

TOPIC : COLONIAL ADMINISTRATION IN RHODESIA

SUBTOPIC : COMPANY RULE

OBJECTIVES

BY THE END OF THE SUBTOPIC LEARNERS SHOULD BE ABLE TO;

- ✓ Outline the formation of the British South African Company.
- ✓ Describe the political, economic and social policies of the Company Rule in southern Rhodesia.
- ✓ Outline the effects of the Company Rule to the natives.
- ✓ Analyse factors that leading to the collapse of the Company Rule.

Introduction



BSAC flag

- After colonization of Southern African people's way of life completely changed as people were forced to become servants of a group of whites who came from Europe.
- Chiefs lost their power to plan direct the political, economic and social destiny of their lives.

- The British South African Company was incorporated on 29 October 1889 by a royal charter given to Cecil John Rhodes and the company occupied southern Rhodesia, acted as a police force and developed settlements for white settlers.
- The BSAC was given the right to establish its political administration so as to protect itself against Africans.
- The BSAC was to develop southern Rhodesia without costing the British tax payer.
- The developments brought by BASC were a complete transformation of the lives of the Zimbabwean people from being a communal society to commercial communities under colonialism.
- The economy of Zimbabwe became a settler colonial economy and the colonial government established laws that revolved around natural resources.
- The pillars of the settler economy were mining and agriculture.
- The occupation of Zimbabwe by the BSAC was based on the idea that the country had plenty of minerals such as gold.



Aims of the company rule

Policies under the company Rule

- The company began to establish proper Government and laws were backed back by legal system.
- In 1898, Southern Rhodesian Order-In-Council established the following under law:
 - The official name for the country became 'Southern Rhodesia'.
 - The BSAC was to govern the country with laid down, specific rules and a specific administrative structure was established on how to administer the country.
 - An administrator was chosen to head the legislative function of government.
 - All regulations affecting Africans were subject to British government approval.
 - Laws that restricted African movements and farming, taxing them and forcing them to submit labour were enacted with British approval.
 - The British Government did not stop exploiting blacks in Southern Rhodesia.

Economic Policies

- The economic structure of the Zimbabweans completely changed soon after the colonization of Zimbabwe in 1890.
- The way of life for the Zimbabweans changed the dimensions.

Characteristics of the economy

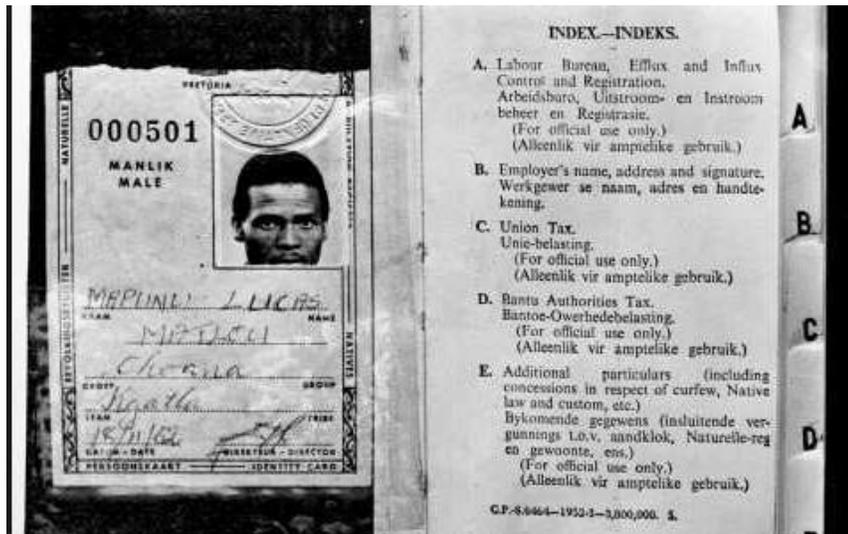
- The economy in Zimbabwe under the Company rule was based on the following factors:



Factors of Settler economy

(a) Pass laws

- For the settlers to completely control the Africans they instituted a number of measures which included the pass laws which controlled the movement of Africans.



Pass book

- The Pass laws were applicable to men and they controlled the movement of men looking for jobs in towns.
- After 1902 at the age of 14 male children were required to register at the pass office and these pass books were issued with identification certificate.
- Without identification it was illegal for men to work for more than 4 days.
- The pass enabled African men to travel into white man's areas between 9 p.m. to 6 a.m.
- The pass laws were burden to the Africans as they were subjected to prosecution because of these pass laws.
- These fines were source of revenue for the Government.
- Africans used different ways to resist these laws such as manipulating certificates, refusing to produce them and using other people's passes.
- Women did not carry pass registration books because African women were regarded as children thus could not make any decisions concerning the capitalist economy.
- It was because of this, till 1982 an African woman could not own property on her own name, could not get married or get divorced.
- Women were paid a less salary for the same job with men for example teachers.
- Women were therefore controlled by men.
- To restrict the women movement, the Europeans began refusing to allocate urban housing to women.

(b) Industrialization

- The first industry to develop in southern Rhodesia was the mining industry.
- The BSAC rulers had hoped to get the riches quickly in Southern Rhodesia.
- The whites faced problems in extracting gold due to the scarcity of gold deposits.
- New minerals were discovered like coal, chrome, lead and copper.
- African labour became the basis of settler economic development and Africans were forced to work under power working conditions.
- Mine workers faced a number of challenges in the work places that is:
 - They were poorly fed.
 - They were paid low wages.
 - They lived in dirty and overcrowded compounds.
 - There was no privacy in their accommodation.
 - They had no protective clothing and were easily killed and injured.
 - Workers were sent home without compensation and had no system of medical treatment.
 - Poor sanitation facilities.
 - Workers were forced to work over time.

