

(10) SSE Ar., File 118, JAK to General Manager, 28 Oct. 1931, op. cit.

(11) ibid.

(12) SSE Ar., File 118, CBR Hornung to Captain G. Hornung, 23 July 1931, op. cit. The higher cost of huts at Marromeu is probably explained by the higher wages men received on that estate.

(13) ibid.

(14) SSE Ar., File 118, Acting Estate Manager to General Manager SSE Ltd. Mopea, 26 Oct. 1931, Cost of 66 Steel-framed Huts for Natives.

(15) SSE Ar., File 133, Recruiting Quelimane and Angonia, 1930-1939, S. Cooke General Manager to Hornung and Co., 14 Sep. 1932, No. 418/34 [sic], Native Hut Construction.

(16) ibid.

(17) ibid.

(18) SSE Ar., File 118, Native Huts Luabo, 9 Oct. 1937 n.n. and General Manager to SSE London, 9 July 1937, op. cit.

(19) SSE Ar., File 118, Native Huts Luabo, op. cit. and SSE Ltd. London to SSE Mopea, 19 Aug. 1937, Steel frames for Native Huts, Ref. Yr. letter, No. 155/37 "E".

(20) SSE Ar., File 135, Tick Fever in the Compounds, Viana Rodrigues, Acampamentos dos Trabalhadores, 23 Feb. 1944.

(21) Whereas in 1939 a day's labour cost 6.521 pence by 1943 it cost 8.331 pence (SSE Ar., File 93, Labour and Recruiting, Government Side, Gerente da Feitoria Marromeu to Gerente Geral, 15 June 1944, No. 31/44 Mgt., Relatório da Propriedade de Marromeu/Caia Referente ao Ano do 1944 e Planos para as Condições apóz Guerra).

(22) AHM, NI 194, 1952-1957, Relatórios dos Agentes do Curador e Delegados de Saúde, No. 46, Concelho do Chinde, 1952, 2° Semestre, Relatório de Mão-de-Obra, Adm. Júlio dos Santos Peixe, 17 Dec. 1952. The only huts which were not made of straw were 15 huts on the "Auxiliares" compound. In the same report the Administrator wrote that SSE's workers at Chinde lived six men to a hut measuring 5.70 x 4.30 metres. The huts were made of palm leaves, were badly finished and were "extremely deficient." Elsewhere in the report Peixe discussed the living conditions of the woodcutters SSE employed at Chinde. Some of the 460 men employed in this capacity lived at home. Others were housed in huts on two compounds made of wattle and daub covered with palm leaves or grass. He remarked that these huts were "badly finished and, in my opinion, hardly suitable to instal workers in. They are called temporary compounds but the truth is that they have been in the same place for a pretty long time." (Translations J.H.)

(23) SSE Ar., File 118, NHDB to SSE Ltd. Luabo, 13 Sep. 1954, No. 270/54, 'A; Account No. 851, Compounds.

(24) SSE Ar., File 118, MT Gerente Geral SSE to Admin. do Concelho do Chinde, 30 Oct. 1954, No. 645/54/HO, Acampamentos para Indígenas no Luabo, Gradual Construção de Habitações Permanentes. SSE's Managing Director agreed to spend

(24) (continued)
£15,000 in 1955 in addition to the money normally put aside for compound maintenance. This money was intended "to go some way" towards meeting the Governor of Zambézia's requirements (SSE Ar., File 118, NHDB to SSE Luabo, 13 Sep. 1954, op. cit.).

(25) SSE Ar., File 133A, Recruiting, Angonia, Quelimane, Local, Hornung and Co. Ltd. to AF Sousa, 4 Dec. 1963, No. 403/63, Recruiting Labour.

(26) SSE Ar., File 133A, JPK to Hornung and Co. Ltd., 10 Aug. 1965, No. 303/65 Private Series, Recruiting and Labour; SSE Ar., Sena Sugar Estates Ltd., Relatorio Anual, Servico de Mao-de-Obra, 1964.

(27) SSE Ar., File 118, SSE Ltd., Marromeu Estate, Medical Officer's Report on Camps and Posho Stores for the Month of August 1942, there were six compounds on the Marromeu Estate at this date; SSE Ar., File 204, Native Diet and Rations, M.J. Gomes to Gerente Geral Luabo, 6 Aug. 1957, Comida Cozinhada, there were seven compounds on the Luabo estate in 1957; SSE Ar., Sena Sugar Estates Ltd., Relatorio Anual, Serviço de Mão-de-Obra, 1964, op. cit.

Compounds	Luabo	Marromeu
	Caoxe	Balieira
	Checanhama	Marrai
	Muide Novo	Juncua
	Mapangane	Central
	Inhatera	Cepe (Sepe)
	Muanavine	Guex
	Capitães	Nhamadaua

(N.B., the names of the compounds also changed over the years).

(28) SSE Ar., File 138 (Obsolete) The Case of Dr. Saboya Ramos, J.Saboya Ramos to Exmo. Snr. Gerente da Sena Sugar Estate Limited Marromeu, 1 July 1939.

(29) SSE Ar., File 118, Secretária Distrital de Saúde, Zambézia, Copia da Informação No. 26 destes Serviços, e do Despacho de 25 do corrente, do Exmo. Snr. Governador do Distrito, nela Exarado, Assunto: sobre as Condições de Trabalho dos Serviçais Indígenas. Da Inspecção à Sena Sugar Estates Lda, no Luabo, Manuel Saraiva Junqueiro, Herdeiros, e Chá Moçambique Lda, no Guruè, 4 Sep. 1956.

(30) SSE Ar., File 367, Advancement African Womenfolk, Maria Helena Vieira de Noronha Directora Instituto de Educação e Serviço Social to Inspector Marques dos Santos SSE Luabo, Proc. No. 20/42, Reg. B.O. 156, Deslocação da Assistente Familiar, Ilda Farinha Nogueira à Sena Sugar Estates Ltd., Luabo, de 23 de Agosto a 10 de Setemembro 1965; SSE Ar., File 204, MJ Gomes to Gerente Geral 6 Aug. 1957, op. cit., the numbers of workers on the compounds at Luabo were as follows on this date:

(30) (continued)

Caoxe	1800
Mapangane	1100
Muide Novo	2000
Inhaterre	1000
Muanavine	1100
Luabo	3800

(31) RTI Art. 215, p. 64; SSE Ar., File 118, MT to Acting Estate Manager Marromeu/Caia, 21 Aug. 1942, Native Compounds. The General Manager ordered that the space between huts was to be reduced from 25 metres in either direction to 16 metres in one direction and 20 metres in the other. Obviously, a reduction of the space between huts reduced the amount of levelling and drainage which had to be undertaken. It also released more land for cane.

(32) SSE Ar., File 94, Labour for Marromeu, Labour Questionnaire Reply, H.N. Usher, Marromeu 2 Nov. 1931; SSE Ar., File 138, Saboya Ramos to Max Thurnheer, 29 May 1937, Particular. Dr. Ramos complained, among other things, about the fact that for reasons of economy the 'natives' were having to sleep six in a hut.

(33) RTI, Art. 215, 1° and 2°; SSE Ar., File 135, Viana Rodrigues, Acampamento dos Trabalhadores, 23 Feb. 1944, op. cit.

(34) SSE Ar., File 118, n.n., 23 Aug. 1954, Custo das "Palhotas" de Alvenaria em Experiência (Superfície de Cada 16 mq.).

(35) GOV. Q, Col. de Moç., Prov. da Zambezia, Relatório do Governador, Capitão da Infantaria César Maria de Serpa Rosa, Respeitante ao período de 4 de Maio de 1943 a 31 de Dezembro de 1947, p. 174. The Governor recommended a round brick hut of three different diameters, 3.50 metres for a couple, 4.50 metres for four workers and 5.50 metres for six workers.

(36) SSE Ar., File 347, African Policy, Cantinas and Acampamentos, Public Address System, SPH / Stephen Hornung / to A.F. Sousa, 16 Nov. 1962, No. 412/62, Labour Code, Habitation; SSE Ar., File 347, Manuel de S.M. Maia, Constructor Civil, Luabo to Gerente Geral SSE Ltd Luabo, 30 Nov. 1962.

(37) SSE Ar., File 118, Custo das "Palhotas" de Alvenaria... 25 Aug. 1954, op. cit.

(38) SSE Ar., File 347, J. de Queiroz Soares, Adjunto do Gerente, Propriedade de Marromeu, Relatório da Visita a Marromeu dos Inspectores do Trabalho Indígena, Snrs. Intendentes João Granjo Pires, Afonso Ivens Ferraz de Freitas e Alberto Cotta de Mesquita, 3 Jan. 1962.

(39) SSE Ar., File 133, S. Cooke to Hornung and Co., 14 Sep. 1932, op. cit.

(40) SSE Ar., File 347, SPH (Stephen Hornung) to A.F. Sousa, 31 Oct. 1962, No. 388/62, Labour Code.

(41) SSE Ar., File 347, NHDB to Mr Sousa, 11 July 1962, No. 253/61 [sic], Beds and Mattresses.

(42) ibid.

(43) ibid.

(44) RTI Art. 217, p. 64.

(45) SSE Ar., File 347, NHDuB to Col. J.D. Hornung OBE MC, 27 Mar. 1962, No. 112/62 Private Series, Policy.

(46) SSE Ar., File 347, African Policy, 29 Apr. 1962, n.n.

(47) SSE Ar., File 347, NHDuB to Col. Hornung, 27 Mar. 1962, op. cit.

(48) SSE Ar., File 347, J. de Queiroz Soares, Relatório da Visita a Marromeu dos Inspectores do Trabalho Indigena... 3 Jan. 1962, op. cit. The inspectors recommended an extensive list of improvements in the compounds, which meant that the things they suggested did not exist at that time. For facilities that did exist prior to 1962, namely, grass sheds for meetings and occasional films see SSE Ar., File 118, MT to Estate Manager Marromeu/Caia, 14 July 1947, Beira Governor's Official visit to Marromeu. See also SSE Ar., File 118, Eduardo C. Mendoça Frias, Chefe do Posto, Admin. do Concelho do Chinde to Gerente Geral SSE Ltd., 29 June 1953, No. 343/A/22 and SSE Ar., File 347, AFS Gerente Geral SSE to Admin. do Concelho da Beira, 6 Feb. 1963, Confidencial, Psíco-Social.

(49) SSE Ar., File 118, MT General Manager to Acting Estate Manager M'meu/Caia, 5 Mar. 1943, No. 41/43 Mgt. Native Compounds.

(50) ibid.; SSE Ar., File 118, MT General Manager to Acting Estate Manager Marromeu/Caia, 24 June 1943, Native Compounds.

(51) SSE Ar., File 118, MT Gerente Geral to Acting Estate Manager M'meu/Caia, 21 Aug. 1942, No. 64/42 Mgt., Native Compounds.

(52) SSE Ar., File 118, M.P. Lopes Estate Manager M'meu/Caia to General Manager SSE Luabo, n.d., No. 63/45 Mgt.

(53) SSE Ar., File 347, African Policy, 29 Apr. 1962, op. cit.

(54) SSE Ar., Sena Sugar Estates Ltd. Relatório Anual Serviço de Mão-de-Obra, 1964, op. cit.

(55) SSE Ar., File 347, NHDB to Col. Hornung, 27 Mar. 1962, op. cit.

(56) SSE Ar., File 238, Mopeia Estate, General, Instructions, Reports, Policy, General Manager to The Superintending Engineer Luabo, 25 May 1959, No. 46/59 MGT, Pump for Mopeia Camp.

(57) Interview at Gile, 14-15 July 1976. (Translation J.H.)

(58) SSE Ar., File 138, Saboya Ramos to Gerente Geral SSE Ltd., 1 July 1939, op. cit. (Translation J.H.)

(59) ibid. (Translation J.H.)

(60) SSE Ar., File 138, Col. de Moç. Circ. de Marromeu, Gabinete do Administrador to n.n. [SSE], 10 Apr. 1942. This letter includes an extract from Ramos' complaint. (Translation J.H.)

(61) SSE Ar., File 118, Círculo de Saúde da Zambézia, sobre a Campanha Contra Infestações, O Inspector, Candido de Barros, Med. Insp. Desg., 4 Sep. 1956, Quelimane, Re: Informação No. 26 deste Circulo de Saude.

(62) SSE Ar., File 347, NHDB to Col. C.B.R. Hornung 15 Feb. 1962, No. 38/62, Private Series, Policy.

(63) ibid.

(64) SSE Ar., File 347, NHDB to Col. Hornung, 27 Mar. 1962, op. cit.

(65) SSE Ar., File 347, African Policy, 29 Apr. 1962, op. cit.

(66) SSE Ar., File 347, NHDB to Col. Hornung, 27 Mar. 1962, op. cit.

(67) SSE Ar., File 347, African Policy, 29 Apr. 1962, op. cit.

(68) SSE Ar., Sena Sugar Estates, Ltd., Relatório Anual, Serviço de Mão-de-Obra, 1964, op. cit.

(69) RTI, Art. 149, p. 45.

(70) ibid. (Translation J.H.)

(71) RTI Art. 215, 1°, p. 64. (Translation J.H.)

(72) RTI Art. 146, 2°, p. 44.

(73) Some men were still walking the whole of the distance to the estates as late as the early 1940s. "I and my companions left Gile on foot for Luabo in the years 1941, 1942 and 1943. Our journey took two months... We slept anywhere we could in the hamlets [we passed through]. There were compounds in Mulevala, Mocuba, Nicoadala and from there to Mopeia." (Interview at Gile, op. cit.) (Translation J.H.); "I went to Luabo... on foot... we left here in a large group. On the road we had to stop for several days because one of our companions was bitten by a snake. After he recovered we continued on our way. We rested for some days in Mopeia. From there we went on to Luabo." (Interview at Alto Molócuè, 16-17 July 1976.) (Translation J.H.)

(74) Only in 1962 did SSE seriously consider improving the transport offered to workers. "As it has been and is being done, it is inhuman and illegal and I am certain that the day any Labour Inspector saw it enormous complications would arise." The writer then went on to say that 'natives' recruited from Maganja da Costa and Baixo Licungo for work in Quelimane and its suburbs were already transported in proper passenger buses. SSE still used lorries. "It is very easy to imagine what passes through the native's mind when he sees Sena Sugar's worker being carried in a 10 or 15 ton cargo lorry, worse at times than any goat, and that of the Quelimane employers' seated comfortably with shades [at the windows] if the weather demands!!!... the continuation of things as they are will represent a cancer in the heart of our recruiting organisation." (SSE Ar., File 305, Native Labour, Transport of Labour, Etc., A. Almeida Azevedo Milange to Gerente Geral SSE Luabo, 13 Jan. 1962, Nova Sistema de Recrutamento.) (Translation J.H.)

(75) "From the Posto de Campo to Mopeia (86 kilometres) they [the contracted men] go on foot when the lorry service is not functioning..." (AHM, NI, 32, B/24/4/1, 1945-1947, Relatórios Trimestrais dos Agentes do Curador, Mopeia, Relatório Geral sobre a Mão-de-Obra Indígena Referente aos anos de 1945 e 1946. See also the reports for Namarroi, Lugela, Morrumbala and Maganja in the same series).(Translation J.H.) Transport continued bad throughout the 1950s, and delays were still common in the 1960s. For example, in March 1962, the Nicoadala/Mopeia road collapsed. All traffic was held up for about three weeks. This meant that men waiting to leave the estates could not go home. "He [the Provincial Governor] looked frightful and had obviously lost his head and was talking about an ensuing uprising among the boys and hinting that they would have some justification." (SSE Ar., File 305, NHDB to Col. J.D.Hornung, 30 Mar. 1962, No. 114/62, Private Series, Lourenço Marques Visit). A year later conditions in the province were even worse. The Mocuba/Alto Molócuè road was cut. Lorries could "just about" get through on the Mulevela road if the occupants pushed most of the time. The road from Mocuba to Maganja da Costa was also cut as was the road from Mualama and Naburi to Pebane. It was, therefore, according to one of SSE's Directors, very difficult to move labour. He added "it is incredible to me that such chaos should now be an annual occurrence in this District, and yet the Governor seems to escape the blame." (SSE Ar., File 133A, NHDuB to Col. C.B.R. Hornung, 3 Apr. 1963, No. 128/63, Private Series, Recruiting Conditions).

(76) SSE Ar., File 118, MT General Manager to Manager SSE Ltd. Mopeia, 4 Mar. 1952, No. 17/52 Mgt., Labour Transit Compounds, (Grass Sheds) between Nicoadala and Mopeia; SSE Ar., File 135, Viana Rodrigues, Acampamentos dos Trabalhadores, 23 Feb. 1944, op. cit.

(77) SSE Ar., File 118, MT to Alexandrino Fragoso de Souza Quelimane, 9 Jan. 1945, No. 4/45/Reservada, Trânsito de Indígenas por Nicoadala. Referring to the site at Nicoadala the author remarked that "the water was neither sufficient nor of good quality, and... the agglomeration of natives in that town was becoming an obstacle to public health and hygiene. Hundreds of natives gathered there at a trading post without public sanitary conditions. They made the place filthy, dirtying everything, from the walls of the stores to the earth of the street and neighbourhood, with fruit peel, papers, rags, bits of straw and remains of all kinds; polluting the air, filling it with gases coming from the fermentation and putrification and from the inevitable smells of the natives themselves, who have no notion whatsoever of individual hygiene and carry dirty clothes impregnated with sweat, with unpleasant smells, without the possibility of washing in abundant flowing water, which can only be found at the River Licaure. And, what was equally important their stay in Nicoadala provoked and fostered swarms of flies..." (Translation J.H.) (Emphasis original)

(78) SSE Ar., File 118, A.A. Azevedo to Max Thurnheer 20 Dec. 1944, Trânsito de Indígenas por Nicoadala.

(79) ibid.

(80) SSE Ar., File 118, MT to Souza, 9 Jan. 1945, op. cit.

(81) SSE Ar., File 118, Camilo Ferreira d'Almeida Circ. Admin. de Mopeia to Gerente Geral SSE, 12 June 1951, No. 489/B/15/2, Acampamento do Trânsito da Sena Sugar Estates.

(82) SSE Ar., File 118, Max Thurnheer Gerente Geral SSE Ltd. to Admin. da Circ. de Mopeia, 10 Dec. 1951, No. 489/51/HO, Acampamento de Trânsito para Indígenas em Mopeia. (Translation J.H.)

(83) ibid. (Translation J.H.)

(84) ibid. (Translation J.H.)

