

rhodesian history

The Journal of The Central Africa Historical Association

Volume 8 1977

N. M. N. RALUSHAI and J. R. GRAY

Ruins and traditions of the Ngona
and Mbedzi

P. R. MAYLAM

The making of the Kimberley-Bulawayo
Railway

B. A. KOSMIN

Ethnic groups and the qualified
franchise

M. ELAINE LEE

An analysis of the Rhodesian
referendum, 1922

Notes, Documents and Revisions

Essay Review

Reviews

Bibliography



RHODESIAN HISTORY

The Journal of the Central Africa Historical Association

Edited by R. S. Roberts and P. R. Warhurst

VOLUME 8 1977

Ruins and traditions of the Ngona and Mbedzi among the Venda of the Northern Transvaal. N. M. N. RALUSHAI and J. R. GRAY	1
The making of the Kimberley-Bulawayo railway: A study in the operations of the British South Africa Company. P. R. MAYLAM	13
Ethnic groups and the qualified franchise in Southern Rhodesia 1898-1919. B. A. KOSMIN	35
An analysis of the Rhodesian referendum, 1922. M. ELAINE LEE	71
NOTES, DOCUMENTS AND REVISIONS	
The Land Commission of 1894 and its membership. P. STIGGER	99
An historical bibliography of voters lists in Southern Rhodesia. Part I: 1899-1922. R. S. ROBERTS	111
ESSAY REVIEW	
Britain and Rhodesian expansionism: Imperial collusion or empirical carelessness? H. I. WETHERELL	115
REVIEWS	129
PICHON, <i>Le Drame Rhodésien</i> and LONEY, <i>Rhodesia: White Racism and Imperial Response</i> by P. R. WARHURST; UFAHAMU, Volume 5, No. 3 by T. D. Shopo; CLUTTON-BROCK, <i>Cold Comfort Confronted</i> and MUTASA, <i>Rhodesian Black behind Bars</i> by R. S. Roberts; ALPERS, <i>Ivory and Slaves in East Central Africa</i> by D. N. Beach; DAVIES, <i>Race Relations in Rhodesia</i> by I. R. Hancock; BENYON et al., <i>Studies in Local History</i> by H. I. Wetherell; REA, <i>The Economics of the Zambezi Mission</i> by H. H. K. Bhila; CARY, <i>The Pioneer Corps</i> and HICKMAN, <i>Rhodesia Served the Queen, II</i> by R. S. Roberts; SOMERVILLE, <i>My Life was a Ranch</i> , RICHARDS, <i>Life on the Farm</i> , WRIGHT, <i>Grey Ghosts at Buffalo Bend</i> , and SAUNDERS, <i>Murray MacDougall and the Story of Triangle</i> by R. S. Roberts; RHODESIANA REPRINT LIBRARY, Volumes 15-18 by H. C. Hummel; GOLDIN and GELFAND, <i>African Law and Custom in Rhodesia</i> by R. S. Roberts.	
BIBLIOGRAPHY	141
NEWS	143

AN ANALYSIS OF THE RHODESIAN REFERENDUM, 1922

M. ELAINE LEE

Johannesburg

THE SUCCESS OF the Responsible Government Association in the referendum of October 1922, in which the electorate supported Responsible Government in preference to Union with South Africa, is clearly a significant turning-point in Southern Rhodesian history. There has been little analysis, however, of how and why this result came about,¹ and the vote for Responsible Government has simply been attributed to the natural outcome of 'British instincts' and Imperial sentiment. These factors undoubtedly contributed to some extent, but were not the prime causes underlying the settlers' decision.

The first demand for Responsible Government was made in 1912, but proponents of this policy were defeated in the election of 1914.² The Rhodesian League of 1912 and the supporters of the 'Common Platform' of 1914 were mainly representatives of farming who saw Responsible Government as the only means by which the injustices they felt they suffered could be rectified. These injustices were the liabilities inherent in land titles and the mining laws, which gave prospectors and miners considerable rights on privately-owned land. The British South Africa Company's reliance on mining for its principal source of revenue meant that however sympathetically it might otherwise consider the agricultural sector's grievances, amelioration of conditions which interfered with mining 'title' was almost impossible in view of opposition from mining organizations. Yet despite the failure of the Responsible Government movement of 1912-14, it laid the ground for future success. The size of the vote it attracted in 1914 led the Colonial Office to include a significant clause in the Supplemental Charter of 1915. This allowed for the implementation of Responsible Government before the ten-year extension of the Company's administrative rights elapsed in 1924, should an absolute majority of the Legislative Council demand it.