C) Recruitment of labour

- Settlers faced serious labour shortages on their farms, and mines.
- There were two kinds of labour in Southern Rhodesia namely:
 - i. Direct forced labour and
 - ii. Indirect forced labour.

(i) Direct forced labour

- It involved state officials who dragged men from villages and forced them to work in the mines.
- Deserters were being shot and it was a form of punishment used.
- In 1901 it became clear that the method was not an effective method to obtain labour from Africans in southern Rhodesia.
- They also began to use migrant labour from Nyasaland, Mozambique and Northern Rhodesia but the method of migrating labourers became expensive.

(ii) Indirect forced labour

- After the failures of the direct forced labour the settlers began to use Southern Rhodesian labour.
- From 1896 to 1934 settlers imposed different taxes and closed down other economic opportunities available for Africans.

Examples of draconian taxes imposed

- Officials collected 2 611 heads of cattle in Mashonaland as tax (1895)
- Wife tax – 10 shillings per year to be paid for every wife (1903)
- Dog tax (1912)
- Grazing fees imposed in Matabeleland (1912)
- Cattle- dipping was made compulsory at one or two shillings per cow (1912).
- 2 shillings and 6 pence tax on each slaughtered cow (1931).
- A tax of 10 shillings per adult male per year called hut tax (1894).
- The Government used the Rhodesia Native Labour Bureau (RNLB) to make Labour available in mines and farms.
- It recruited labour and forced Africans to sign contracts for long period.

- To obtain cheap labour settlers also grabbed land from Africans which was a means of production.
- Natives used land for grazing, mining minerals, hunting and gathering fruits.
- Africans were moved into unproductive, overcrowded, infected with tsetse fly, dry and hilly reserves.
- By 1902 more reserves were created in Matabeleland and Mashonaland.
- They were able to attract more white farmers and the creation of reserves was a method to obtain cheap labour from Africans.

Expansion of peasant Agriculture



Peasant agriculture

- The effects of the company rule benefited local agriculture in the early years.
- Peasant agriculture prospered because of the following reasons:

- The capitalist system created market and the peasants began to produce for sale and subsistence.
- The hut tax system under colonialism forced African men to become farmers so as to get cash to pay taxes.
- The Africans also used new tools such as the plough which made the cultivation of land much easier.
- The Africans had control over land.
- Improved transport in the form of railway lines.
- Agricultural productivity increased and the expansion of peasant meant that settlers had fewer labourers.
- With the success and expansion of peasant agriculture, Africans could pay for their taxes from their produces.

Collapse of peasant Agriculture



African agriculture vs settler agriculture

- The expansion of peasant Agriculture disadvantaged the settlers in terms of labour.

- The Rhodesian government implemented and introduced measures that ruined peasant Agriculture.
- These measures had negative effects as they destroyed the agriculture industry of peasants in 1930.
- The white settlers took away African livestock, for about 80% of Ndebele cattle were taken.
- The 1894 Order-in-Council created the Gwaai and Shangani reserves.
- In Mashonaland and Manicaland grain stores were destroyed and taken in the 1896-97 war.
- They took the fertile land from the Africans and they reduced the size of the land set aside for Africans.
- The Rhodesian Government ruined African agriculture by creating a white farming community that was heavily subsidized by government.
- This became a turn for settlers as they saw the benefits of agriculture.
- They grew similar crops to those grown by Africans.
- In 1930^s African commercial agriculture had become almost insignificant and a number of laws were enacted to destroy African agriculture.

Settler agriculture



Peasants working in field

- Due to the scarcity of minerals, European miners became broke, companies were forced to close and they considered farming as a better option.
- The first serious action came from the directors of the BSAC who set up a land settlement committee in 1905 followed by an Estates Department in 1908.
- The Rhodesian government created the Department of Agricultural Journal.
- The company began to work on crops like tobacco and citrus fruits and cattle ranching.
- To promote settler agriculture a number of incentives were introduced such as the reduction of land prizes and Europeans got land with watered rich soils.
- These agricultural policies resulted in a rise in the production of maize, tobacco, soya and cattle.

- European agriculture began to grow for the export market in Britain, Belgium, Congo and Northern Rhodesia.
- Africans who remained on European land refused to enter into labour agreements and were forced to pay the excessive grazing fees, dipping fees, hut tax and dog tax among others.
- In order to obtain wealth Europeans stole African cattle, employed Africans and dismissed them before pay and also demanded wide range of high fees.

Effects of company rule on Africans

- Laws were introduced to legalise the oppression and exploitation of Africans.
- Numerous commissions were set to force Africans off the rich soils and to surrender their labour.
- These included the 1901 importation of labour ordinance No. 18.
- 1907 mines and mineral ordinance.
- 1911 native labour regulation ordinance No. 16.
- Native registration ordinance and 1922 Gwaai and Shangani reserves Development Fund.
- Africans lost wealth and freedom.

Factors that led to ending of company rule

- Southern Rhodesia was ruled by the BSAC from 1890-1923.
- The company rule ended with the coming of Responsible Government in 1923.
- A number of factors led to the collapse of the company rule such as:
 - Loss of income

- Policies of the settlers were not always the same as the company's.
- There was often a conflict between the settlers and the company.
- The war of dispossession, of 1893 was costly.
- BSAC lost men in the war.
- The company resources, horses, cattle were killed.
- Deficit in administration- the company had borrowed money to run the economy.
- Mines were not working and BSAC was not making a profit.
- Involvement in the First World War proved to be costly to the company.