(85) AHM, NI 202, 1952-1957, Relatórios dos Agentes do Curador e Delegados de Saúde, No. 54, Circ. de Mopeic, Ladislau Batalha Junior, 12 Jan. 1954. In an appendix to this report written in 1953 the then administrator had written "the building is not big enough for the workers in transit. There are many workers on the verandas, under the building (the building is on pillars) and spread around outside without any protection." (Translation J.H.)

(86) AHM, NI 195, 1952-1957, Relatórios dos Agentes do Curador e Delegados de Saúde, No. 47, Concelho de Mocuba, Relatório Relativo ao Ano de 1953.

(87) AHM, NI 204, 1952-1957, Relatórios dos Agentes do Curador e Delegados de Saúde, No. 56, Circ. de Namacurra, Relatorio sobre Mão-de-Obra Indígena, Ano de 1953.

(88) SSE Ar., File 305, A. Almeida Azevedo to Gerente Geral SSE, 13 Jan. 1962, op. cit.

(89) SSE Ar., File 347, Admin. do Concelho do Chinde, 12 Apr. 1962, Cópia Confidencial, Distrito da Zambézia, Serviço de Acção Psíco-Social, Gabinete de Zona, Suggestões as Empresas para Prosseguimento da Política de Moralização do Trabalho e Elevação do Nivel Social e Económico dos Trabalhadores.

(90) Examples of this kind of manoeuvre are the experimental huts built during the 1930s, 1940s and 1950s.

(91) Little had changed by the 1970s. The Guardian [London] reported on the living conditions at SSE in the following terms in 1973. "Mr Peter Du Boulay, an assistant general manager and grandson of the firm's founder, talked about the conditions under which the African work force were living, paid and recruited... The workers all live in compounds of small octagonal huts which Mr Du Boulay described as "squalid" from a European viewpoint but satisfactory for the Africans. The compounds appear squalid from any viewpoint, without running water, sanitation or electricity." (Guardian, 30 July 1973).

CHAPTER VIII

THE HEALTH OF THE LABOUR FORCE

The combination of overcrowded and unhygienic living conditions and an inadequate diet resulted in an environment at SSE in which workers were susceptible to numerous illnesses. Afflictions affecting the labour force can be divided into two main groups. On the one hand there was a range of communicable diseases whose transmission was facilitated by overcrowding and lack of hygiene. On the other hand there were a variety of complaints which resulted from a combination of poor hygiene and inadequate diet. The latter group tended to affect only the individual. Nevertheless, at SSE they were often endemic precisely because the conditions in which they flourished affected everyone. This chapter will examine some of the more common complaints affecting SSE's labour force. It will also look at the measures taken by both the estate and the state to combat these diseases.

AILMENTS AND DISEASES AFFECTING SSE's LABOUR FORCE

Controlling Smallpox and Tick Fever

The problem of the easy transmission of infectious diseases was recognised early in the twentieth century. Thus, for instance, the Hornung Contract of 1921 included clauses which obliged the employer to vaccinate and re-vaccinate all contracted men against smallpox. Failure to do so resulted in a fine.(1) This legislation

was carried through to the Regulamento do Trabalho dos Indígenas. Employers were obliged to provide smallpox and other treatments aimed at preventing infectious-contagious diseases.(2) The authorities were given powers to order vaccinations or any other treatments to prevent epidemics whenever they deemed them necessary.(3) However, despite the legislation there was, at some time during or before 1931, an outbreak of smallpox on one of the Marromeu compounds at SSE which resulted in the Medical Officer ordering the destruction of all huts.(4) Unfortunately, there is no further discussion of the effects of this outbreak, but the fact that smallpox is not mentioned again in SSE's records probably indicates that the lesson was a salutary one for the company. As has already been shown, hut building was costly. The replacement of an entire compound was an expensive undertaking. The replacement of all the compounds, had an epidemic developed, would probably have been prohibitive. It can, therefore, reasonably be assumed, that thereafter SSE ensured that its workers were regularly vaccinated.

The problem of preventing the spread of tick fever was not, however, so easily overcome. Many of the areas through which SSE's workers passed on their way to the estates were inhabited by various species of wild animals which acted as hosts for ticks. Walking through the bush, sleeping rough or in grass huts and compounds infested with rodents men easily picked up ticks. Since there was no effective vaccination against tick fever public health measures were necessary to stop the spread of the parasite and hence the incidence of the disease. When, in 1944, there was an outbreak of tick fever amongst workers arriving at Mopeia SSE discussed a number

of measures which could be taken to eliminate the problem. It was proposed that workers' baggage should be fumigated in Mopeia and a shower constructed where all workers would be obliged to bathe before passing on to the various properties.(5) Before passing through the shower the men's hair would have been cut and they would have been shaved. Their clothing was also to be disinfected.(6)

Disinfecting workers and their baggage on arrival at the main reception camp in Mopeia would have helped to prevent the spread of ticks and hence tick fever to the permanent compounds. Nevertheless, the problem of tick-infestation in the transit compounds still remained. Workers, bitten by a disease-carrying tick, could still arrive at the main compound and lose several days or weeks of the contract as the disease took hold. Indeed, this was the situation when the company first appears to have become alerted to the problem in 1944. There had been numerous complaints about ticks infesting the transit compounds along the Nicoadala road and the gaol at Luabo. There were also several cases of recurrent fever.(7) More radical measures than the mere disinfecting of the persons and personal effects of workers were therefore needed to eliminate the problem.

The grass roofs of huts, the cracks and crevices in the walls and floors provided a lodging for all sorts of potentially hazardous insects. The most effective way of preventing insect-infestation of the huts was to destroy the insects, their eggs and larva by burning down the huts. This solution was adopted in the Luabo compounds where the structure of the huts was iron or old wood.

It could not be adopted in the transit compounds, however, unless new buildings were erected to replace the barracks destroyed. Instead, SSE decided to disinfect these barracks and at the same time to build huts in their place. It was cheaper to fumigate or destroy a small hut designed to accommodate a few men than a large structure aimed at accommodating several hundred men. After disinfection the grass barracks on the transit compounds were to be used exclusively as cotton markets.(8)

When these proposals were made SSE recognised that the problem of insect-infestation of the huts would recur. The company therefore also sought an acceptable solution to the long-term problem of eradicating disease-carrying insects from the compounds. Various solutions were proposed. The straw or reed roof of the huts could be burnt away and the structure taken to pieces and dipped in disinfectant. Alternatively the roof could be burnt off leaving the structure of the hut intact. These were considered relatively cheap ways of keeping the huts insect-free because they had to be re-roofed every two years anyway. Hence, disinfection of the huts could precede re-roofing. Another alternative was to use iron-framed huts. According to SSE's General Manager iron buildings were "obviously" better than grass huts because fire could eradicate the insects with less outlay on time, labour and materials. This solution could, however, only be considered after the war.(9) As already demonstrated, despite their several advantages, iron-framed huts were never in fact introduced on a wide scale, largely because the price of iron made them more costly than grass huts.

Following the outbreak of tick fever in 1944 further proposals were made which were intended to keep the problem under control. These included the regular cleaning and fumigation of the interior of the barracks. All garbage was to be destroyed. Cracks in the floors and walls were to be filled with lime. Rudimentary bunks were to be installed "if possible". These did not necessarily have to be single beds but would need to be light enough to be carried out of the building when not in use. They were to be placed away from the walls of the barracks and were to be raised at least 30 centimetres from the floor. In addition, workers were to be forbidden from bringing their belongings into the barracks and were to take a shower before entering it in order to destroy any larva clinging to their legs and bodies. A light was to be kept on during the night since the insects only emerged in darkness. All vegetation near the compound was to be destroyed and a ditch dug around it which was to be filled with ashes to prevent animals carrying ticks from entering. Finally rats, porcupines and other animals were to be "combatted".(10)

The recommendations made in 1944 do not appear to have been taken up by SSE, for in 1953 more ticks appeared, this time in the Luane compound at Marromeu. The ticks appeared soon after some workers from Marral (Posto do Campo) arrived there. On investigating the outbreak SSE's Medical Officer discovered that the workers' baggage had not been fumigated when they arrived in Mopeia. He urged the Manager of the Marromeu Estate to insist that this was done in future.(11) Referring to the matter SSE's General Manager wrote that the disinfection of labour had never advanced beyond the

experimental stage, although he was interested in introducing regular disinfection at the earliest opportunity.(12) Presumably, the experimental disinfection was not taken up because the costs of installing the necessary showers and the costs of providing equipment were considered too high. As has already been shown in some cases, bathrooms were not installed in the compounds until the 1960s. Since ticks and other harmful insects could largely be kept under control by occasional disinfection of huts when their roofs were replaced, SSE appears to have preferred the loss of production which the sickness brought about than the creation of an effective system of prevention; a system of prevention which in any case implied far more wide-ranging measures than the proposals above suggest. Besides disinfection of workers, their baggage and the buildings the men slept in, prevention also implied providing showers and fumigation facilities on all the transit camps, and not just the major reception centre at Mopeia. It also meant providing more accommodation and individual space for the men using the compounds, for clearly, the ticks could spread between men more easily if living conditions were cramped and overcrowding normal. These were measures which SSE did not even consider.(13)

The recorded outbreaks of tick-fever and smallpox were few at SSE. It can be assumed that in the case of smallpox the prophylactic treatment was effective in controlling the disease. However, the same assumption cannot be made for tick fever. Firstly, the conditions in which the ticks flourished continued to exist at SSE for many years after the company was first alerted to the problem. Secondly, workers suffered from a number of diseases

whose symptoms were fever. Amongst these malaria is the most obvious example; it was probably also the most widespread. Thus, it would seem likely that the symptoms of tick fever were often disguised by the symptoms of other diseases. Thirdly, workers at SSE were loathe to seek medical treatment. The reasons for this reticence will be discussed below. However, the fact that men did not present themselves at the company's hospital when sick probably means that the disease occured more often than SSE's records reveal. Like other ailments which did not manifest themselves in an acute form, therefore, the recorded outbreaks of tick fever probably do not reflect its real incidence.

Pneumonia and Dysentry

In his report for the first six months of 1939, SSE's doctor at Marromeu noted that there had been abnormally high mortality rates from pneumonia and dysentry.(14) Indeed, so critical was the situation that SSE had only narrowly avoided a full-scale enquiry by the health authorities. Writing to the Estate Manager at Marromue/Caia, SSE's General Manager stated that the Quelimane recruiter, Sarmento Pimental, and the Marques de Ficalgo had "both complained bitterly about the physical conditions of the last batch of Angurus that was repatriated from your estates." He added "it was only through the understanding nature of the Marques, who on his own attributed the deplorable fact to the flood, that a major enquiry has been averted." The General Manager then asked if it could have been "purely the flood conditions with the batch in question, or were there other reasons, such as a major infection of bilharzia or hookworm?"(15)

The comments of the doctor at Marromeu are instructive. In relation to the high sickness and death rates, 79 men died from dysentry in the first three months of 1939, he suggested that SSE's record was actually acceptable in view of what might have happened.

> The rate of mortality and morbidity from dysentry and pneumonia - it rained almost every day in the flood period - were abnormal. If we think, however, about the worst, about what might have happened in an agglomeration of over 3,500 natives living in perfect discomfort, in an extremely limited area, without the minimum notion of hygiene, and if they had not been taken from the compounds and huts and if prophylactic measures had not been pursued, these rates ought to be considered very low.(16)

This particular outbreak of pneumonia and dysentry was probably exacerbated by the flood conditions. There can be little doubt, however, that poor diet and unhygienic living conditions contributed to the high incidence of the diseases, as the doctor himself suggested. Elsewhere in his report he elaborated.

> In the first fortnight of May there were still 16 cases of dysentry among natives who had fled and who belonged to the group who were repatriated in June. There was not a single case among the natives of the new contingents who arrived here at the end of April, in May and at the beginning of June.
>
> The mortality rate was still abnormal in May and June among patients who were admitted to hospital in March and April with dysentry. Ninety per cent of them died during their convalescence, the final cause of death being toxaemia, anaemia, cardiac infection and vitamin deficiency...
>
> In spite of everything the majority of natives had a very weak physical resistance - a fact which is always observed in the season of torrid heat and torrential rains. On the other hand, their physique develops and weight goes up during the cold season and the harvest because of the high numbers of calories furnished by the cane that they suck, very rich in sugar.(17) (Emphasis original)

The diet offered to SSE's workforce has already been discussed. Nevertheless it is pertinent to point out, in the context of health, that the diet was known to be vitamin deficient as early as 1939. In that year, Medical Officers attached to some of the districts from which SSE's workers were recruited, noted that unless they died, the men's health always improved when they returned home from the estates. At home they received a more balanced diet and the food was better prepared.(18) To this degree, the findings of the government doctors confirmed the observations of SSE's own doctor. Men were most debilitated towards the end of the contract. They were also more debilitated when their diet could not be supplemented, either by cane or other foods.

In Chapter VI it was noted that SSE rationalised the diet offered on the plantations by pointing out that workers acquired locally foods which were not available in it. These included cane from the fields which they took during the harvest, vegetables and fruits which they planted themselves, and meat and fish which were either hunted or purchased locally. However, referring to the 1939 outbreak of dysentry and pneumonia, SSE's doctor shed a rather different light on this situation.

> The guards in charge of cleaning and maintaining order destroyed many hundreds of kilos of rotten meat from animals caught in the river's current and spoilt fish, in a real state of putrification, which other natives came to sell in this village in canoes.(19)

This quotation suggests that SSE's workers were suffering from hunger, for nobody would consider eating rotten meat and fish if fresh meat and fish were available. It would appear, then, that the men were both desperate for food as such, and desperate to acquire any

food which would relieve the monotony of the normal diet. That the men were obliged to purchase rotten meat and fish suggests that these items were not as readily available in local markets as the company tried to imply.

Like meat and fish, fresh fruit and vegetables were also not as readily available as SSE suggested. Quite apart from the physical impossibility of the men planting enough vegetables and fruit trees to meet their consumption needs over the course of the contract the availability of these items was limited by the climate.

> Even if this company proposed to produce them [fresh fruit and vegetables] directly, there would be a period in the year in which it would not be possible to have them and several hundreds of hectares would have to be cultivated under irrigation... We would add, further, that... during part of the year, the hot season, not even the European population has sufficient fruit and vegetables and hence, it would not be possible, even by planting a very extensive area, to produce the five tons required daily.(20)

Effectively, then, SSE's workers' diet consisted almost exclusively of the foods which the company itself provided. As a result the men's physical condition gradually deteriorated over the course of the contract.

The deterioration of the men's health was compounded by the problems arising from poor food preparation. In Chapter VI it was stated that men did not receive a proper meal until they returned from the fields in the evenings. Often, unwilling to spend a long time cooking their rations, the men ate them uncooked. The effects of eating uncooked foods were noted by SSE's doctor in relation to locust consumption. Locusts, properly cooked and

prepared with a special sauce, appear to have been something of a local delicacy.(21) Men at SSE caught locusts to eat when they appeared. They did not, however, prepare them properly.

> Others, such as the Angurus, do not lose time with their culinary preparation.
> They eat them [locusts] raw, with all their innards and bitter parts, which often, when [eaten] in abundance, if they do not produce a strong irritation of the mucous and lining of the intestines, lead to death by obstruction, peritonitis and perforation..(22)

Poor diet, irregular meals and the consequent lack of careful food preparation and cooking all contributed to the debility of the work force at SSE. Lack of hygienic living conditions and the general lack of comfort on the estates further reduced the workers' resistance to disease. Huts varied greatly in temperature between day and night. Men were expected to sleep on the floor without even a mat, or outside the building, with only a blanket to cover them. They had few warm clothes. On being contracted they were issued with a singlet, a pair of shorts and a blanket. On arrival at the estate they also received a sugar sack.(23) Most men could not afford shoes and hence had to walk through mud and rain in bare feet when it was wet. In addition they slept five or eight men to a hut; washed, urinated and defecated in water that they were also expected to drink, and only ate one meal a day, a meal which consisted in the main of flour. The weakness that this combination of factors engendered was compounded by the fact that many men were already weak when they arrived at the estates. In 1939, for instance, according to a local government Health Officer, 78.8 per cent of men working on the estates had parasitical infections.(24) In 1954 it was estimated that almost

100 per cent of the workers had internal parasites and suffered from hookworm.(25) In the same year, hookworm appeared most frequently as the cause of death in the estate records.(26)

The eggs of the hookworm are deposited in the faeces of an infected person. The larva then pass through the soles of the feet of anyone who treads on the infected faeces or their traces. Since SSE did not construct hygienic lavatories until the 1960s and since hundreds of men, most of whom walked around barefooted, lived in overcrowded compounds, the degree of contamination was probably high. Furthermore, in these conditions, men who were not infected when they arrived at the estates probably picked up the parasite after they arrived.

A similar cycle of transmission existed for such afflictions as dysentry and bilharzia. In the latter case, the eggs of the worm were passed through the urine of the infected person. If the person urinated in water the eggs thrived until they found another host in the person using that water. In the case of dysentry it was sufficient for an affected person to fail to wash his hands before preparing food for the disease to be transmitted to those eating the food. Thus, a vicious circle of original infection, lack of hygiene and undernourishment ensured that such diseases remained endemic. Whereas healthy, well-nourished people might have survived for some time with only minor discomfort, men who were already weak were prone to death not only from the havoc wreaked by the parasite but also to death from secondary complications.

The eradication of these diseases required a three-pronged attack on diet, hygiene and public awareness. Diet and hygiene, as we have seen, were largely ignored until the 1960s. Formal education of the African population hardly moved beyond the rudimentary stages in Zambézia until the 1960s.(27) Health services were almost non-existant.(28) With the exception of a soap-making campaign and the previously referred-to latrine campaign in the mid-1950s, health education was unknown.(29)

THE PROVISION OF HEALTH CARE

Health Care on Plantations

Private firms which employed over 100 workers were obliged by law to provide health care for their workers.(30) The type of care provided and the qualifications of those providing the service depended on the numbers employed. Thus, at SSE, for example, on the Luabo estate the company had its own private hospital. The company employed a doctor, one European and two auxilliary nurses. There were also sick bays on some of the compounds and two wards in Mopeia and Matilde run by auxilliary nurses.(31) At Marromeu there was a hospital and first-aid posts on some of the compounds.

The quality of care offered by private firms was low. For instance, in his 1939 Report SSE's Doctor described the 'native' hospital at Marromeu. This consisted of

> two pavilions with room for 75 patients, able without prejudicing the principles of hygiene to accommodate 20 more.