¹ The only detailed account is by M. A. G. Davies, 'Incorporation in the Union of South Africa or Self-Government : Southern Rhodesia's Choice, 1922' (Univ. of South Africa, unpubl. M.A. thesis, 1963) summarized under the same title in University of South Africa, Communication No. C58, 1965, and very briefly in 'A day of decision : 27 October, 1922', in *Proceedings of the Central Africa Historical Association Conference September 1966, Part II* (Salisbury, the Central Africa Historical Assoc., Local Series Pamphlet No. 19, 1967), 1-6. His account, however, deals mainly with the Civil Service and Railway vote, and in the latter case is inaccurate.

² For more detail on this and the background to Responsible Government, see M. Elaine Lee, 'The origins of the Rhodesian Responsible Government movement', *Rhodesian History* (1975), 6, 33-52; 'Politics and Pressure Groups in S. Rhodesia, 1898-1925' (Univ. of London, unpubl. Ph.D thesis, 1974), ch.6.

The outbreak of war in 1914 interrupted internal political movements in Rhodesia, but these revived in 1917 after the Company itself introduced controversy by advocating amalgamation of Northern with Southern Rhodesia. As a result, farming leaders formed the Responsible Government Association (R.G.A.) after the Congress of the Rhodesia Agricultural Union in 1917. The appeal of this Association might once again have been limited to the agricultural (and to some extent the commercial) sector, but the investigations into the ownership of land (instigated, significantly, by the Rhodesian League and the Rhodesia Agricultural Union) led to the decision of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council in favour of the Crown in the Land Case of 1918. This decision broadened the electoral appeal of the R.G.A., for the Company, having lost what it had considered its principal asset in the country, no longer had an incentive to continue its administration. It refused to finance further deficits in the country's revenue, which made it quite clear to the settlers that if the country was to be administered on its own resources, they might as well have the advantage of so running it themselves.

The support for the R.G.A. became obvious in the 1920 elections. Led by Sir Charles Sopwith (who formerly opposed farming movements, and had for many years been lawyer to the Rhodesia Chamber of Mines), it won 12 of the 13 seats, losing one only as a result of a split vote. Pressure for the attainment of Responsible Government was therefore intense from this date.

Although the foundations of the Responsible Government movements were laid well before 1922, this in itself does not fully explain the greater appeal for this course over Union. In the 1920 elections the issues were less clear than in the referendum. In place of a straightforward contest between Responsible Government and Union, other alternatives, in the form of Representative Government or continuation of the Charter, were offered in 1920. The success of the Responsible Government Association in 1920 can be seen in many instances to have been a vote rather against the continuation of Chartered rule than for a particular form of government to succeed it, especially as only four Unionist candidates stood in the 1920 elections. Far greater effort was put into the campaign for Union in 1922; and although it failed, 5 989 votes were secured, representing 40.6 per cent of the electorate, a figure slightly higher than the overall 'opposition' vote in 1920 when in the face of the R.G.A. and Labour candidates supporting Responsible Government, it secured 39.4 per cent.³

The most interesting features of the referendum results lie not only in the failure of the Union cause, but in the changes in the voting pattern between 1920 and 1922, despite the apparent similarity of the above figures. A detailed analysis of the 1920 figures has not been possible, but the success of the R.G.A.

³ F. M. G. Wilson (ed.), *Source Book of Parliamentary Elections and Referenda in Southern Rhodesia 1898-1962* (Salisbury, Univ. Coll. of Rhodesia and Nyasaland, 1963) 115.

can quite clearly be attributed to farming and Afrikaner support, the white Labour and clerical vote. Most Labour and white-collar workers continued to support Responsible Government in 1922, but to a large degree farming and Afrikaner support declined. The apparent attractions of Responsible Government or Union had not changed significantly in two years, and the following analysis makes it clear that various economic factors underlay the decision of various sectors of the community to support one side or the other. Such factors were less important in 1920, when the future form of government was less certain and more distant.