One pavilion consisting of one large room for dressings and treatment and another, smaller one, for clinical observation and consultations.
Four huts for the isolation of patients with infectious-contagious diseases which are destroyed by fire when the patients die or are discharged, with room for 10 patients.
Four detached brick houses for 12 female patients.
One mortuary; that is, a hospital with 64 beds.
Exceptionally it accommodates 232 patients!!!(32)

However, it was not only in 1939 that the 'hospitals' provided by SSE were, to all intents and purposes, a mockery. By 1951, conditions had not changed at all. Thus, the 'sick-bay' on the main reception camp at Mopeia consisted of "one house... which is completely lacking in furniture and equipment."(33)

In part, the lack of health care facilities on the estates was related directly to cost. SSE was loathe to invest in adequate curative facilities when the state ensured that the supply of workers would continue regardless of their health. In this situation the company could afford to accommodate a percentage of wastage through ill-health. In part, however, the lack of facilities was a reflection of the ideology of forced labour. It was assumed that the African was naturally lazy and hence resisted all attempts to make him work. Pressure, sactioned by law, was needed to make him take up wage work and to stay in it once recruited. Absenteeism was regarded as proof of this assertion. Failure to appear for work could only mean one thing; that the labourer was shirking. The idea that men were simply making excuses if they said that they could not work because they were ill in turn led to a system of treatment whose aim was not to cure the sick but rather to bully them back into work.(34) In the workers' minds periods spend in hospital meant periods of ill-treatment. Men therefore avoided going to the

company's hospitals at all costs and only appeared when they were on the verge of death. As a result the company's hospitals became associated with death which meant that the men's suspicions were confirmed.

> The people who were ill were seen as shirkers... When a person felt ill he was even afraid to go to the hospital. Many of them, when they had pains, fled from the compound and stayed in the bush because in the compounds there were people called sangiras who asked "why are you in the compound?" If you said that you were ill they took you to the hospital, but if you went to the hospital the nurses who treated you there asked you what was wrong with you. If you said you had stomach ache or some pains they said you were not ill but were only avoiding work. The nurses gave injections, which the patient felt were very complicated. Many of them died and if you were not lucky you did not escape. Thus, with this situation, when the men felt ill they preferred to stay in the bush rather than go to the hospital.(35)

Resistant to hospital treatment during the contract, men were even more resistant to being admitted to hospital at the end of the contract, for reasons which are obvious. To avoid the sick escaping, SSE subjected workers about to be repatriated from the estates to a medical examination. In 1939, for instance, SSE's doctor wrote in this context

> when one of the contingents of Angurus was repatriated at the end of April I prevented some escapes - which have always happened, still happen and will continue to happen... I agreed with the compound chief that only those natives examined on the evening before who presented a special ticket which was distributed to them [then] would be allowed to embark.
>
> The supervision was rigorous at the hour when they embarked. It was exercised by the compound chief (European), by two native nurses and various guards. Nevertheless, some managed to escape; the majority of them natives who had not been admitted to the hospital.(36)

However, at some point after 1939 this system of inspections broke down for in 1954 there was an internal enquiry within SSE following the deaths of two men who were on their way home from the estates. The men had left Mopeia on the 15th April and arrived at Vicente on the 16th. There they waited for eight days for transport because the lorries had broken down. They finally arrived at Cundine, on the Nicoadala/Mopeia road, on the 19th April. Two days later SSE's manager in Mopeia received a call from the Post of Campo saying that two men had died and six more were unfit and unable to travel on. They required hospital treatment.(37) The six men were sent back to the estates. Referring to the matter, the Manager of the Marromeu property wrote to SSE's General Manager,

> there is no doubt that the six men who were returned from Mopeia for treatment were all of a poor physical appearance, and had been in hospital, but considering that they left Marromeu on 15th April and returned on 29th April, and that for two weeks they had been living at Mopeia and Cundine in conditions which are unlikely to be as good as in proper compounds, it is not surprising that their condition should have deteriorated.(38)

The Manager admitted that 'natives' could avoid appearing at the final medical inspection if they "had any doubts that the doctor will not allow them to proceed to their homes."(39) To prevent this situation recurring in future, therefore, the system already in operation in Luabo was to be adopted at Marromeu. When given their final medical examination, the doctor would issue cards to those men he found fit to travel. Immediately before leaving the estate these cards would be collected by a European employee. The men would thus receive a second inspection from the overseer and would be prevented from leaving if they were found unfit.(40)

The breakdown of the system of final medical inspections after 1939 probably occurred for two related reasons. On the one hand, SSE wanted to avoid high mortality rates on the estates. From SSE's point of view it was better than the men died at home than at work. Deaths, other than from accidents, led to awkward questions and enquiries by the authorities. The end result of these enquiries, as has already been demonstrated, was pressure on the firm to improve the facilities provided. This in turn implied increased expenditure on labour. On the other hand, keeping back workers who were sick itself meant spending money on their care; care which, however rudimentary, had to be provided after the worker had ceased to be of any use to the company. Further, if, as often happened, the worker died after admission to hospital, another enquiry was likely to follow, with the consequences described above. The lack of a rigorous inspection at the beginning of the recruitment process, however, arose for different reasons.

Medical Examinations of Recruited Workers

When workers were recruited by SSE they received a medical examination from a doctor employed by the company for that purpose. Until 1942, these examinations were made '*en masse*'. However, in that year, SSE's doctor on the estates complained about the way in which men were selected for work. The complaint arose after the repatriation of a group of workers from Angonia. 792 men were contracted in April 1941. A year later 688 were repatriated. Of the remainder, 17 had not arrived at the estate in the first place, 32 had escaped, eight had already been repatriated, 16 men had died

and 31 were in the company's hospital.(41) In his report about this particular group of contracted men SSE's doctor complained about their poor physical condition. He added that many of them should never have been recruited in the first place.

> The bad recruitment when men are contracted, in the overwhelming majority [of cases] of weak physical constitution, many being over 45 years of age or boys without the necessary robustness and at a critical age in their development... [has] contributed to the high and even exceptional morbidity and mortality rates for this property... Almost all of the Angonis, approximately 85 per cent leave Marromeu in a weakened state.(42)

The recruiter responsible for engaging these men wrote to the doctor who had examined them on recruitment asking for confirmation that they were healthy when they left their homes. He felt that he was being blamed for their poor physical state.(43)

The doctor replied to the effect that of the 49 'natives' rejected by SSE in May 1942 he had only examined 38. The two leaders of the group were well. He added that there were certainly some old men among the group but said that it was well-known that SSE in a "laudable attitude of care and protection for the native" gave them light work such as compound cleaning. Nevertheless the doctor criticised the system of mass inspections and added that these had now been replaced by individual examinations.(44)

Yet, despite the doctor's criticisms the selection of men without the necessary strength to cope with plantation labour continued in other areas. For instance, in 1954, referring to the deaths of the two men cited above, the Manager of the Marromeu estate admitted that "the Maganjas, generally speaking, have, for

some time been considered a poor type of labour, and a large percentage of each batch requires medical attention, but to my mind this particular guia was composed of a very poor type of native."(45) This opinion was confirmed by the doctor who had examined the men in question before they left for the estates. He felt that the 'race' was physically deficient. "They can die from moment to moment... especially natives who in the majority, such as the Angurus, have very weak physical resistance from birth."(46) The doctor suggested that the medical examination on recruitment should be supplemented by a further examination when the men arrived at the estates, because the 'natives' practised all sorts of subterfuges and substituted each other at the examinations. However his next words undermined this assertion, for by implication they revealed the absolute inadequacy of the first examination. So long was the list of complaints from which men suffered that it would have been impossible for healthy men to have substituted all those who were unhealthy in the first examination. The doctor wanted to

> repatriate immediately after their arrival all the workers with heart complaints, anaemia, hernias, those without limbs, cripples, the almost blind, deaf-mutes etc., who are frequently and in abuse [of the law] sent to work in our company.(47)

He added that he also wanted to reject natives "who, on being contracted suffer from the following symptoms: hernias, but who say that they can and want to work, and the same thing when one is dealing with people suffering from hydrocele and sometimes people with heart disease for whom not even the lightest work is possible, and the same thing for limbless men, cripples etc. when the situation occurs from time to time." In substantiation of his claim the doctor added that "not long ago there arrived at Marromeu a contingent

of some 300 men of whom 37 were immediately admitted to hospital and many more were admitted in the first days after their arrival."(48) The vicious cycle of original infection, increased debility and secondary complications, alluded to above, started at the point of recruitment. Men who were already unfit were passed as fit in the mass inspections. If they did not succumb to illness on the journey to the estates they gradually became sick during the course of the contract.

It is reasonable to assume that the numbers of men who slipped through the medical inspections(49) was a reflection of the growing labour shortage in Zambézia. As the pool of able-bodied men dried up so labour recruiters were increasingly obliged to contract men who were not able-bodied, either through physical incapacity, old age or because they were too young to cope with the arduous work. Until the numbers slipping through reached proportions which could not be ignored, the company's doctors colluded with the recruiters. To the degree that workers were expendable and to the degree that they received no wages and no food for the days when they did not work, SSE had little to lose by turning a blind eye to the irregular practices of its recruiters.

This chapter has examined a range of illnesses suffered by the labour force at SSE. It has also looked at the measures introduced by the company to deal with sickness among the labour force. Most of the afflictions suffered by plantation workers were the result of a combination of poor diet and overcorwded and unhygienic housing conditions. Even when diseases could not be attributed

directly to these causes their transmission and/or hold on the individual was facilitated by them. Prevention of disease required not only a concerted attack on living conditions on the estates but also the development of a wide-ranging health education programme in conjunction with an effective curative health service. Neither the state nor the estate was prepared to consider either of these possibilities seriously. On the one hand they implied a substantial increase in expenditure. On the other the ideology of forced labour militated against them for ill health was seen primarily as a means of avoiding work. The lack of concern over health and the consequent lack of health care facilities resulted in a work force which was weak and sickly if not actually racked by illness.

The policy pursued by state and company alike in Zambézia with regard to the health of the labour force had obvious repercussions on other aspects of policy. For example, the ill-health of the labour force affected the men's ability to produce the task demanded of them. Ultimately it meant that companies such as SSE had to tolerate reduced levels of production.(50) Yet, as has been shown elsewhere, one of SSE's aims was to increase the productivity of the labour force. How, then, is this apparent paradox to be explained? Its explanation is consistent with the main argument of this dissertation and lies in the very nature of the forced migrant labour system which operated in Zambézia. While labour was coerced into wage work by the colonial state at wages set in the employer's favour there was little need to increase production by employing a healthy work force. Brute force was a cheaper method of maintaining production levels than investing in effective preventive and curative

health care. Providing the worker only missed the occasional day's work the overall cost of maintaining the labourer was low, for on the days when he was sick he received neither food nor payment. If, on the other hand, he managed to work for part of the day, the company actually stood to gain from his debility because he did not receive payment for partial task completion. Finally, as long as the worker was not hospitalised for an extended period during the contract the burden of supporting his physical recuperation fell on his family. During the six months "rest" period his health recovered sufficiently for him to take up another contract, unless he died. And if he died coercion by the state and the rotating supply of labour ensured that another man would take his place. General debility and weakness could therefore be tolerated to the extent that it did not prevent men from working for lengthy periods. However, as has been demonstrated, SSE increasingly started to recruit men who were likely to be ill for part if not all of the contract period. This policy, which could have had no economic advantage, can only be explained by the growing labour shortage in Zambézia. SSE presumably felt that it was better to recruit men who might produce a task, even if crippled or ill, than to forego the use of their labour altogether. It can only be assumed that it was cheaper to support sick workers than to instal labour-saving machinery.

Quite apart from the long-term effects of such policies on generations of workers and their families in Zambézia, the short-term effects of SSE's policies reveal a total disregard for the welfare of the labour force. The sickness and death of a worker

was not a matter of human concern. It mattered only to the degree that it might reflect on the company's image and lead to unwelcome attention from the authorities. Workers at SSE were, as far as the company's management was concerned, no more than units of production to be put to work in the least costly way.

NOTES

(1) SSE Ar., File 133, Recruiting, Quelimane and Angonia (1930-1939), Prov. de Moc., Dirrecção dos Serviços de Fazenda, Contrato feito entre o Estado e a Firma Sena Sugar Estates, Ltd., para Ampliar a Produção das suas Fábricas Assucareiras em Mais Quinze Mil Toneladas (15:000) da Actual Produção pelo Prazo de Vinte Anos, 9 May 1921.

(2) RTI, Art. 222, 3°, p. 66.

(3) RTI, Art. 237, p. 71.

(4) SSE Ar., File 118, Native Compound, Mr Nurse to Col. Hornung, 23 July 1931.

(5) SSE Ar., File 135, Tick Fever in Compounds, Vianna Rodrigues, Acampamentos dos Trabalhadores, 23 Feb. 1944.

(6) SSE Ar., File 135, Fernando Barros to Gerente Geral Luabo, 4 Mar. 1944, Febre Recorrente e Medidas para a Combater nos Acampamentos de Trânsito entre Mopeia e Nicoadala. The effects of deparasiting the men and their baggage were not entirely physical; they were also psychological, analogous perhaps to the routine of prisons, mental hospitals or indeed that of any total institution. For a fuller discussion of this theme and other parallels with the situation at SSE see Erving Goffman, Asylums: Essays on the Social Situation of Mental Patients and other Inmates (Pelican Books, 1968), especially pp. 23-46.

(7) SSE Ar., File 135, Vianna Rodrigues, 23 Feb. 1944, op. cit.

(8) ibid. In fact, as already demonstrated in Chapter VII huts were not built to replace the barracks on transit compounds, and conditions on the transit camps deteriorated after this date.

(9) SSE Ar., File 135, Vianna Rodrigues, 23 Feb. 1944, op. cit.

(10) SSE Ar., File 135, António J. Barros Lima to Gerente Geral SSE Marromeu, 29 Feb. 1944, and Fernando Barros to Gerente Geral 4 Mar. 1944, op. cit.

(11) SSE Ar., File 93, Labour and Recruiting, Government Side, Torre do Vale de Lacerda to SSE Marromeu, 25 Mar. 1953.

(12) SSE Ar., File 93, MT General Manager to Estate Manager M/meu/Caia, 3 Apr. 1953, No. 24/53 MGT.

(13) Notwithstanding the fact that the costs of maintaining sick workers had been specifically advanced as one of the reasons preventive measures were needed in 1944 (SSE Ar., File 135, Vianna Rodrigues, 23 Feb. 1944.) SSE's policy of doing the minimum possible was also pursued in spite of the fact that the company's management had been alerted to the dangers of easy transmission of ticks and the fever to Europeans: SSE Ar., File 135, J. Barros Lima to Gerente Geral Marromeu, 29 Feb. 1944 and Fernando Barros to Gerente Geral 4 Mar. 1944, op. cit.

(14) SSE Ar., File 138 (Obsolete), The Case of Dr. Saboya Ramos, J. Saboya Ramos to Gerente da SSE Ltd. Marromeu, 1 July 1939.

(15) SSE Ar., File 94, Labour for Marromeu, MT General Manager to Estate Manager Marromeu/Caia, 6 May 1939, No. 45/39 MGT, Anguru Labour Recently Repatriated.

(16) SSE Ar., File 138, Saboya Ramos to Gerente SSE, 1 July 1939, op. cit. (Translation J.H.)

(17) ibid. (Translation J.H.)

(18) SSE Ar., File 204, Native Diet and Rations, Abel da Costa Ferreira, Admin. do Concelho do Chinde, to Gerente Geral SSE, 26 Jan. 1942, No. 129/B/15, Enclosing Information from the Administrator of Alto Molócuè given on 14 Aug. 1939 and from Dr. Calisto Baptista, Sub-Delegado do Saúde, Circ. de Massingire.

(19) SSE Ar., File 138, Saboya Ramos to Gerente SSE, 1 July 1939, op. cit. (Translation J.H.)

(20) SSE Ar., File 204, SSE Ltd n.n. to Governador Geral da Prov. de Moc., 15 Dec. 1956. (Translation J.H.)

(21) "The natives consider the locust a splendid titbit. They eat them, after they have been cleaned and cooked, with a sauce which does not compete with those of the celebrated 'savarin' but which is much appreciated!!!" (SSE Ar., File 138, Saboya Ramos to Gerente SSE, 1 July 1939, op. cit.) (Translation J.H.)

(22) ibid.

(23) SSE Ar., File 135, Fernando Barros to Gerente Geral, 4 Mar. 1944, op. cit. The sugar sack was the only form of protective clothing the workers received, even when they entered the cane fields after the leaves had been burnt off the plants prior to harvesting. Barros suggested that during the dry season the workers should receive the sack when they arrived in Mopeia. They could then use it to keep themselves warm while their own clothes were drying after disinfection.

(24) SSE Ar., File 204, Abel da Costa Ferreira to Gerente Geral SSE, 26 Jan. 1942, op. cit.

(25) SSE Ar., File 93, Torre do Vale de Lacerda to Gerente Geral SSE Luabo, por Intermédio do Gerente Geral da Propriedade de Marromeu, 5 May 1954.

(26) SSE Ar., File 133A, Recruiting, Angonia, Quelimane, Local, MJG (Gomes) to Director de Admin. Civil da Zambézia, Quelimane, 12 Oct. 1954, Deaths at SSE between January and September 1954.

(27) There were only eight primary schools in the whole province in 1947, but "Africans hardly attend them for, as a result of the legal dispositions in force, only assimilados can be admitted." For African pupils the Catholic Church ran 'rudimentary' schools. In 1942, 1500 students matriculated from the 'rudimentary' schools in Zambezia. In 1946 the syllabus of the 'rudimentary' schools was "profoundly altered". According to the Governor of Zambezia "the new programmes mark, without any doubt at all, a better understanding of the needs and reality of the native pupil, and are not imbued with the mysticism of the ABC which dominated the rudimentary schools in the previous period." The aims of the rudimentary schools were "1) to teach the pupils to work and to instil in them a sense of the dignity of work, 2) to teach them to speak the Portuguese language, 3) to teach the most apt pupils to read and write." (GOV. Q, Col. de Moç., Prov. da Zambézia, Relatório do Governador, Capitão da Infantaria César Maria de Serpa Rosa, Respeitante ao Périodo de 4 de Maio de 1943 a 31 de Dezembro de 1947, pp. 18-24). (Translation J.H.) (Emphasis added).

(28) Relatório do Governador (Zambézia) 1943...1947, op. cit., pp. 40-46.

(29) SSE Ar., File 118, Dirreção dos Serviços de Saúde, Instrucções para a Campanha a favor da Limpeza dos Indígenas de Moçambique, LM, 17 Mar. 1944, o Director dos Serviços de Saúde, Aires Pinto Ribeiro; SSE Ar., File 118, Círculo de Saúde da Zambézia, Sobre a Campanha contra Infestações, o Inspector, Candido de Barros, Med. Insp. Desg., 4 Sep. 1956, Quelimane, Re: Informação No. 26 deste Círculo de Saúde.

(30) RTI, Art. 225, p. 67. For the detailed legal dispositions concerning medical assistance for 'natives' see pp. 66-73.

(31) Relatório do Governador (Zambézia) 1943... 1947, op. cit., p.50.

(32) SSE Ar., File 138, Saboya Ramos to Gerente SSE, 1 July 1939, op. cit. It can only be assumed that since the totals of patients which the hospital could accommodate do not tally with the number of beds given, there were in fact only 64 actual beds, although floor space existed for more patients. (Translation J.H.)

(33) SSE Ar., File 118, Camilo Ferreira d'Almeida Circ. Admin. de Mopeia to Gerente Geral SSE Luabo, 12 June 1951, Acampamento de Transito da Sena Sugar Estates. (Translation J.H.)

(34) In many ways this attitude is analogous to the philosophy which governed the nineteenth century Poor Law Reform in Britain. Relief was seen as a means by which the idle would avoid wage work "It [relief] gives him, strange as it may appear, a sort of independence. He need not bestir himself to seek work, he need not study to please his master; he need not put any restraint upon his temper; he need not ask relief as a favour. He has all the slave's security for subsistence, without his liability for punishment." (Tony Novak, "Social Policy, Poverty and the Working Class, the 1934 Poor Law Amendment Act" (Durham University Political Economy Group, Paper presented 28 Oct. 1975), mimeo, p. 12, citing the Report of His Majesty's Commissioners for Enquiring into the Administration and Practical Operation of the Poor Laws, 1834, p. 57). In both cases it was assumed that the provision of adequate hospitals or reasonable unemployment relief would encourage the worker to cease employment.

(35) Interview at Muide Compound, SSE Luabo, 14 Nov. 1976. (Translation J.H.) cf. Charles van Onselen, Chibaro: African Mine Labour in Southern Rhodesia, 1900-1933 (Pluto Press, London, 1976), p. 59.

(36) SSE Ar., File 138, Saboya Ramos to Gerente SSE, 1 July 1939, op. cit. (Translation J.H.)

(37) SSE Ar., File 93, António Queiroz Mopeia to Gerente Geral Luabo, 28 Apr. 1954, No. 6/54/MGT.

(38) SSE Ar., File 93, [Manager] Marromeu to General Manager Luabo, 13 May 1954, No. 39/54 "Mgt", Case of the Maganja Repatriates.

(39) ibid.

(40) ibid.

(41) SSE Ar., File 94, [Manager] Marromeu to D. António de Noronha M'kame Angonia Portuguesa, 24 Apr. 1942, Natives recruited by D. António de Noronha, Circ. de Angonia, Contracts 1, 2, 3/41 of 22 Apr. 1941.

(42) SSE Ar., File 94, João Sabaia [sic] Ramos to Gerente Geral SSE, 25 Apr. 1942. (Translation J.H.)

(43) SSE Ar., File 94, António de Noronha M'kame to Dr. Ayres de Sousa Neves Vila Coutinho, 7 Aug. 1942.

(44) SSE Ar., File 94, Dr. Ayres Correa de Sousa Neves Vila Mouzinho to SSE Agente M'kame, (n.d. but from other correspondence on the file probably 13 Aug. 1942). (Translation J.H.)

(45) SSE Ar., File 93, [Manager] Marromeu to General Manager, 13 May 1954, op. cit.

(46) SSE Ar., File 93, Torre do Vale de Lacerda to Gerente Geral SSE, 5 May 1954, op. cit. (Translation J.H.)

(47) ibid. (Translation J.H.)

(48) ibid. (Translation J.H.)

(49) SSE Ar., File 184, Native Labour Organisation, Hut Tax, MT General Manager to M.J. Gomes Luabo 29 June 1954, No. 77/54/Mgt. The General Manager here referred to the large numbers of labourers, who slipped by with normal contingents, who were not fit to do a day's work.

(50) This was a situation that had parallels in many other areas where plantation production existed. According to the ILO "in general, conditions on estates do not favour good health, and many diseases are prevalent. The state of under- and mal-nourishment greatly diminishes resistance to diseases and deprives workers of the physical stamina necessary for hard and sustained work. Laziness and lack of interest in work, of which plantation workers are occasionally accused, may often be the result of disease and/or undernutrition." (ILO, Committee of Work on Plantations, Third Session, Geneva 1955, Living and Working Conditions and Productivity on Plantations (ILO Geneva, 1955) p. 101). On p. 103 the report outlines some of the more common diseases found on plantations, and discusses their causes and effects. The diseases are all the diseases (with the exception of tick-fever) which have been discussed in this chapter. The Report concludes: "the high incidence of certain diseases reflects the low level of health of workers on some of the estates which must at least in part be ascribed to unsatisfactory living conditions. No doubt this state of health affects the level of labour productivity."

PART II

THE IMPACT OF THE COERCIVE LABOUR REGIME, 1930-1960

ii. Workers' Responses to Forced Migrant Labour

CHAPTER IX

THE STRUGGLE AGAINST LABOUR RECRUITMENT

The single most important factor which shaped workers' responses to migrant labour was their condition as forced labour. Regardless of their personal inclinations or the existence of alternative opportunities for making a living, African men between the ages of 18 and 55 were obliged by law to enter an annual contract either with the state or a private employer. It was only in 1962 that the RTI, which asserted the duty of African men to take up regular employment, was abolished, and even after this date forced labour continued, albeit in a disguised form.

The effect of this legislation, as already demonstrated, was the development of a system of labour organisation and supply in which the state took on the central role in providing capital with labour. It was state officials, the administrators and their subordinates, the state-appointed chiefs and headmen, who were directly responsible for rounding up men for work on plantations. The role of the private recruiter was, in general, limited to collecting his contingent of men and boys at the 'concentration' organised by the administrator. It was also state officials who supervised the work of contracted men with private employers and who punished men who failed to fulfil the conditions of their contracts. This meant that at every stage of the labour recruitment process contracted workers came into direct contact with the state. Indeed,

their primary contact with wage work was not with capital but with the state. They saw themselves being "bought" by private companies from the state.(1) It was, therefore, primarily towards the state and against the labour system as such that their energies were directed. It is this that explains the need for coercion to conscript men in the first place and the increasing use of coercion over time. However, the degree to which men could express their opposition to the labour system was severely limited by the extensive nature of the controls and punishments which were part and parcel of it. Organised protest, except at the most spontaneous level, required great personal courage and was doomed to almost certain failure. Unable to confront the state through direct political action and still less through open rebellion, migrant workers were forced to adopt a strategy which involved avoiding the demands of the state and hence avoiding forced labour. This chapter will examine the four principal forms this strategy took.

MANIPULATING THE CONTRADICTIONS OF ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY

One of the problems the Portuguese colonial state encountered in its attempt to impose an administration which would generate revenue through tax collection and mobilise labour for capital was the effective use of indigenous political leaders. Like many other colonial regimes elsewhere, the Portuguese followed a policy of delegating authority to 'traditional' rulers who acted as the agents of its authority and actually saw that the law was carried out at base level. The Portuguese devised a three-tier system of 'native' authorities. At the highest level there was the regedor or 'chief' who supervised the work of the sub-chiefs under him and was directly

responsible to the administrator or chefe de Posto. Below the regedor were the chefes de Grupos de Povoações who supervised a number of hamlets. Finally, there was the chefe de Povoação, or the head of the hamlet. Orders from the administrator were transmitted through these three tiers and finally executed by the lowest-level 'chief', the village headman.(2) By ensuring that a compliant strata of 'chiefs' and 'headmen' were inserted into positions of authority within the wider administrative divisions, responsibility for tax collection and labour conscription could be devolved to them without the expense of employing an extensive network of European administrative officials. Apart from the purely economic function of this system of delegated authority it also served an ideological purpose. It meant that the population was divided amongst itself. Criticisms of the regime as such could be deflected to criticisms of individuals who supported it. The fostering of divisions among the people in turn meant that the possibility of recognition of their common experience of oppression and united opposition to it was minimised.

However, the system of delegating certain areas of responsibility to the 'native authorities' implied a series of practical problems. These confronted the regime in some areas of the Province throughout the period under study. Firstly, the over-riding aim of the colonial authorities was to impose the most cost-effective administration. This meant that ideally, administrative boundaries had to correspond to population distribution. It was clearly uneconomic to maintain posts with only a small and scattered population which cost as much to run as posts with a large and concentrated population. On the other hand, in areas where the population was dispersed, or if in general the administrative unit

was very large, control over the population, which was clearly as important as rational economic organisation, was undermined. Secondly, rational definition of the boundaries of administrative units from the economic and demographic standpoints conflicted with the actual organisation and distribution of the 'traditional' authorities. Reorganisation of administrative divisions to obey economic and demographic criteria implied splitting up the traditional socio-economic and political units and with it unrest. Thirdly, moulding a strata of compliant 'chiefs' and 'headmen' in itself implied eliminating those traditional leaders who were recalcitrant, disobedient, or otherwise ineffective from the administration's point of view. It entailed a contradiction between the need to use 'native authorities' whom the people would respect and obey and the need to find 'native authorities' who would themselves respect and obey the government. The confusion which resulted from the various attempts to reconcile these contradictory needs gave the ordinary people an opportunity to avoid the demands of the regime. Through a brief discussion of the administrative history of the circumscription of Alto Molócuè I shall show how this happened.

Between 1919, when a civil administration was first installed in Alto Molócuè, and 1933, when the external boundaries of the district took the shape they were to retain for the rest of the colonial period, the major preoccupation of successive administrators was to reorganise the internal boundaries of the district in order to maximise the revenue from tax collection and minimise the expense incurred in gathering it.

According to the writer of the administrative history of the area, commissioned by the Governor of Zambézia in 1954, it appeared to some people that after 1933 the problems of effective administration had been resolved through boundary changes. In his opinion, however, these changes only led to further confusion which increased the problems of the administration.

> With the fusion of areas confusion arose about the native authorities and there was a consequent impossibility of supervising and administering the areas and people by the administrative authority, and / there was / the dispersal of documents and the disappearance of old buildings, which are being destroyed by the weather.(3)

These problems were compounded by the frequent reorganisation of the areas supervised by the native authorities; brought about in an attempt to rationalise tax collection.

> We remember that in 1947 it was ordered that regedorias which did not have at least 500 taxpayers should be fused. Absolute barbarities were committed, to the point where there were some administrative posts of over 8000 square kilometres with only one regedor or two, because the number of taxpayers did not allow for more.(4)

The writer of the history, the then Administrator of Alto Molócuè, remarked that these reforms were errors "only justified on the basis of the principle of reducing expenses." He added "and it has been in obedience of this terrible principle that the circumscription of Alto Molócuè is now and from the point of view of native policy divided in the worst possible way and badly administered."(5)

In practise, as the Administrator pointed out, the frequent reforms rather than consolidating colonial rule tended to undermine it for they afforded the ordinary people an opportunity to ease the burdens imposed on them. One way of doing this was to move out of

the area of an unpopular 'native' authority and into the area of one who was less rigorous in fulfilling his duty. These moves generally took place when the government interfered with the succession of the traditional rulers. There was, for instance the case of the Regedor Nivava.

In 1921 the Regedor Nivava was responsible for collecting 893 taxes. In 1938, however, the authorities decided to abolish the Regedoria because the incumbent at that time was a "bad servant". The people under his jurisdiction passed instead to that of the Regedor Malua. There was discontent among the people as a result of this change which led to the movement of large numbers of people to Milange, Nyasaland and the Administrative Post of Molumbo. Over time the region became more and more depopulated and was gradually invaded by wild animals, and especially by lion and leopard. This in turn led to further population movement from the area until finally, even those who were "most attached" to the soil had moved away.

In 1939 or 1940 those people who had stayed with the Regedor Malua used a change of administrator to ask to be liberated from a chief who in three years had done nothing positive for them. On the contrary "whenever the Regedor Malua was called upon to do any work he went to the [former] Regedoria Nivava and sacrificed people for contracts, for unpaid labour service [contribuição braçal] and for the roads." As a result "many people took flight... until the administrative authority took note and once again restored authority to those from whom it had been taken, although to a new individual from the lands and family of the old Nivava."(6)

The new incumbant was a certain Pedro Nivava who, according to the writer, was an alcoholic and a drug addict who had not the slightest notion of his duties and responsibilities. Pedro Nivava was finally exiled for concealing a murder committed by his assistant. The Regedoria then passed to André Nivava who was the closest heir in the blood line. He was chosen by the people. Other regedorias were subsequently incorporated into that of Nivava and by 1954, the Regedor controlled 465 taxpayers (2,334 people).(7)

The administrator did not record the effects of the incorporation of smaller regedorias into the reformed Regedoria Nivava. However, examples of similar reorganisations elsewhere in the circumscription suggest that reorganisation was usually accompanied by discontent which expressed itself in a flight of people. Changes in administrators usually led to petitions to restore the old rulers. Fearful of losing still more people the administrator often had to succumb to these demands even if the person chosen was patently unsuitable from his point of view.

The second major way in which people were able to profit from the contradictions of administrative policy was to attempt, when reorganisations were taking place, to ensure the nomination of chiefs who were acceptable to them. Even if the regedoria was left unaltered the administrator still had to try and ensure that only those candidates who were acceptable to the colonial government succeeded. However, this was difficult, because the colonial authorities were generally ignorant of the lines of succession(8) and the people used their ignorance to further confuse the authorities whenever the question of succession arose.

In his 1954 Report, the Administrator of Alto Molócuè placed great emphasis on the problem of succession. He described typical meetings he had held with the people to tell them of the Governor's intention of establishing a "native hierarchy" on the true blood lines. He tried to encourage the people to discuss their choice of chief but on the whole encountered only "a great lack of interest" among them. He wrote that he and his colleagues had repeatedly brought the question up at census meetings where most of the people were gathered: "attentive faces but absent minds". As the meeting progressed more and more people started to fidget and finally to steal away "on the sly". Asked about the first representatives of local authority few if any knew how to answer "but instead tell the story of such and such a man who presented himself to the whites and offered them a goat or some help." When it came to the question of geneaology the people became very muddled confusing "sons with nephews, grandparents with aunts and uncles and the detailed distinction between the true blood line and the interest they have begun to want to sell us, to ensure their own comfort, is impossible to make." Various illegitimate successors were suggested until the true blood line was lost.

> The talk continues with a smaller and smaller audience, until in the end half a dozen old natives are left listening to us. Generally speaking they indicate not the true heir but a native who, resembling and distantly related to one of the many to whom reference has been made, has the following qualities: indifference and lack of interest, obvious mean-spiritedness, attraction to idleness and vagrancy and no desire to work hard. In short, the choice falls on the individual who will offer them the most comfortable, lazy and drunken life. Often, faced with various candidates we ask the question "why did you choose this one and not that one who seems to us to have an equal right but more self-confidence." Silence, and the crest-fallen gaze of those present continues

> until one of them raises his head and, facing the immediate censure of the rest, says "we want this one because he does not seize people."... In fact, the mentality of the people is this: they want a chief who does not seize people, who does not investigate idleness and crime...(9)

Without more detailed studies of individual circumscriptions, like the one above, it is impossible to say how generalised this tactic was. The limited evidence available suggests that it was most effective in outlying regions where capital and settler penetration were weakest. In areas where European settlement and capital penetration were greater, in an arc spreading out from Quelimane with an arm along the Zambesi river, problems of administrative control had probably been resolved. Here it was, for example, in the urban and semi-urban areas that administrators could ignore the lines of succession and appoint the men of their choice to positions in the 'native hierarchy'.(10) Nevertheless, even in these areas there was no guarantee that 'chiefs' and 'headmen' would be scrupulous in carrying out their duties. They formed an intermediary strata between the authorities and the people and were therefore, subject to pressure from both. Some clearly opted for the advantages that office brought. Others, on the other hand, tried to balance the demands of the authorities against their desire to maintain the people's respect.(11)

The two tactics described above, namely, fleeing to an area where either the native authorities or the colonial officials were more lenient in their demands, and confusing the administrative authorities to ensure the succession of native authorities who would not be over-zealous in the fulfilment of their duties, or who could

be bribed to prevent the recruitment of men(12) were tactics which rested on the notion of prevarication. Their objective was to delay the inevitable for as long as possible.

POSTPONING THE CONTRACT FOR AS LONG AS POSSIBLE

Another form of prevarication practised by men in Zambézia involved trying to postpone the contract either indefinitely or at least until the time when it was least inconvenient for the individual to leave his own home. It appears from SSE's records that it was always difficult to recruit labour during the planting season and after harvests. For instance, in his 1958 recruiting report, SSE's recruiter in Zambézia wrote that it would probably be difficult to arrange enough men to replace those leaving the estates in August and September, for the reasons which arose every year.

> With the appearance of the cotton and rice markets, the natives have quite enough money at their disposal to pay their taxes and meet their other needs, thus avoiding contracting themselves.
>
> On the other hand, land preparation for the new cotton machambas [fields], work done exclusively by men, has begun.(13)

One of the ways in which men managed to delay the contract was by using a change of administrator to play for time, since it took a while for the new incumbant to familiarise himself with local conditions. Thus, for example, while the Administrator of Maganja was absent for a period during 1951 the recruiting situation deteriorated in the area.(14) Similarly, in 1958 the difficulties over recruitment, alluded to above, were exacerbated by the absence

of the administrator, who was on leave.(15) In the same year the recruiting situation in Morrumbala was "bad" because the area was without an administrator. According to SSE's recruiter in the area, things would only return to normal when an administrator was appointed.(16)

Men also took advantage of changes in 'native' policy to avoid taking up a contract. Hence, when forced recruiting was temporarily suspended in 1944, SSE's recruiter in the Ile/Gile/Mulevala region of northern Zambézia anticipated that this change would lead to "some difficulties and a little resistance on the part of the natives, who, in recent years have always been accustomed to being forced to come to work by the authorities."(17)

More serious were the fears at the end of the 1950s that forced recruiting would come to a complete end. SSE's views on the possible change in the law were expressed by one of the company's directors in a letter to the General Manager.

> If the obligation to work after the six months rest period were not enforced, I feel that the labour position throughout the district would become chaotic. For many years now the Native has been educated in the belief that he only has to find work when the Administrator [obliges him]. Consequently, if that pressure were removed it is probable that the great majority of the labour force in the District would be content to remain in their villages and quickly lose the little civilisation which they gain during the six months that they spend with us.(18)

The Director's fears were realised for when forced recruiting was officially banned in 1962 the immediate result was that men were very difficult to engage. The numbers of men recruited from inland Zambézia, Mopeia and Morrumbala dropped considerably.