The first step taken by the newly-elected Legislative Council members in 1920 was to request Responsible Government in terms of the Supplemental Charter. Lord Milner, Secretary of State from 1919 to 1921, prevaricated; his reply in December 1920 suggested a delay until after the 1924 elections, when, if the electorate should still support Responsible Government, it would be granted. This recommendation was rejected by Coghlan, although the offer of a development loan of £150 000 per annum was welcomed.⁴ The loan did not alter the position of the Company, whose main reason for wishing to relinquish the reins of administration had been to avoid further financial commitment in the country. Now that funds had become available from another source, the Company preferred to prolong its administration in order to allow time for a conversion of public opinion to Union, for entry into the Union gave the Company its best chance for a satisfactory financial settlement.⁵ The joint interest of the Colonial Secretary and the Company in such a delay was shortlived, for in February 1921 Winston Churchill became Colonial Secretary. This change was not immediately seen as unfavourable to Company policy; Malcolm commented on the new incumbent that:

While he may not be hostile, [he] is not likely to be particularly sympathetic towards us. On the other hand he is pretty sure to be in sympathy with Union aspirations, as he will regard the Union as the fruit of what he and Elgin did in 1906 and 1907.⁶

Churchill, on taking office, delegated responsibility on the issue of Rhodesian Responsible Government to a committee, to which he appointed Lord Buxton, the former High Commissioner in South Africa and perhaps the most sympathetic of all Colonial Office officials to Responsible Government. In May 1921 publication of his report gave a considerable boost to Coghlan's party, and was seen as a setback by both the Company and Rhodesian Unionists,⁷ for the demand for Responsible Government was acknowledged, although it

⁴ [The] Rh[odesia] Her[ald], 24 Jan. 1921, Reply of the Elected Members.

⁵ Hist[orical] M[anuscript]s Coll[ection], CH8/2 [Papers of Sir Francis Percy Drummond Chaplin : Correspondence and Other Papers], 2/6 (By Correspondent : P. L. Gell, 24 Oct. 1918 - 6 Jan. 1923), Gell to Chaplin, 7 May 1921.

⁶ Hist. MSS Colln, CH8/2/2/11 [D. O. Malcolm, 16 Sept. 1910 - 9 Apr. 1929], Malcolm to Chaplin, 28 Jan. 1921.

⁷ Ibid., Malcolm to Chaplin, 12 May 1921.

was recommended that the issue first be placed before the public in a referendum, suggested for early in 1922.⁸

The Rhodesia Union Association attempted to make the most of the Buxton Report by suggesting that the financial liabilities that this (and the Cave Award) would impose on the country were unbearable, but in fact Coghlan, whose party had now been joined by the Company's former Treasurer, Sir Francis Newton,⁹ felt that they would well be able to stand up under the estimated debt of £2 000 000.

The Report was also seen as a setback by Smuts. Like Chaplin and the Company, he believed that given time Rhodesia would opt for Union, but the proposed referendum was a 'for or against' issue on Responsible Government and did not give them any time. He therefore suggested a referendum embracing all issues, including Union, although this placed Churchill in an awkward position since Union had been resoundingly defeated in the 1920 elections.¹⁰ However, Smuts was supported by the local Union Association, which had been encouraged by his increased majority in the February 1921 elections after the amalgamation of the South African and Unionist parties. This was considered to have allayed Rhodesian fears of Afrikaner Nationalism (although it was not unobserved in Rhodesia that Smuts's gains were at the expense of Labour rather than the Nationalists), and consequently the Rhodesian Unionists claimed to have won widespread support with a reputed membership of 1 500 in June 1921.¹¹ However Coghlan rejected a motion by Fletcher that the deputation to London proposed by Buxton should request that Union be included as an issue in the referendum,¹² but as a result of widespread support for the Union Association's subsequent petition, signed by 8 104 settlers,¹³ Churchill successfully pressed the matter on the deputation's arrival in London. The deputation's subsequent success with the Colonial Office was also seen as a setback by Smuts, who commented:

Coghlan has played his cards well and beaten both the Imperial Government and the British South Africa Company and I most certainly don't want him to beat me . . . It will never do to let him know he's bested the Colonial Office and Chartered Company else he'll sit down in sheer stubbornness and try to beat me.¹⁴

⁸ Great Britain, *South Africa. First Report of a Committee Appointed by the Secretary of State for the Colonies to Consider Certain Questions Relating to Rhodesia* [Cmnd. 1273], paras 33, 39, 45 (H.C. 1921 (I), xxiv, 719).

⁹ *Rh. Her.*, 20 May 1921. Newton's conversion was a surprise to the Company, who attributed it to the Buxton Report and the influence of the Imperial Secretary, Stanley (who was felt to have influenced the Report as well), *Hist. MSS Colln, CH8/2/2/11, Malcolm to Chaplin, 7 June 1921*.

¹⁰ R. Hyam, *The Failure of South African Expansion, 1908-1948* (London, Macmillan, 1972), 60.

¹¹ *Rh. Her.*, 12 June 1921.

¹² Southern Rhodesia, *Debates in the Legislative Council during the Second Session of the Seventh Council, 25th April to 27th May, 1921* (Salisbury, Argus [1921]), 25 May, 1070ff.

¹³ *Rh. Her.*, 8 July and 25 Aug. 1921.

¹⁴ Quoted in *Hist. MSS Colln, CH8/2/2/9* [J. G. MacDonald], McDonald to Chaplin, 3 Aug. 1921.

Although the Rhodesian press and Rhodesia Union Association did their best to belittle the draft letters patent on the delegation's return in January 1922 and to make capital particularly out of McChlery's unenthusiastic attitude,¹⁵ the draft constitution nevertheless was well received by the R.G.A.'s supporters and Fletcher received a vote of no confidence at Wankie after denigrating the terms.¹⁶ Despite the defection of the former R.G.A. stalwart, McChlery, who was later asked by Coghlan to resign from the party,¹⁷ the Unionists' only hope now lay in the forthcoming deputation to Smuts to obtain the terms for Union, since it was obvious that only the most generous terms for entry into the Union would be able to sway public opinion.

The delegates, especially the Unionists, returned well satisfied with the willingness of South Africa to meet Rhodesia's needs, but they had obtained no definite terms. The subsequent delay in obtaining the official terms of entry was probably part of Smuts's plan to delay the referendum (as well as the difficulties experienced in negotiations with the Company) to give the Unionists time to build up support,¹⁸ but his hand was forced when Coghlan himself introduced the Referendum Ordinance late in the Legislative Council session, despite the absence of the Union terms, in order to avoid just such a delay.

The date of the referendum was set for 27 October, and once the Union terms were obtained in July, campaigning by both parties started in earnest. Chaplin had suggested to Smartt earlier in the year that if the Rhodesia Union Association 'were to receive a little encouragement I imagine they would take a more active line',¹⁹ and such 'encouragement' was received from both South Africa and the B.S.A. Company, as well as from local mining companies.²⁰ Malcolm wrote:

I am glad that J. G. McDonald and his pro-Union friends are showing more activity . . . I think we shall have to give him some help quietly through the Goldfields. It would not do for us to appear in the matter.²¹

The latter sentiment was one with which the Colonial Office was in accord, for incorporation into the Union might be jeopardized if Rhodesians suspected Company pressure. 'The British thus fervently hoped that the Company would

¹⁵ *Rh. Her.*, 20 Jan. and 24 Feb. 1922.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 17 Feb. 1922.

¹⁷ Hist. MSS Colln, RH8 [Papers of the Rhodesian Party (formerly Responsible Government Association)], 1 [Correspondence and Other Papers], 1 [1922 Referendum, 3 June 1919 - 28 Feb. 1924], 1 [Bulawayo, Mar. - Dec. 1922], Coghlan to McChlery, 25 May 1922.