By August, despite the fact that it was a "notoriously bad month" for recruitment, there was a growing reluctance of any man to work. "Our recruiters are no doubt doing all they can but they are so used to being helped by the Government Authorities that they are inclined to resign themselves to the fact that without such help they will be unable to produce the desired results."(19)

FLEEING ABROAD

The first part of this chapter showed how men living in areas of the province which were least effectively administered were able to avoid entering a contract by moving out of areas where the authorities were active to areas where they were either unable or unwilling to fulfill their duties seriously. In general these areas comprised the northern border of the province with Moçambique Province. Along the extensive border with Nyasaland a similar problem existed, although here it was compounded by less repressive living and working conditions in the English colony. According to the Administrator of Milange the authorities in Nyasaland were attracting men from Mozambique

> because of the excessive liberties that they concede to him. Today they regret this and are sorry that they did not adopt our methods. The working conditions offered to the native worker there are inferior to those offered in Milange, but the native enjoys freedom to work which borders on vagrancy, and it is that liberty which leads to a situation where he prefers to work in Nyasaland... Understand, therefore, that emigration... has as its principal cause the lack of forced labour in that Territory.(20)

The wild, hilly country along the Nyasaland border, its length, and the lack of European penetration in parts of it all combined to make effective patrolling of the numerous crossing points impossible. As a result, clandestine emigration to Nyasaland was a problem which plagued the authorities throughout the period. It was, moreover, an exodus which had more serious implications than the temporary avoidance of wage labour within Zambézia, for it implied an absolute withdrawal of labour from the province and a drain on the pool of cheap labour which employers and the state alike were both so concerned to maintain.

Reference has already been made in passing to the withdrawal of groups of people to Nyasaland when administrative boundaries were changed or the 'native authorities' replaced. In addition to these population movements there was also a continual trickle of individual men across the border. Milange appears to have been a favourite crossing place. Men who had completed a contract on the tea-plantations on the Portuguese side of the border would then cross to Nyasaland in search of work.(21)

Because the emigration was clandestine accurate estimates of the numbers of men involved do not exist. However, that it was a grave problem is demonstrated by the authorities' response to it. Until the mid-1950s the labour laws were relaxed in both Morrumbala and Milange to prevent a wholesale exodus of people.(22) In addition, the unpaid labour service or contribuição braçal was replaced by a money tax in the border regions in an attempt to discourage men from emigrating to avoid it.(23) Finally, there was

a campaign in the mid-1940s to encourage the cultivation of the candlenut tree [aleurite]. This "very appreciable source of wealth" was intended to attract men back from Nyasaland and at the same time to dissuade others from leaving Zambézia.(24)

For a short while in the mid-1940s it appeared that the emigration had stopped. This was when the aleurite cultivation programme was introduced "to consolidate this exceptional situation."(25) [Emphasis added]. The emigration only apparently stopped however, because although the census for 1947 revealed a net increase of 88,627 more individuals in Zambézia than in the 1943 census, the census was never accurate.(26) Furthermore, it was relatively easy for men to cross and recross the borders and to confuse the authorities by registering as nationals on both sides or by keeping a family on one side of the frontier and registering on the other.(27) The authorities lack of awareness of the full extent of the problem is also revealed by their discovery that men from Mozambique were selling their passes to men from Nyasaland.

> Natives who hold identity cards issued in our territory frequently die in Rhodesia and even South Africa. Their effects are sent to Milange bur rarely are the heirs found, and it happens even, at times, that the very native, given as dead, is found in his home. After investigations have been conducted the following emerges: the Nyasaland authorities do not allow natives from that territory to leave for Rhodesia or South Africa, and those natives, in order to be able to emigrate, buy the passes of Portuguese natives, since, as Portuguese natives they can emigrate. The trade in passes has reached considerable proportions but it is being rigorously suppressed by stopping the renewal of passes which have been mislaid unless the veracity of the claim is proven.(28)
> (Emphasis added)

An intense dislike of forced labour and the compulsory period of labour service, coercion to recruit men and the lack of choice of employer which accompanied it, appear to have been the principal reasons for the flight of men to Nyasaland. Yet, for men who did not live near the western border of the province this option was not available. They had to resort to other means to avoid forced labour.

"PLAYING OFF" THE DIFFERENT SECTIONS OF CAPITAL AGAINST EACH OTHER

In Chapter IV the effects of the growing demand for labour within Zambézia were discussed. The chapter argued that at the provincial level the demand for labour was controlled by the readjustment of recruiting zones within Zambézia and by other measures designed to redistribute labour within and between the different sections of capital in the region. These changes were accompanied by the introduction of harsher penalties for men who infringed the labour law. The chapter also attempted to show, however, that in spite of these developments, at district (as opposed to provincial) level, where the actual distribution of labour depended directly on the administrator concerned and his interpretation of the regulations, the growing shortage of labour was often accompanied by growing competition for labour. One of the major areas of competition discussed was that between cotton concessionaries and the labour recruiters for plantations. SSE was partially able to resolve this problem through its policy of only distributing cotton seed to women on its own concession. In

other areas, however, as has been shown, cotton concessionaries sought various legal and illegal means of acquiring male labour.

The widespread resistance to forced cotton cultivation and the general abhorrance felt by women cultivators towards the crop(29) should not obscure the fact that there was a distinction between the cultivation women were obliged to enter and the cultivation that men could opt to take up. Women appear to have been forced to grow cotton whether they wanted to or not and this in addition to their normal cultivation of food and/or cash crops. Men, on the other hand, could register as cotton farmers provided they agreed to sow one hectare of land and an additional half hectare for each wife. Cotton growing was thereafter regarded as their full-time occupation and they were exempted from the obligation to enter a contract.(30) Thus, whereas forced cotton cultivation undertaken by women was analogous to the forced labour undertaken by men, for men it provided an alternative to forced labour and one that offered certain advantages. Firstly, whereas most plantation workers were separated from their families and had no contact with them during the course of the contract, cotton farmers lived at home. Secondly, by cultivating cotton and working on the family plot the danger of the family starving was reduced. Thirdly, whereas the contract labourer worked for others, the cotton farmer appeared to be working for himself, and appeared to control his own means of production. Fourthly, despite controlled prices the evidence also suggests that "considerable sums" could be earned from cotton production. There are references in the records relating to the 1940s to the amount of cash available from cotton; these continue

into the 1950s. In 1956, for instance, referring to the shortage of labour in the Province, the Governor of Zambézia was to remark that the percentage of men recruited for wage work in the Morrumbala district was small in relation to the numbers available.

> We must also remember that among eligible natives, but those who are not available for work, are included about 8000 cotton farmers, the great majority of whom are "registered vagrants". Some of them come to ask the administrator to punish their wives for not producing enough cotton to enable them to buy bicycles.(31)

As late as 1959 SSE's recruiter in Zambézia was complaining about the amount of cash the 'natives' received from their cotton harvest.

> I know that in certain areas... there were a great number of natives who received for their weights 3, 4, or 5000 escudos. With these results it is natural to expect less reluctance on the part of the natives for cotton cultivation and greater propaganda by the concessionaries. Cotton cultivation, therefore, will be the great enemy of recruitment in the future.(32)

It would be misleading to infer from the foregoing that cotton cultivation provided a welcome alternative to forced labour. As the quotation above suggests, even with the cash available from cotton cultivation, men did not rush to register as cotton farmers. Like plantation managers the agents of the cotton concessionaries were anxious to derive as much profit from their concessions and from their cultivators/labourers as they could. The actual conditions of cotton cultivation were therefore probably little different from those experienced by plantation workers. Nevertheless, viewed in the context of the situation as a whole, cotton cultivation provided the only opportunity for avoiding wage labour which was available to many men in the province.

This chapter has reviewed the four principal ways in which men in Zambézia responded to recruitment for forced labour. To a certain extent there was a regional distribution of responses. In the outlying and border areas of the province some men were able to postpone, if not to permanently avoid, their labour obligations by manipulating the contradictions of administrative policy. Where the border was also a national boundary, they could flee from the repressive labour regime by emigrating. However, in central and eastern regions of the province, by and large, these options were not available. There men either had to resort to playing for time when, for one reason or another, the continuity of the local administration was interrupted, or they sought to exploit the competition which existed between cotton concessionaries and plantations by registering as cotton farmers.

The limited range and the essentially passive nature of the responses discussed was conditioned by the whole administrative and socio-political framework established by the authorities. The repression exercised over migrant labourers was decisive in both limiting and determining the options available to them. Nevertheless, the passive nature of the responses outlined should not disguise their common underlying characteristic. Discontent hinged principally around the system of forced labour; a system which was identified with the state. To the degree, therefore, that workers were able to struggle against forced labour, their struggle was directed against the state. Yet despite the existence of resistance to labour recruitment, the fact remains that many thousands of men in Zambézia were still being forced to

work on plantations as late as 1962. The following chapter therefore, will examine their reactions, not to the labour system as such, but to the actual conditions they encountered in the work-place.

NOTES

(1) Interview at Miude Compound, SSE Luabo, 14 Nov. 1976.

(2) GOV. Q., Prov. de Moç., Zambézia, Circ. do Alto Molócuè, Relatório Apresentado em Conformidade com a Ordem de Serviço No. 2/954 do Governo da Zambézia, de 4 de Março de 1954, sobre: A Circunscrição do Alto Molócuè após os Comandos Militares em 1919 e a Fundação dos Seus Postos Administrativos até 1954. A Reorganização das Regedorias Indígenas, Seus Limites e Sucessão de Regedores, António Lopes Henriques de Oliveira, Adm., pp. 67-69. See also, Rep. Port., Principal Legislação Aplicavel aos Indígenas da Prov. de Moç. (Imprensa Nacional de LM 1960), Decreto-Lei No. 23:229 Aprovando a Reforma Administrativa Ultramarina, 15 Nov. 1933, Seccao XII, Dos Auxiliares da Admin. Civil nas Colonias, pp. 12-20. The 'native authorities' received certain privileges. Among others they were exempt from forced labour and the contribuição braçal, they could order people under their jurisdiction to perform unpaid labour service in the public interest. They also received a percentage of the tax they gathered. (Principal Legislação, op. cit., passim).

(3) A Circunscrição do Alto Molócuè... op. cit., p. 10. (Translation J.H.)

(4) ibid., pp. 20-21. (Translation J.H.)

(5) ibid., p. 8. (Translation J.H.)

(6) ibid., p. 26. (Translation J.H.)

(7) ibid., pp. 26-27.

(8) GOV. Q., Col. de Moç., Prov. da Zambézia, Relatório do Governador, Capitão de Infantária, César Maria de Serpa Rosa, Respeitante ao Périodo de 4 de Maio de 1943 a 31 de Dezembro de 1947, p. 8, "the lines of succession of the native chiefs [having been] lost as a result of the agitated period of our occupation, and later, in Zambézia, as a result also, of the prazos regime, it was necessary to remodel the native authorities." (Translation J.H.)

(9) A Circunscrição do Alto Molócuè... op. cit., pp. 22-23. (Translation J.H.)

(10) ibid., p. 65.

(11) For instance, in 1954, SSE's recruiter in Mopeia described the visit he had made to the 'native authorities' in September to recruit men. He noted that "the few difficulties encountered are only the habitual excuses we always hear: 'now there are few people at home'." (SSE Ar., File 133A,

(11) (continued)
Recruiting, Angonia, Quelimane, Local, SSE Ltd, Propriedade de Mopeia R, 7 Oct. 1954, Relatório do Recrutamento na Circ. de Mopeia (Sede e Campo) em Conformidade com os Dizeres da Nota No. 577/B/14 de 7 de Setembro, da Mesma Circunscrição. (Emphasis added). (Translation J.H.)

(12) GOV. Q., Rep. Port., Prov. de Moç., Governo do Distrito da Zambézia, Acta da Conferência dos Administradores 31.8.1955 - 2.9.1955, p.9.

(13) SSE Ar., File 133A, António de Almeida Azevedo Milange to Gerente Geral SSE Ltd., 12 July 1958, Recrutamento, Sumário referente ao 2a Semestre de 1958. (Translation J.H.)

(14) SSE Ar., File 133A, MT to Col. Hornung, 26 Oct. 1951, No. 145/51 Private Series, Labour from Quelimane District.

(15) SSE Ar., File 133A, António de Almeida Azevedo to Gerente Geral, 12 July 1958, op. cit.

(16) SSE Ar., File 133A, António de Almeida Azevedo to Gerente Geral SSE Ltd., 11 Apr. 1958, Recrutamento, Sumário Referente ao 1º Trimestre de 1958.

(17) SSE Ar., File 133A, A.F. Sousa to Max Thurnheer, 9 Nov. 1944, No. 49/44 'Reservada'. In the same letter the correspondent wrote that the Administrator of Ile had been instructed by the Governor to give SSE his "full support" if the company found it difficult to recruit men without a direct "round-up" by the authorities. (Translations J.H.)

(18) SSE Ar., File 204, Native Diet and Rations, NHDB to DA 10 Dec. 1957, No. 262/57, Labour. The letter continued, "we have to date always been prepared to suffer some of the inconvenience of having the Authorities control the division of labour in the District between the employers in order to gain the benefits of the pressure that they bring on the labour force to work its full time per annum. I believe that this is still the right policy to follow."

(19) SSE Ar., File 133A, SPH to Hornung and Co. Ltd., 8 Aug. 1962, No. 309/62 Private Series, Recruiting.

(20) GOV. Q, Rep. Port., Prov. de Moç., Governo do Distrito da Zambézia, Acta da Conferência dos Administradores 19.9.1956 - 22.9.1956, p. 85. (Translation J.H.)

(21) GOV. Q, Rep. Port., Prov. de Moç., Governo do Distrito da Zambézia, Acta da Conferência dos Administradores, 29.8.1957 a 31.8.1957, p. 93. Clandestine emigration from Angonia to Rhodesia was also a problem throughout the period. For example, the labour figures for the Circ. of Angonia in 1956

(21) (continued)
and 1957 reveal that 7,000 and 9,200 men respectively were "clandestinely" in "English Africa". (AHM, NI 188, 1952-1957, Relatórios dos Agentes do Curador e Delegados de Saúde, No. 38, Circ. Angonia, Relatório sobre Mão-de-Obra Indígena Referente ao Ano de 1956 and Relatório Anual sobre Trabalho Indígena 1957. N.B. These figures were estimated by the administrator).

(22) AHM, NI 16, A/31/945, Respostas ao Questiónario que Acompanhou a Circular No. 1356/A/31 de 22 May 1945, Massingire [Morrumbala]: Besides the able-bodied men who were recruited from the circumscription there were also 5,134 men who lived in regedorias along the Nyasaland border. It was deemed wise not to recruit them; AHM, NI 16, A/31/945... Milange. No men were recruited for employers outside the circumscription and it was considered ill-advised to initiate recruitment since Milange lay on the border. See also, GOV. Q, Rep. Port., Prov. de Moç., Governo do Distrito da Zambézia, Acta da Conferência dos Administradores, 31.8.1954-3.9.1954, p. 10. The Administrator of Milange remarked that if he were to insist on regular attendance and task completion at the work place he would face a mass emigration to Nyasaland.

(23) Acta da Conferência dos Administradores... 1955, op. cit., p.35.

(24) Relatório do Governador (Zambézia)...1943...1947, op. cit., p.8.

(25) ibid.

(26) ibid., p. 7.

(27) Acta da Conferência dos Administradores...1956, op. cit., p.87.

(28) ibid. cf. Charles van Onselen, Chibaro: African Mine Labour in Southern Rhodesia, 1900-1933 (Pluto Press, London, 1976), pp. 232-233.

(29) Sherilyn Young, "Women in Transition: Southern Mozambique 1975-1976, Reflections on Colonialism, Aspirations for Independence" (paper presented to the Conference on the History of Women, College of St. Catherine, Minnesota, 21 Oct. 1977), mimeo, pp. 6-7; Leroy Vail and Landeg White, "'Tawani, Machambero!' Forced Cotton and Rice Growing on the Zambesi," Journal of African History, XIX, No. 2 (1978), especially pp. 252-256.

(30) SSE Ar., File 44A, Details for Annual Cotton Report 1943-1946, Director Provincial da Admin. Civil, A. Mendes Gil, to Chefe da Secção de Algodão da SSE, 5 Nov. 1945, Nota no. 2886/D/11/2, Companha Algodoeira, Instrucções - da Inscrição e Registo dos Agricultores de Algodão. The farmer was also required to grow one hectare of food crops and an additional half hectare for each wife. The card issued to the cotton farmer

(30) (continued)
by the concessionary and validated by the local administrator "besides allowing for perfect and easy supervision... constitutes a guarantee of exemption from the moral obligation to work for someone else." (Translation J.H.)

(31) Acta da Conferência dos Administradores... 1956, op. cit., p.52.

(32) SSE Ar., File 133A, Antonio de Almeida Azevedo to Gerente Geral SSE Ltd., 11 Oct. 1959, Recrutamento, Sumário Referente ao 3º Trimestre de 1959.

CHAPTER X

FORMS OF STRUGGLE ON THE ESTATES

The most striking point to emerge from SSE's records between 1930 and 1960 is the lack of militant action by the work force in pursuit of higher wages and better working conditions. With the single exception of a collective demand for higher wages by river steamer crews in 1949(1) there is no other mention of organised action by the work force or sections of it. Yet, as has been shown in the foregoing chapters wages at SSE were low, the work arduous and living and working conditions bad by any standards. How then is the lack of organised opposition to these conditions to be explained and did its absence denote a passive work-force either too oppressed or too apathetic to organise in defence of its own interests?

It is the oppression of the labour force which provides the key to understanding the lack of militant action at SSE. Firstly, as suggested in the last chapter, the principal concern of men in Zambézia was to avoid forced labour. This is not to say that men did not struggle against conditions on the estates but it is to say that it was the state rather than capital which was seen as the major protagonist, and that the struggle against the labour system took place primarily at the point of recruitment. Secondly, as in the case of opposition to the labour system itself, the role of the state in controlling both the conditions of labour and the labour

force was critical. The administrative mechanisms aimed at maintaining the flow of cheap labour to the estates applied as much to men working on plantations as to those at other stages of the labour recruitment process. Hence, there was no legal means through which men could protest against wages and conditions in the work-place. Any attempts by workers to form organisations or even collectively to discuss working conditions would have been construed as acts of disobedience at best and acts of rebellion at worst, and both were punishable in terms of the RTI. So extensive was the list of misdemeanours to which punishment applied that it was only at the immediate point of production that plantation management assumed responsibility for controlling the labour force. Even here administrators could be called in to supervise the work of men who, for whatever reason, failed to produce the stipulated task.(2) Hence, the legal sanctions which discouraged men from openly resisting labour recruitment equally discouraged them from openly protesting against their conditions of service.

Besides the system of control exercised by the state, a system which has already been discussed elsewhere, there were two other factors which inhibited the development of workers' organisations on the estates. Firstly, SSE's management devised a system of supervision in the fields which was designed to facilitate control of the labour force. Secondly, therewere a series of structural constraints which arose from the way in which the flow of labour to plantations was organised. These two constraints will form the first part of this chapter, which will briefly examine their principal features. The second part of the chapter will then examine

the range of responses which, despite the extensive system of control, were available to men at SSE.

CONSTRAINTS INHIBITING THE GROWTH OF WORKERS' ORGANISATIONS

Control on the Estates

According to a memorandum written by one of SSE's Directors in 1962, compound staff at SSE were subordinate to field staff and control of the field staff over the work-force was "absolute".(3) The role of the compound staff, was, therefore, essentially one of supporting the field staff. The main task of the compound superintendent, apart from the administration of the compound and supervision of food and payment, was to ensure that labourers got up early and arrived in the fields on time. To this end the first task of the superintendent and his assistants in the mornings was to rouse the labourers and "encourage" them to go to work.(4)

Unfortunately, SSE's records contain few references to field supervision methods prior to the 1960s. However, after this date there is more evidence, mainly because the system was revised in an attempt to 'buy off' the labour force and deflect criticisms of the labour regime. Thus, by extrapolating from remarks made in the 1960s an idea of field supervision methods in the earlier period can be given. Authority in the fields, as has been shown, extended directly from the head overseer/estate manager to his assistants, and below them to the capatazes down to the foremen of field gangs. The role of the field staff was primarily supervisory. They received no agricultural training and were not required to understand the

cultivation process. Their function was to make sure that workers completed their daily task.(5) The resulting low-level of SSE's field staff was criticised by the government inspectors in 1962; a criticism which one of SSE's directors reiterated in relation to the changes to be introduced. He remarked that amongst the lower-level European staff only those who had failed to make good in their own societies came to Luabo.(6) The quality of the African foremen was also low and their behaviour towards the labour force was cited as one of the reasons for the high levels of absenteeism.(7)

When, in 1962, a new Welfare and Administration Department was created to take over the responsibility for matters relating to tasks and discipline from the field staff it was instructed not to be "soft" with the African worker. However, it was also told that the old inflexible methods of ensuring task completion were to change. According to the memorandum which included these instructions, gone were the days when a task stated meant a task completed. The General Field Manager was also instructed to set more reasonable tasks. These had previously been unfair.(8) Both field and welfare staff had at times been tactless. A report on this aspect of company policy also revealed that "however well the plantation staff may handle labour some of the practices they employ are illegal."(9) In future, punishment of the African worker was to be consistent throughout the business. It was also to comply with the law.

> Today this unfortunately is not so. The field staff are naturally not legal experts and they apply what they understand of the law in a rough and ready way. This has been perfectly adequate for many years, but it will no longer be adequate because we could easily get into the position when the African labourer knows the field staff is not within the law.(10)

Apparently this instruction did not take immediate effect for a year later SSE's recruiter in the Mocuba region reported that he was finding it very difficult to contract men. The reason he gave for the difficulty arose from the reports of bad treatment brought back by workers returning from the estates. This was confirmed by the administrator. While the men were receiving their deferred pay the recruiter overheard some of the complaints. The men were saying that

> all workers who do not finish their task are brought from the compound by the capatazes in the presence of the police... and are punished either at home or in the secretariat. Afterwards they remain prisoners for a week. If they miss work for two days, besides being punished they are imprisoned for three months...(11)

Control in the fields, therefore, rested firmly on the power of the immediate supervisor to mete out punishment in a "rough and ready way." It also rested on the fear instilled in the labour force of the possible consequences of failing to do what the supervisor ordered. These consequences included summoning the authorities who took over responsibility for punishing the worker either by beating, detention and/or unpaid labour service. After punishment the worker was returned to the estates to complete his contract.

It is the involvement of the authorities in discipline of the labour force at the workplace and their collusion with estate management in all matters relating to the punishment of workers which explains why the compounds were not closed at SSE. In principle men were free to wander off the estates and into the local town. In practice, according to recruited men "[we] cannot go to

the town of Luabo to buy things, have c drink or talk with our friends because [we] are immediately persecuted and imprisoned by the auxiliary police and taken to the Post."(12) Nevertheless, compared with the situation van Onselen describes direct policing of the labour force by SSE employees to keep it on the estates was limited.(13) Expenditure on fences and police patrols were not necessary precisely because the authorities were responsible for capturing, punishing and returning to the estates men who deserted from them.

Structural Constraints in the Labour System

The relative lack of direct policing of the labour force by estate management was also in part the result of the way in which the flow of labour was organised to the plantation sector and the nature of the labour provided. Firstly, there was no guarantee that men would return to the same company after their six month 'rest' period had expired. The result of the growing demand for labour in central Zambézia, was, as has already been shown, an increasing competition for labour, not only between the different sections of capital within the region, but increasingly within them. As exclusive labour reserves for particular employers were abolished in response to the labour shortage so individual men were able to exercise more choice over their employer. This in turn meant that the likelihood of their returning regularly to the same firm decreased.(14) Secondly, even when men did return regularly to the same employer they did not necessarily fulfill the contract on the same estate. As has already been shown, field work at SSE was

unskilled work. This meant that SSE could deploy and redeploy labour between the various estates either to meet particular needs and/or to undercut wages. Hence, there is the major example, already discussed, of the transfer of lower-paid labour from Zambézia to the plantations in Manica and Sofala. In addition to the transfer of labour between plantations there was also an interchange of labour within a single plantation. Whereas some men were recruited for specific work, most of the labour force was recruited for "general field work". This meant that it could be used as and when necessary. Thirdly, again, as has already been demonstrated, men did not necessarily work in the same groups regularly. Gangs were organised on the basis of the work in hand, and both the numbers of men in them and their composition depended on the particular conditions in the fields and also on the time of year. Finally, and related to the organisation of field work, men did not necessarily return to the same compound after every 'rest' period. Compound allocation depended on the numbers of men on the estates at any one time. It also depended on the type of work to be done.(15) Thus the element of continuity which is vital for the establishment of an organisation, which requires cadres and time to develop contacts, trust and networks of activities, was almost impossible within the migrant labour system. The result of these limitations, was the impossibility of the development of overt and organised struggle against conditions on the plantations. Hence, just as men were obliged to resort to a series of tactics to avoid recruitment for forced labour which eschewed direct and open confrontation with the state, so too were they forced to adopt strategies on the estates which sought to mitigate the conditions of their labour without rebelling openly against it.

WORKERS' RESPONSES TO CONDITIONS AT SSE

The Work/Protest Song

In their paper "Plantation Protest: The History of a Mozambican Song" Leroy Vail and Landeg White analyse the development of a song which was sung in the area of the estates from the time when the Hornung family first started to produce sugar in the region in the 1890s. The content of the song changed over the years to include new experiences of repression and exploitation, yet it continually referred to a man called Paiva. Although various Paiva Rapozos were associated with SSE and members of the family worked for the company for intermittent periods until the 1950s, the authors suggest that the song did not so much refer to an historical individual as to the company itself.

> Paiva from the very beginning is the company itself, the name under which it has alienated land and commandeered labour. The song is an attack on the inequalities brought to the area by the monopolistic company system, a satire on the disproportion between wages and profits. Those other Paiva... keep the song alive by maintaining its direct relevance, giving exploitation for each successive generation of workers a fresh human face.(16)

Despite its protest element, the song was also a work song. No doubt its insistent beat and rhythm, which matched the pace of work in the fields, helped the men to work. The insults directed against Paiva also appear to have helped. According to Vail and White, former field workers asserted that they liked singing the song so much because it gave them strength in the fields. However, as the authors point out "work song and protest song, in the context of forced labour, would seem close to being contradictions in terms."(17) The clue to explaining this apparent contradiction, lies,

they suggest, in the all-pervasiveness of the company in the lives of the people in the Mopeia/Luabo region.(18) The song offered the people one area of expression in which their own separate identity was asserted. "What is secured in 'Paiva' is not just a private rebellion but a whole tradition of rejection. It is in the song that the people's identity is preserved."(19)

As far as it goes Vail and White's analysis is surely correct. Men who were unable to find legitimate forms of protest against their conditions and for whom even illegal or clandestine protest entailed a risk of imprisonment and even death, must have needed the affirmation of solidarity that such a song provided. The song stressed the identity of the group and their common experience of exploitation and thus distinguished them from the company to whom all their experience suggested they belonged. As Vail and White point out, the song provided the men with a separate identity and reaffirmed their status as independent human beings. By stressing the common identity of the group and by mocking or lamenting the situation in which the group found itself, the song stressed the historicity of the events through which the men were living. In effect, through satire the song distanced itself from the present and implied that however oppressive and enduring the present situation there had at least been a different past even if there was not a different future in sight.

However, it is over the question of the work-protest element of the song, which Vail and White saw as being close to a contradiction in terms, that their analysis falls short. Surely these two

elements are a contradiction in terms, but one which reflected the reality of the men's lives? The song expressed a real contradiction in the situation which confronted SSE's workers. They did not want to work for the company but it was difficult to avoid doing so. The tasks were long. The individual was faced with the choice of either finishing his task and receiving payment, however meagre, or not finishing his task and facing loss of earnings and punishment. In this context the song as a work song helped the men to get through the work, which for most was an objective necessity if they did not want to increase their suffering. Yet, at the same time, the song as a protest song, restated their own alienation from the work, the injustice of their situation and their recognition of its injustice. In effect it was saying: we have to work to live. We must therefore work, but let us also remember that we do not do so from choice.

It might be asked whether songs which insulted the field staff and which were sung to their faces were a prelude to acts designed to 'get back' at the company in a more direct way than mere verbal abuse. In SSE's records there is no mention of such acts. There are no recorded incidents of deliberate arson, for example, which were not unknown on the Rhodesian mines.(20) Nor do the records reveal any other acts of deliberate sabotage.(21) The contradiction described above and the general repression associated with forced labour probably explain this lack of dramatic protest.(22) However, that protest was not dramatic does not mean that it did not exist. One way of resolving the contradiction between the need (and compulsion) to work and the dislike of doing so was by seeking to evade work. Work evasion at SSE took two

principal forms. Firstly, there were those men who were absent for days or weeks on end during the contract or who deserted from the estates altogether. Secondly, there were men, who, while appearing to meet the daily task requirements, actually found various ways of avoiding doing so.

Absenteeism

In SSE's records, frequent mention is made of the assiduidade of the labour force. Literally translated this term means assiduity or diligence. At SSE the task system and the manner of marking tasks meant that only those men who had completed their daily task were entitled to payment. By definition those who had failed to complete the task were marked as absent. Hence, productivity and attendance were inextricably linked, and absenteeism rates disguised, what was, strictly speaking, lack of task completion.

There was also a second problem associated with the ticket marking system which tended to blur the distinction between failure to turn out for work for one or several days and definitive desertion from the estates. SSE did not take daily roll calls of the workers presumably because this was both time-consuming and expensive. Nor did the company refine its system of allocating metal discs, probably for the same reasons. Discs were not date-stamped. They only registered the origin of the worker, and this for payment purposes. Only at the end of the week was the man's daily attendance during the course of the week noted in the company's books. It was therefore, relatively easy for men to miss work for various periods

of time, and only appear to hand in their metal discs when they had acquired the five or six which entitled them to a cash bonus.

SSE was well aware of the limitations of its payment and task-marking system. Indeed, the company used the fact that workers were able to acquire discs without working as a defence against accusations of exploitation. Thus, in reply to a letter from the Provincial Government about its payment system in 1942, SSE wrote

> This simple mechanical form does not allow the exploitation of the worker by the capataz or by the marker because he would demand the handing over of the disc... on finishing his task or day's work, or the payment of the weekly bonus to which he was entitled. It does, however, permit the exploitation of the boss by the worker as regards the weekly bonus for five or six days worked, because it is evident that many of them keep their discs from one week to the next, when, for example, they have only appeared for work three or four days in the week and with the aim of being able to present six discs for six consecutive days to receive the corresponding weekly bonuses.(23)

As a result of the limitations of the system,therefore, SSE did not know for certain until the end of the contract who had fled from the estate.

Notwithstanding the difficulties of distinguishing between the different types of absenteeism, and bearing in mind that the figures also disguise the appropriation of unpaid labour, absenteeism as a whole was a major problem for the company. For instance, in an assessment of future labour needs SSE's General Manager reported that in 1952 absenteeism both for the whole week and one to five days had absorbed 15 per cent of the total field labour force over the year.(24)

Day to day absenteeism, as already demonstrated, was facilitated by SSE's policy of distributing large quantities of flour. Men planning to miss work could save part of the flour ration they received on days that they had completed the task to cover days when they did not intend to work. It was also facilitated by the dishonestry of some of the capatazes. According to former workers at SSE it was not uncommon for capatazes to acquire more discs than were actually required. Each morning the capatazes counted the number of people working on their section that day. They were then supposed to request the number of discs appropriate to that number of men. Apparently, they also often requested a few discs which they kept back for later sale. Some men, who were on good terms with the capatazes, were able to receive payment for every day of the contract without ever having worked a single day. This system depended on the laziness of the European overseers. They soon tired of the laborious business of checking discs against workers present, and as long as some discs were handed back at the end of the day for men who had not worked or who had not completed their tasks they did not investigate the precise situation. According to the informants a number of capatazes were sacked because of the discrepancies between the numbers of discs requested and the numbers handed back.(25)

In addition to a trade in discs organised by the capatazes there was also a trade in discs among the men themselves which facilitated the individual's ability to evade work.

> The natives, who are not always the childish natives that many people in good faith imagine, when they don't appear at work for some days of the week, and in order not to lose the weekly bonus, lend their discs or exchange them for different things with other colleagues, and even those who flee from work after a few days sell the discs which they have not managed to have marked, or have not used, to other colleagues.(26)

Desertion

Unlike day to day absenteeism which rested on the ability of the individual worker to manipulate the contradictions of SSE's payment system, desertion from the estates seems to have been related more to the degree of administrative repression exercised in the areas from which the men were recruited.(27) Where administrators and/or company employees were not rigorous in suppressing the problem of desertion, other factors, such as the pressure of forced cotton growing or the existence of alternative opportunities for making a living came into play.

In 1945, the manager of SSE's Matilde plantation went on leave. According to the Administrator of Chinde the percentage of desertions went down to 19-20 per cent while he was away, and then climbed steadily again after he returned. During the Manager's absence he was replaced by a "young, ehthusiastic lad"

> full of vigour and energy who presented to me in the Secretariat /of the Administration/ all the contracted natives who had not fulfilled their contracts regularly. They were punished with detention for a reasonable period - which increased the period they had to work - and the result is clear. Now, with the arrival of Snr.

> Matos Pereira everything has changed. This gentleman never brought a jomba/ deserter/absentee_7 to the Secretariat and I know that he prefers the blacks' friendship to problems with them.(28)

The initial recruiting drive organised by the Administrator in 1945 for the Madal company and SSE produced only 80 men for work at SSE from the Micaune region (compared with 500 men from Chinde itself). Of these, almost all the men fled from the estates. They were captured and interrogated about the reasons for their flight.

> They alleged that they were given 'Lomwe' capatazes, common people, that the water given to them was scarce, that the food given to them was mixed with hippopotamus meat which they could not eat, finally that the tasks were exaggerated and that the firewood given to them for heating and cooking was insufficient. There were exaggerations in the statements of the blacks, but in certain cases there was some truth /_in their allegations_7.
>
> The principal reason is that the black of Micaune does not need to work to live, to pay his taxes and to dress decently. All of them have palm trees which give them 500, 600, 1000 and more escudos per harvest.(29) (Emphasis added)

Notwithstanding the existence of an alternative income, when the Administrator increased the contract length to discourage desertion not a single man fled.(30)

It is clear from the above, that both conditions on the estates and the existence of a remuneration from peasant production which compared favourably with the wages offered contributed to the men's reluctance to work. Nevertheless, increased sanctions against men who did not take up or complete a contract, or stepped-up administrative pressure where formally it had been lacking, had the effect of increasing attendance at the work place. In Mopeia, for instance, when in 1943 absenteeism rates among labourers from the

area on six month contracts reached over 50 per cent, SSE gave the spread of forced cotton cultivation as one reason for the high rates. Nevertheless, it also stressed the need for firm administrative action to ensure that men fulfilled their contracts. "The question of labour from Mopeia, Marral and Derre for Marromeu was likewise discussed, and the administrators concerned were instructed to exercise more pressure with a vew to minimising the ever-increasing percentage of absentees."(31)

Ten years later the recruiting situation had again deteriorated in Mopeia. Levels of absenteeism had once more "recently" reached 45 per cent according to SSE's General Manager. In a letter about the matter to the Acting Manager at Mopeia the General Manager noted that "the administrator did promise to look into the matter immediately and actively, having also suggested that the task would be eased if we were to take on additional native police under his control and paid for by us."(32)

In 1954, a new Administrator took up his post in Mopeia. In his report to the Native Affairs Department he noted that the effectividade of men from Mopeia working at SSE's plantation in Marromeu was only 55 per cent in July 1953. Out of 100 men contracted only 55 worked "the remaining 45 fleeing at one time." He added

> There were contracts in which less than half arrived at the work-place and of these a few days afterwards already a great many more had fled who never again put in an appearance.
>
> The wage sheets were separated, one for the effectivos and the other for those who had fled. Often the numbers of the latter were greater than the numbers of the former.(33)

The Administrator attributed the large number of flights to the difference in wages between a man recruited from Mopeia (Zambézia) for work in Marromeu and a man recruited from Marromeu (Manica and Sofala) for work there. Whereas the man from Mopeia received 70 escudos a month, an attendance/productivity bonus and an additional bonus of 15 escudos 50 centavos, a man from Marromeu received a basic wage of 100 escudos a month in addition to an attendance/ productivity bonus.(34) To overcome the problem the Administrator took steps to stop men crossing the river to Manica and Sofala without due authorisation. He also "initiated a policy of great repression... [and] seized many natives, punishing them with a certain severity." The Administrator added that as a result of his action effectividade was now better among the men from Mopeia. Only 15-18 per cent of the men were absent from work, although jombas were still a problem.(35)

Elsewhere in Zambézia the drive to increase the attendance of the work force and to cut down on absenteeism also gave results. In the 1954 meeting of the Administrators of Zambézia the Governor thanked the Administrators for their work in making sure that the attendance targets for the Province had been fulfilled. These were set at 80-85 per cent for the first two years of the implementation of a 1953 order. Attendance/productivity, said the Governor, had increased recently.

> This was due, without doubt, to the efficient action of the Administrators. Without any exception this action was truly appreciable, as in the case of Guruè, where there exists a work discipline which could only be surpassed with difficulty.(36)

Definitive desertion from the estates, therefore, was only a feasible response to forced labour if the men involved knew that

they stood a reasonable chance of avoiding detection. The examples above illustrate that men were quick to seize the opportunity to desert where it existed but refrained from doing so when the likelihood of detection and therefore punishment increased.

Work Evasion Tactics on the Estates Themselves

Strictly speaking the ability of men to manipulate the contradictions of SSE's payment system and hence to miss work without losing the right to collect the weekly bonus was a form of work evasion. It was one, however, that was likely to be detected at the end of the contract, for when the man was paid off the total number of days he had worked during the contract became apparent to the estate management. Only by deserting from the estate and avoiding capture could he preclude the imposition of an extended contract which detection entailed. Yet, if he took this option he lost his basic wage for the entire contract period. Absenteeism, therefore, in all its forms, was a response which while bringing short-term gains also brought losses in the long-term. There were however, other methods of mitigating the conditions of forced labour which were less liable to detection, and if successfully employed brought only advantages to the individual worker. These were the range of tactics which comprised attempts to evade meeting the daily task requirements while appearing to do so. They appear to have been applied to almost every field task. There was for instance, the planting task.

The planting task involved preparing lengths of cane and then laying them in a row with their ends touching. The row, which was 360 metres long was then covered with soil. Instead of planting the cane at the appropriate depth it was common for men to simply cover the cane with a thin layer of soil. It was also common for men to leave wide gaps between each separate length of cane or to deposit the seed cane in one large hole.(37) Shortly after planting workers were moved on to moulding. Moulding involved building a small mound around each length of planted cane. The mound not only anchored the plant more firmly and helped to prevent the plant from being blown over by heavy winds, but it also encouraged the growth of roots and secondary shoots. Workers allocated to a moulding task either did not make the mounds or did not make them properly.(38) Periodically the rows of newly planted cane and rows of ratoons were weeded. Instead of weeding the whole row men allocated to this task would trample down the weeds in the middle of the row on the assumption that the capataz or capitão would not walk down every single line and check it.(39)

The most serious problems for SSE arose from the workers' 'dodges' on the cutting task. Most of the sucrose content of the cane plant is concentrated at the base of the stem. Failure to cut even two or three inches at the base of the stem can lead to up to a 30 per cent loss of sugar. It also inhibits the growth of the ratoon. It was, apparently, common for workers to cut the stem above soil level rather than at the point where the stem emerged from the soil. Workers given a cane-cutting task were also supposed to cut the leaves from the stem and to cut the top off the

stem in the right place. This was necessary, firstly to avoid 'clogging up' the factory with a lot of waste material and secondly to cut down on the acid content of the cane which concentrates at the top of the stem. Lack of due care, which hastened completion of the task, led to inefficient processing of the cane and unnecessary wear and tear of processing machinery.(40)

On the loading task workers tried to build "a proper rat's nest". Instead of chopping up the cut cane and laying it horizontally in the truck men criss-crossed the stems vertically over each other. A layer of horizontally laid cane would be placed on top of the load to give the appearance of a full truck. According to some of SSE's former workers those who knew how to make the trucks look full often finished their tasks by about ten o'clock in the morning whereas those who did not know how to make the carts look full had difficulty in finishing their tasks and often went on loading until two or three o'clock in the afternoon.(41) Unless the foremen and overseers were very rigorous in their checking of loaded trucks in the fields the deception was only discovered when the trucks were weighed at the factory gates. By this time it was almost impossible to tell which group of men had loaded the particular truck and the capitão received the blame. He lost a day's pay. If, however, the capitão himself knew which group of men were involved he would thereafter stand and watch them working, climb onto the truck, chop the cane up and press it down so that more could be loaded. Often, men harrassed in this way fled.(42) Often, however, as the workers themselves pointed out, the capitães and capatazes failed to carry out their own duties diligently.

It is for this reason that it is difficult to draw any firm conclusions about the African supervisory staff employed at SSE. Clearly, since their own wages and bonuses depended on proper task completion by their gangs they had an economic incentive to work hard. On the other hand, it is reasonable to assume that since the discrepancies between them and their European colleagues were so great in terms of salaries, housing, status and promotion(43) some at least attempted to walk a tight-rope between not incurring the wrath of their own supervisors and not coming down too heavily on the men. In this sense the position of the African supervisory staff on the estates was analogous to that of the 'native authorities' in the countryside. Yet, whatever their personal feelings and however conscientious they were it was nevertheless difficult for the capitão and still more for the capataz to have his eyes on every worker all the time. While the foreman's back was turned men he was not watching could engage in various subterfuges. Apart from those described above, men also abandoned their own uncompleted task and moved onto the line their friend had already completed, whatever the task. The friend's task would then be presented for marking again.(44)

The tactics described above were all tactics employed by individual workers, albeit with the collusion of their friends and colleagues. Only rarely is mention made in the records of a collective response to the conditions encountered. There is the example, already mentioned in Chapter V, of large-scale desertions following the extension of the compulsory contract period from six to eight months. There is also one recorded example of what appears to have

been a collective go-slow. In 1954, SSE's General Field Manager wrote to the General Manager that it was impossible to achieve the same output from different 'tribes'. Men from Quelimane in particular refused to complete the task set for them.

> The authorities have rendered us every assistance in trying to get them to complete tasks but to no effect. Early this year at Marromeu we had a particularly glaring example in a gang of about 500 Quelimanes. The local Administrator visited them several times and at one time suggested that the task given at planting must be too large. To demonstrate to him we put a gang of children to plant fields on one side of the main line and the Quelimanes on the opposite side and gave them an equal task which was two thirds of the normal planting task performed by Mopeas and Marrães. The Administrator put cipães with the Quelimanes to see that they worked. Every day for a week they worked opposite each other and every day for a week the children finished their tasks by about 1.30 p.m. and most of the Quelimanes had to be sent home at 4 p.m. with tasks unfinished.(45)

This quotation suggests that these men were aware of the advantages of unity. They saw that whereas individual workers could be picked out, isolated and punished, it was very difficult for the estate management and authorities alike to confront the collective disobedience of hundreds of men. The quotation also suggests that groups of workers, either consciously or unconsciously set their own pace in work and refused to be bullied into producing more. Unfortunately, the lack of evidence of similar responses precludes a discussion of the many questions that this example throws up. Suffice it to say, however, that by implication, the very differences in task output which was the constant complaint of SSE's management, suggests that this form of protest was much more widespread than the records suggest.

At the beginning of this chapter I noted that the recorded incidences of organised industrial action to improve wages and conditions were few at SSE. There is no evidence of overt manifestations in the form of strikes, and only one indication of a collective wage demand. I have argued in the course of this dissertation that such manifestations were not even possible given the structure of labour conscription, the system of labour use and the system of control established and operated by the state with the collusion of capital. However, in this chapter, I have tried to show that the absence of a conventional workers' organisation is not necessarily a priori evidence of a lack of consciousness. It should be clear from the examples discussed above that workers at SSE were conscious of their exploitation but were forced to adopt ambiguous forms of struggle against it in order, ultimately, to protect their own lives. Hence, the range of work evasion tactics described above as well as serving to alleviate the ardours of forced labour were also a sophisticated (in that they reveal an understanding of the situation, its implications, and the forms of struggle appropriate to it) but necessarily disguised way of preventing SSE from continually increasing tasks without increasing wages. In other words, unable to struggle overtly on the wages front, workers sought to struggle covertly against arbitrary attempts to increase productivity. This is not to suggest conclusions about the proletarianisation of the migrant labour force over time, nor to draw a mechanistic distinction between the response of peasants prior to recruitment and the response of workers after recruitment. It seems obvious that men will always respond to the particular circumstances they encounter. It is, therefore, simply to say that,

while on the estates, men attempted to struggle against the conditions they found in the only ways that were available to them. Thus, just as a relative lack of administrative repression seems to have been decisive in prompting individual men to flee from the estates altogether, so too did SSE's more blatant attempts to increase the appropriation of surplus value call forth an immediate response from the labour force; a response that cannot be pinned down to any one sector at any one point in time. This chapter has reviewed some of the forms this response took. Chapter V looked in more detail at the particular conditions that led to these responses. Taken together they show that when tasks were increased attendance/productivity dropped; when wages did not rise proportionately or were not increased when other employers offered wage rises, labour was either more difficult to recruit or deserted. When the compulsory contract period was arbitrarily increased mass desertions followed. Conversely, higher wages, better bonuses or reduced tasks led to greater attendance/productivity. Although these were, in general, individual responses by individual men, when they occurred on a wide scale SSE could not ignore them. Thus, although the different responses of SSE's labour force, taken in isolation, were not dramatic, taken as a whole they had the overall effect of checking SSE's more blatant attempts to intensify exploitation. In this, the effects of the responses of SSE's labour force were no different from the effects of the more conventional responses of a 'free' labour force.

NOTES

(1) "I had yesterday at Luabo o combined representation from crews of river steamers 'Quarra', 'Morrumba' and 'Zomba' which amounted to a plea for increased remuneration, and this on the grounds that other labour doing similar work for the company was earning more etc." (SSE Ar., File 184, Native Labour Organisation, Hut Tax, MT General Manager to the Manager SSE Ltd Chinde, 6 Aug. 1949, No. 96/49 Mgt, Re: Native Crews, River Steamers.)

(2) See below, p. 352.

(3) SSE Ar., File 347, African Policy, Cantinas and Acampamentos, Public Address System, N.H.Du Boulay, 30 Oct. 1962, Memorandum Giving the Division of Responsibility between the Native Welfare and Administrative Department and the Plantation Staff.

(4) SSE Ar., File 93, Labour and Recruiting, Government Side, Jose Vaz Cunha to A. Marques dos Santos Adjunto do Gerente Geral, 29 Mar. 1973, S/N, Assunto: Servico dos Chefes de Acampamentos.

(5) cf. SSE Ar., File 94, Labour for Marromeu, Labour Questionnaire Reply, H.N. Usher, Marromeu, 2 Nov. 1931, "the white overseer's time as a ganger here has always been a sort of chrysalis stage - the budding second overseer learning his job. I don't remember any overseer who would have cared to come back on a second contract merely to look after a gang again. The work is too monotonous for anyone possessed of a normally active brain... I think the ideal system of gangs is a good coloured ganger together with good native capitaes adequately supervised by a second overseer who has not more than three gangs to control. Because, I believe in future, unless a white man is near at hand the natives will not be so easily controlled by a coloured ganger. Yet it is no job for a white man to spend his whole day standing behind one weeding gang."

(6) SSE Ar., File 347, PHDB (Du Boulay) to Domingos Arouca, 19 Jan. 1962, No. 23/62, Native Labour and Recruiting, New Official Policies.

(7) SSE Ar., File 133A, Recruiting, Angonia, Quelimane, Local, (n.n. London) to AF Sousa Luabo, 7 Aug. 1963, No. 270/63.

(8) SSE Ar., File 347, N.H. Du Boulay, 30 Oct. 1962, Memorandum... op. cit.

(9) SSE Ar., File 347, NHDB to A.F. Sousa 30 Oct. 1962, No. 384/62, Welfare and Administration Department.

(10) SSE Ar., File 347, N.H. Du Boulay, 30 Oct. 1962, Memorandum..., op. cit.

(11) SSE Ar., File 133A, J. Barata Gomes Mocuba to Gerente Geral SSE Ltd., 20 July 1963, No. 1/63 Mgt. (Translation J.H.)

(12) ibid. (Translation J.H.)

(13) Charles van Onselen, Chibaro: African Mine Labour in Southern Rhodesia 1900-1933 (Pluto Press, London, 1976), pp. 128-132. (The author is here referring to the closed compound system first used in the Rand and later adopted in Rhodesia). There were other reasons for the open compounds at SSE. Firstly, unlike gold and diamonds which are both easily concealed and valuable, cane was hardly worth robbing except for personal consumption. It was also bulky and difficult to conceal. Secondly, SSE's plantations were isolated. The nearest large centres of population, Quelimane and Beira, were both over 200 kilometres from the estates. Fleeing to either of these towns meant avoiding the only road that led to them and walking through the bush (which was, for much of the way, heavily-wooded and full of wild animals) at night. Thirdly, and perhaps most important, within limits absenteeism was actually profitable for the company. As long as men who deserted were captured by the authorities they lost the wages owing to them and were also made to work an extended contract. Men who were not captured lost their wages. Thus providing deserters worked long enough to cover the cost of recruiting them the company could appropriate unpaid labour from them.

(14) See Chapter IV. In addition men also crossed into Manica and Sofala in search of better-paid work.

(15) SSE Ar., Dr. Luis Cardoso de Menezes, Impressões da Visita a África de 28 de Abril a 1 de Julho de 1966, Lisboa, Julho/Agosto 1966.

(16) Journal of Southern African Studies, V, No. I (Oct. 1978), p. 6.

(17) ibid., p. 20.

(18) ibid., p. 24.

(19) ibid., p. 25.

(20) van Onselen, op. cit., p. 242.

(21) It could be that the destruction of huts mentioned in Chapter VII as well as being an act of necessity was also, in part or at times, a sign of disgust and an attempt to hit back at the company. Certainly in 1977 SSE's General Field Manager attributed deterioration of the compounds to 'vandalism' by the workers. (Interview with L. Duarte, General Field Manager, SSE Luabo, Feb. 1977).

(22) This is not to imply that labour was not repressed on the Rhodesian mines. It is simply to suggest that in the absence of other evidence the repression exercised over labour in Zambézia would seem to provide the most reasonable explanation for the lack of this particular response. Only very detailed comparative studies of the impact of different systems of forced labour in different areas would allow the particular factors which shaped workers' responses to oppression to be isolated.

(23) SSE Ar., File 184, P. Viana Rodrigues to Admin. Concelho do Chinde, 30 Mar. 1942, No. 85/42/HO, Ref. Nota 372/15/2 de 14 de Março de 1942, Resposta à Nota da Repartição Central dos Negócios Indígenas sobre o Pagamento dos Salários aos Indígenas. (Translation J.H.)

(24) SSE Ar., File 184, MT General Manager to General Field Manager Luabo, 12 July 1954, No. 81/54 Mgt. Re: Future Labour Requirements. The 1954 labour needs were based on an estimated rate of absenteeism of 15 per cent.

(25) Interview at Muide Compound, SSE, Luabo, 14 Nov. 1976. In 1948 SSE discovered that food tickets had been stolen, probably from the company's strong room. In one particular week "a rather high number", more than were issued were handed back (SSE Ar., File 204, Native Diet and Rations, from Rapozo Luabo, 6 Oct. 1948, Re: Pay and Food Discs, and (attached) For GM's Favour of Consideration and Decision, Re. Pay and Food Discs, 4 Oct. 1948). Although it is not within the period covered by this study there is one reported incident of capitães and capatazes working a fraud in bonus payments. In 1968 in a conference on the bonus for loading it was discovered that bonus cards existed in duplicate and triplicate; that there were cards whose numbers corresponded to those of workers already repatriated; that cards were marked for more days than were actually worked, etc. Working together, several capitães and capatazes had arranged to steal the original cards which one of their colleagues later stamped as valid. This fraud cost SSE 84,000 escudos for one season alone, and the company suspected that it had been going on for several years (SSE Ar., File 184, Informacão, Fraude em Bonus de Carregamento, Marromeu, 26 Aug. 1968.)

(26) SSE Ar., File 184, Resposta à nota da RNCI... 30 Mar. 1942, op. cit. (Translation J.H.)

(27) For some men, however, desertion was clearly an act of individual desperation. For others it resulted from conditions on the estates and particularly from the employers' practice of aribtrarily extending the contract period. This, at least, was a reason put forward by the authorities for desertion. "Having considered the causes of the not infrequent flights from work and poor assiduidade, we must recognise as one of the principal causes the illegal procedure which has come to be adopted in some areas

(27) (continued)
of contracts by months being fulfilled by days actually worked. Hence, it is common to find natives bound to work for one employer for periods of over a year, although with contracts of six months... From this practice results ... a flight from work." GOV. Q, Rep. Port., Prov. de Moç., Governo da Zambézia, Acta da Conferência dos Administradores 31.8.1954-3.9.1954, Governo da Zambézia, Ordem Geral No. 3/53. (Translation J.H.)

(28) AHM, NI 32, B/24/4/1, 1945-1947, Relatórios Trimestrais dos Agentes de Curador, Admin. do Concelho do Chinde, Relatório da Mão-de-Obra Relativo ao Terceiro Trimestre do Corrente Ano, 1946, Admin. Ladislau Batalha Junior. (Translation J.H.)

(29) ibid. (Translation J.H.) Writing about the replacement of men from Gile with men from Maganja in 1951 SSE's General Manager noted that everything had been done to make the men from Maganja happy at SSE, in order that they would give favourable reports about the company when they returned home. Each "batch" of departing labourers went away "very satisfied" but asked if they would return said they would only do so if "specifically induced by the Administrator concerned, making it clear that if the choice of employer remained their own it would definitely be SSE but that they had in point of fact no real need to work since money was ample or fully [sic] enough for their tax obligations and other needs as the direct consequence of the fact that great numbers of them owned their own coconut palms from which they derived a personal income." (SSE Ar., File 133A, MT to Col. Hornung, 26 Sep. 1951, No. 145/51 Private Series, Labour from Quelimane District).

(30) NI 32, B/24/4/1... Admin. do Concelho do Chinde, Relatório da Mão-de-Obra... 1946, op. cit.

(31) SSE Ar., File 94A, Labour for Marromeu, MT to Col. C.B.R. Hornung, 25 Aug. 1943, No. 82/43 Private, Visit of His Excellency the Governor of Quelimane.

(32) SSE Ar., File 94A, MT to Acting Manager SSE Ltd. Mopeia, 15 July 1953, No. 23/53 Mgt., Re: Labour from Mopeia/Marral for work at Marromeu.

(33) AHM, NI 202, 1952-1957, Relatórios dos Agentes do Curador e Delegados de Saúde, No. 54, Circ. de Mopeia, Ladislau Batalha Junior, 12 Jan. 1954. (Translation J.H.)

(34) ibid.

(35) ibid. (Translation J.H.)

(36) Acta da Conferência dos Administradores...1954, op. cit., pp. 12-13.

(37) Interview with L. Duarte, General Field Manager, SSE Luabo, 4 Mar. 1977.

(38) ibid.

(39) ibid., and Interview at Muide Compound, SSE Luabo, 14 Nov. 1976.

(40) Interview with L. Duarte, 4 Mar. 1977, op. cit., and Interview at Muide, 14 Nov. 1976, op. cit.

(41) ibid.

(42) Interview at Muide, 14 Nov. 1976, op. cit.

(43) The records do not contain a detailed comparison of the wages and benefits of European and African supervisors. However, the differences are indicated through the total expenditure on European and African staff given in Sena Sugar Estates Ltd., O Que é o Que Vale Económica e Socialmente, Exposição da Actividades Económicas de Moçambique Commemorativa da Visita de Sua Excelência o Presidente da República, General Fransisco Higíno Graveiro Lopes, Agosto 1956 (LM, 1956).

(44) Interview at Muide, 14 Nov. 1976, op. cit. When the capitão's back was turned men at the front of a line would help those at the back in order to get the task marked more quickly.

(45) SSE Ar., File 184, H.N. Usher General Field Manager to General Manager, 28 June 1954, Re: Future Labour Requirements, Your letter No. 59/54 'Mgt' of 29 May 1954. cf. Eugene D. Genovese, The Political Economy of Slavery: Studies in the Economy and Society of the Slave South (Vintage Books, New York, 1967), p. 44: "Ample evidence indicates that slaves worked well below their capabilities. In several instances in Mississippi, when cotton picking was carefully supervised in local experiments, slaves picked two or three times their normal output."

CONCLUSION

Capital accumulation depends on the ability of the owner of the means of production to appropriate surplus value from the labourer during production. This is achieved by paying the labourer a wage related to the value of the commodities necessary for the production and reproduction of his capacity to labour but by wresting from him the additional value his labour-power creates during the production process. The appropriation of surplus value, therefore, rests on the ability of the capitalist to increase the ratio of surplus to necessary labour time during production. The capitalist either seeks to make the individual labourer work harder and longer for the same or a reduced wage, or he seeks to increase the productivity of labour by mechanising production. In the latter case, as the ratio of constant to variable capital rises the share of wages falls (and hence exploitation increases) although the absolute level of wages may remain stable or even rise. For the greater part of the period under study SSE and its forerunners worked to increase the appropriation of absolute surplus value by reducing wages and by increasing the intensity of labour without increasing the ratio of constant to variable capital.

The degree to which capital is able to increase profits depends on a variety of factors, not least of which is the availability of cheap labour and the role and nature of the state in ensuring its availability. Related to this is the ability of the labour force

to organise in defence of its own interests. In Mozambique, from the 1870s and especially after 1930, the colonial state established a protected market for its sugar producers which effectively cushioned them against competition. Of far greater importance, the colonial state also secured the conditions in which capital could seek to reduce labour costs. Thus, the most striking point which emerges from a study of capital and labour in Zambézia is not that wages on plantations were low and conditions poor, but that the state sought to ensure that they remained low and poor. The consolidation of the migrant labour system after 1930 which continued to furnish capital with cheap labour until the 1960s was the direct result of state policy.

The role of the state in guaranteeing favourable conditions for the accumulation of capital in Zambézia took two principal forms. In the first period, for approximately 40 years after 1890, the state sought to establish the conditions which would encourage the investment of capital in the province. These included the enactment of legislation which imposed a labour service and monetary tax on the African peasantry. This led to the creation of a part-proletariat which oscillated between periods of domestic production and labour. These policies, by "attracting" labour to production were also successful in "attracting" capital to the province. However, unable, for a variety of reasons to impose an administration which would effectively carry out its labour "attraction" policies throughout the whole of the province the burden of "attracting" labour fell to capital. This was a burden that capital willingly assumed for the costs associated with it were few. Under the prazos

legislation capital was allowed to call on unpaid labour, and secure revenue by collecting taxes from the people living on the prazo.

The expansion of production on plantations which resulted from this policy meant that over time labour needs increased. Although the geographical area from which labour was drawn was enlarged, the specific contradictions of state policy: the division of the province between state and capital (prazo-leaseholders), the ineffectiveness of the administration imposed by the state in certain areas, and the attempt by the state to secure revenue through the sale of labour to South Africa (until 1913), gave rise to a labour shortage. This was a shortage that the state sought to suppress in 1930 by extending its administration to the whole of the province and by taking direct control of labour supply.

From approximately 1930 to 1960 the state consolidated its role in "attracting" labour to capital by establishing a labour-controlling monopoly. The role of capital in the labour conscription process diminished as the state took over more and more of the functions previosly undertaken by capital (the prazo-leaseholders). New labour legislation was enacted which strictly defined the duties and obligations of the African population. This legislation required men to enter regular wage work at wages established by the state. It also made it the primary duty of state functionaries to suppress 'vagrancy' and 'idleness' and to ensure that men fulfilled their legal duties.

However, the legislation which paved the way for the state's extended role was brought into force at a time when, because of the general recession in the economy of central Mozambique and the regions surrounding it and the effects the recession had on prices paid for peasant crops, labour was pouring onto the labour market. Capital, as exemplified by SSE, used this situation to bring about reductions in wages and to reorganise its labour supplies. Yet, if the state assumed a role which was perhaps not required in the first years of the 1930s this was not the case as the region began to recover from the depression. With recovery and a growing demand for labour, the legal and administrative mechanisms established in 1930 were brought into play.

Recovery from the depression was accompanied by the growth of a new form of production: forced peasant cultivation of cotton, and the expansion of the plantation sector. These developments increased the demand for labour and gave rise to a new shortage of labour, the origins of which, however, were very different from that which existed until 1930. In an attempt to meet the labour needs of the different sections of capital in the province, the state, besides "attracting" labour, also sought to redistribute it within and between the competing sections of capital. Unable to enlarge the geographical area from which labour was drawn because of the existence of other competing capitals outside the province, the state sought to expand the labour supply by calling on the untapped labour sources within Zambézia. Hence, women and old men were conscripted into cotton production and old men and young boys joined the ranks of the able-bodied men recruited for plantation work.

Despite the growing shortage of labour within Zambézia no section of capital called for the ending of the migrant system. State conscription, direction and control of labour and the supply of labour provided cotton concessionaries with unpaid labour. They provided plantation capital with cheap labour. The maintenance of a partly proletarianised labour force was part of a deliberate state strategy to hold wages down, for wages in the plantation sector calculated on the existence of a peasant sector carrying part of the workers' costs of reproduction. In addition, the migrant system allowed capital to adjust its labour needs to seasonal requirements. It could avoid supporting unproductive labour during the slack period of the year. Yet, within this broad framework of labour supply the state also allowed capital, as seen through the activities of SSE, to reduce wages further. This SSE did in three principal ways. Firstly, it imposed arbitrary increases in productivity by extending the working day and increasing the intensity of labour within it. Secondly, it pursued a policy of offsetting increases in minimum wages against bonuses or advances on wages. Thirdly, it reduced overall expenditure on labour by reducing that part of the indirect wage which was represented by food and shelter. Finally, through the application of its legislation the state prevented the development of a workers' struggle against low wages. Coerced into wage labour by the state and punished by it for failing to enter employment or fulfill the terms of the contract, workers directed their struggle primarily against the state and against the system of labour recruitment. In the countryside the struggle was directed against the colonial administrators and the 'traditional' authorities. However, the

very structure of the system of controls imposed on workers by the state prevented anything but an essentially negative struggle; one which sought to avoid forced labour. On plantations, men who had been unable to avoid labour recruitment sought to evade work. Yet they were still constrained by the labour system and were, therefore, limited to essentially individual forms of struggle.(1) It is for these reasons that plantation capital supported state policy despite a growing inability of the system to supply the labour needed. It is the success of the state's policies which explains why, as the labour shortage grew acute in the 1950s, capital was prepared to employ men who were crippled and sickly, and whose productivity did not match that of a man in his prime.

Looking at the situation as a whole between 1930 and 1960, then, three trends can be discerned in the history of state, capital and migrant labour in Zambézia. Firstly, the state established a labour-controlling and selling monopoly. Through its monopoly it sought to "attract" and then redistribute labour in production. As the demand for labour grew it extended the labour supply by drawing on the reserve army of labour within the geographical boundaries of the province. Secondly, this framework of labour supply provided capital with cheap and docile labour. It resulted in the perpetuation of a backward system of production in the plantation sector. Capital did not need to increase the productivity of labour by mechanising production. This implied increasing the skill of labour, reducing labour needs and developing a settled proletariat. Instead it continued to rely on large numbers of unskilled labourers and increased the productivity of the labour

force through physical coercion. Thirdly, the constraints of the labour system in general prevented the development of workers' organisations on plantations. This was compounded by the unspecialised division of labour on the estates. Each man was more or less interchangeable with his fellows. This further limited the already limited power of the work force, or sections of it to halt production and voice their demands.

It was only in the 1960s that changes in state policy were introduced which altered the role of the state in the labour conscription process and the relation of capital and labour. However, these changes were already discernible in the 1950s. They resulted both from the labour shortage in the province and from political developments outside it.

During the 1950s the provincial government first seriously called for the establishment of a free labour market. Employers in the plantation sector were enjoined to cut down on labour wastage and to mechanise production. They were instructed to "attract" labour by offering better wages and conditions. They were ordered to undertake their own recruitment of labour. In short they were instructed to compete for labour. At the same time cotton concessionaries were ordered to end the worst abuses of the cultivation. They were encouraged to establish peasant 'co-operatives' where more social facilities and greater technical assistance would be provided. Finally, men were encouraged to return to full-time peasant production.(2)

Increasing concern about international opinion, which was reflected in these moves, and the various inspections of labour conditions on plantations, which was one of their consequences, resulted in a marginal, but nevertheless costly (for capital) improvement in conditions on the estates.

In the meantime, partly as a result of the labour crisis and partly as a result of the changing direction of state labour policy, capital in the plantation sector began to discuss ways of reducing labour needs. In 1957, for instance, a combined group of tea and sisal planters, supported in the background by SSE, petitioned the government to extend the contract period and reduce the 'rest' period between contracts.(3) In the same year, SSE discussed its long-term plans. These included the mechanisation of loading and possibly planting. In the four years that it would take to introduce mechanisation the company embarked on an attack on absenteeism. It also sought alternative recruiting areas outside the province where it "could hope to develop a successful and unrestricted recruiting organisation."(4) In 1960 the company gave its first serious consideration to a scheme aimed at settling labour around the estates; an idea which was rejected after the planning stage when the government refused to support the social overheads implicit in re-settlement.(5) Yet, in spite of these developments, forced labour, the forced recruitment of labour by the state, and forced peasant production of cotton continued.

Only in 1962 was the state's new thinking translated into a new national policy. In that year the RTI was replaced by the

Rural Labour Code.(6) Administrators and the 'native' authorities were prohibited from interfering in the recruitment of labour. Forced labour was abolished, men were given the right to freely choose their employer and profession and the right to opt out of wage work. Recruiting reserves were abolished.(7) Simultaneously forced cotton cultivation came to an end.(8)

While these policies were being pursued at the national and provincial levels the state also instituted a much more rigorous campaign to improve working conditions in the plantation sector. Known as "psycho-social action", this policy was designed to improve the employers' image and to placate the work force. Employers were enjoined to make wide-ranging improvements in every aspect of plantation life and work.(9)

The immediate effect of these policies was a staggering decline in the number of men recruited for plantation work.(10) In the short-term SSE sought to overcome the labour crisis by recruiting men from Moçambique and Cabo Delgado Provinces. It also proceeded with its plans to introduce mechanisation. At the same time it began to encourage men to stay longer at the estates, return to work sooner and bring their families with them. These changes were to be accompanied by higher wages, increased bonuses, improved housing, training schemes and less punitive methods of supervision. In short, the company's long-term policy was directed towards creating a permanent and much smaller labour force, whose greater skill would more than offset the improved standard of living which would accompany its evolution.(11)

The liberalisation of the labour regime, both in the wider society and on plantations, together with political unrest in Mozambique, also had their effects on the labour force. The forms of resistance witnessed in the earlier period were increasingly replaced by more militant and organised action by the work force. At SSE mass walk-outs were not uncommon and on several occasions strikes were threatened.(12)

However, these changes, for all that they appear dramatic compared with the situation before the 1960s were only minor and embryonic. They suggested the direction of things to come, rather than actually confirming it, for in many respects the situation remained the same. After only a short period recruiting began to return to its old moulds.(13) As FRELIMO's activity increased so did the overall level of repression. On plantations, technical problems impeded the pace of mechanisation. As a result, migrant labour recruited with the complicity of the authorities on short-term contracts persisted as the predominant form of labour use in the plantation sector. Nevertheless the importance of the changes should not be underestimated, for they point to three new and very important developments. Firstly, the state was beginning to abandon its role as a monopoly supplier of labour. With mechanisation in the plantation sector, the releasing of female labour from cotton production and the reorganisation of peasant agriculture, the state sought to restructure labour supply. Its new policy was designed to "expel" workers from production. By restructuring the demand for labour it intended to create again a reserve army of labour within the province, and so end pressure on wages and the

labour crisis. Secondly, capital, through the introduction of more mechanisation moved to reduce the overall cost of labour by increasing the ratio of constant to variable capital in the production process. In this way it could decrease its reliance on the state, bind its workers to it through the development of specialised skills and financial and social inducements, and eventually depress wages when both its own and the state's new labour policies bore fruit. Thirdly for labour, the liberal trends in state and capital's policy meant not only improved conditions but also growing power. As the division of labour became more specialised the firm's dependence on its permanent workers would increase. As the firm's dependence on labour increased the power of labour to voice its demands would grow.

In the year leading up to Mozambique's independence these trends were slowed. With independence the colonial state was dismantled. The exodus of settlers and settler capital cut back production and threw men onto the labour market. Capital which remained sought to profit from these changes. SSE, for one, dismantled its recruiting organisation, and in an attempt to offset the massive wage rises introduced during the period of transitional government, casualised the labour force. Men who had previously been recruited at the company's expense were now expected to make their own way to the estates in the hopes of picking up a day's work here and there. Only with FRELIMO's assumption of power would the prospect open for new forms of organisation of labour.

NOTES

(1) Just as the colonial administration sought to foment divisions among the African population in the countryside by incorporating 'traditional' leaders so too did it foment divisions on plantations. African workers were legally defined and socially viewed as different from both Europeans (the managerial strata) and "Mistos and Assimilados" (skilled workers). These racial categories cemented the division of labour and the differences in salary, status and treatment which flowed from it. They served, therefore, not only to disguise areas of common concern but also to rationalise, at an ideological level, the policies pursued.

(2) A detailed account of policy changes in the 1950s can be found in the various Actas da Conferência dos Administradores da Zambézia (GOV Q., Rep. Port., Prov. de Moç., Governo da Zambézia). See the Actas for 1954, 1955, 1956, 1957 and 1958, passim.

(3) SSE Ar., File 204, Native Diet and Rations, D. Arouca to Major Du Boulay, 25 Oct. 1957, No. 173/57 Private Series, Labour, Enclosing: Comissao da Mão-de-Obra dos Plantadores de Chá e Aluerites do Guruè, Apontamentos para Alteração do Regime Actual de Mão-de-Obra Indígena, Inerente aos Trabalhos Agricólas do Guruè; SSE Ar., File 93, Labour and Recruiting, Government Side, DA Gerente Geral Interino to J. dos Santos Callado SSE LM, 19 Nov. 1957, Confidencial, Mão-de-Obra Indígena.

(4) SSE Ar., File 93, NHDB to Gen. Manager, 30 July 1957, No. 377/57 General (H and Co. Ltd), Labour.

(5) SSE Ar., File 10 (Obsolete), Native Settlement, Wheat Experiments, passim.

(6) Rep. Port., Ministério do Ultramar, O Trabalho nas Províncias Ultramarinas, Decretos Nos. 44309 e 44310 de 27 de Abril de 1962, Aprovando o Codigo do Trabalho Rural e Alterando a Estrutura dos Tribunais do Trabalho no Ultramar (Agência Geral do Ultramar, Lisboa, MCMLXII).

(7) SSE Ar., File 347, African Policy, Cantinas and Acampamentos, Public Address System, J. de Queiroz Soares Adjunto do Gerente, 3 Jan. 1962, Propriedade de Marromeu, Relatório da Visita a Marromeu dos Inspectores do Trabalho Indígena, Snrs. Intendentes, João Granjo Pires, Afonso Ivens Ferraz de Freitas e Alberto Cotta de Mesquita.

(8) SSE Ar., File 44B, Details for Annual Cotton Reports (1946-1964), DA to J.A. dos Santos Callado SSE LM, 26 Feb. 1962, No. 21/62/Reservada, Concessão Algodoeira.

(9) For the list of improvements to be introduced see SSE Ar., File 347, J. de Queiroz Soares, 3 Jan. 1962, op. cit., and NHDuB to Col. J.D. Hornung OBE MC, 27 Mar. 1962, No. 112/62 Private Series, Policy. Psycho-social action also included a new system of control. The Inspector responsible for psycho-social action "put... [SSE] in the picture about what is happening in the subversive world as much outside [Mozambique] as inside, the measures being taken and the absolute need for SSE to mount a good information service." Having explained how the state's secret service operated, (it apparently had a complete file on every member of the population) the inspector then requested SSE to open a file on each of its workers. (SSE Ar., File 347, AFS Gerente Geral to Hornung and Co., 21 Sep. 1962, No. 384/62 Private Series, Visita ao Luabo do Inspector Ferraz de Freitas.) (Translation J.H.)

(10) SSE Ar., File 133A, Recruiting, Angonia, Quelimane, Local, SPH to Hornung and Co. Ltd., 8 Aug. 1962, No. 309/62, Recruiting.

(11) For a detailed and comprehensive account of SSE's policy changes during the 1960s see SSE Ar., File 347, passim.

(12) See SSE Ar., File 133A, passim, and SSE Ar., File 347, passim, and SSE Ar., File 93, H. Bakker to Estate Manager Marromeu, 5 Feb. 1964, Labour Trouble, Moçambiques, Guex Compound.

(13) SSE Ar., File 347, NHDuB to C.B.R. Hornung, 9 Mar. 1962, No. 71/62, Private Series, Recruiting. "Where local authority has acted energetically and with firmness recruiting has picked up quickly and is now back to more or less normal numbers." cf. SSE Ar., File 133A, Major N.H. Du Boulay to n.n. 25 Apr. 1972, No. 210/72, Private, Labour Institute: "although all government officials are to be instructed to refrain from giving the slightest assistance in the recruitment of labour, at the risk of facing instant dismissal, I presume they will still be allowed to use the utmost persuasion in collecting the hut tax and it is this fact which has a great influence in persuading the Africans to seek employment."

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