¹⁸ RC/3/1 [Resident Commissioner : Correspondence : General], 121 (1922), 481, H[igh] C[ommissioner] to Secretary of State, 9 June 1922.

¹⁹ Hist. MSS Colln, CH8/2/1 [General, 9 Feb. 1896 - 18 Nov. 1933], Chaplin to Smartt, 28 Feb. 1921.

²⁰ D. J. Murray, *The Governmental System of Southern Rhodesia* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1970), 124.

²¹ Hist. MSS Colln, CH8/2/2/11, Malcolm to Chaplin, 14 Apr. 1921 and 27 July 1922; Malcolm to McDonald, 17 Aug. 1922 encl. in Malcolm to Chaplin, 17 Aug. 1922.

not, with their usual clumsiness, engineer a press campaign in favour of entry to the Union.²² Such a press campaign was indeed organized, despite assertions by the Rhodesian Printing & Publishing Company's biographer to the contrary,²³ but in fact the strongly biased reporting failed to influence the electorate to any great extent.

South African aid was not limited to financial and press support. Talks were held with prominent South African Party politicians in South Africa, while a South African Party agent visited Rhodesia 'to help all he can . . . and give you all some most useful pointers and lay out propaganda at which I believe he is very good'.²⁴

The Rhodesian Union Association's policy at the time of the London deputation had been to attempt to subvert the loyalty of Responsible Government members of the deputation,²⁵ and McChlery's subsequent doubts and resignation from the R.G.A. were perhaps the result of such tactics. Attempts were also made by influential South Africans such as Abe Bailey and Joel Coghlan to win Coghlan over by promise of a South African Cabinet post,²⁶ but such attempts were hopeless for Coghlan's antipathy to Union was unlikely to be overcome by such means.²⁷ The Association also hoped to use the considerable ability and influence of Smuts himself; McDonald insisted that 'we must get Smuts up here early next year. By then we'll be ready and he'll carry the "wobblers".'²⁸ He also warned Smuts against disbelieving in Coghlan's sincerity in wanting Responsible Government; too late to stop the attempted 'purchase' of Coghlan and perhaps a point that Smuts was already aware of himself.

Much was made of the provisions of the draft letters patent and the Union terms during the referendum campaign, but it is probable that their details played a relatively minor role in deciding the electorate. As with the 1920 elections, Unionists made much of the difficulties they imagined the country would experience financially under Responsible Government, while R.G.A. supporters felt that ten representatives in the South African Assembly (a generous offer considering the small size of the Rhodesian electorate) would in no way protect purely Rhodesian interests, or compensate for their loss of independence. More general interests, such as the fear of Afrikaner nationalism, the influx of 'poor white' settlers, loss of labour (for although

²² Hyam, *The Failure*, 63, quoting Buxton to Smuts, 17 Apr. 1921.

²³ W. D. Gale, *The Rhodesian Press . . .* (Salisbury, Rhodesian Printing and Publishing, 1962), 127.

²⁴ Hist. MSS Colln. CH8/2/1, J. G. McDonald to L. Ludlow of Goldfields Rhodesia Co. Ltd., 7 July 1921 encl. in McDonald to Chaplin, 7 July 1921.

²⁵ Ibid.. McDonald to Chaplin, 8 Nov. 1921.

²⁶ J. P. R. Wallis, *One Man's Hand: The Story of Sir Charles Coghlan . . .* (London, Longmans, Green, 1950), 176-7.

²⁷ Coghlan was also aware of the unpopularity of Union : RC/3/1/87 (1920), 458, R[esident] C[ommissioner] to H. C., 29 Apr. 1920 : 'Whatever his political opponents say of Sir Charles, they cannot honestly charge him with being ignorant of public opinion'.

²⁸ Hist. MSS Colln. CH8/2/2/9, MacDonald to Chaplin, 30 June 1921.

South Africa guaranteed that no recruiting for the Rand mines would take place north of 22°S latitude, it was obvious that Rhodesia would no longer be able to stop the flow of voluntary African labour to the higher-paying Rand), and the higher income tax rates prevailing in South Africa, swayed many people to support Responsible Government.²⁹ Furthermore, while Smuts offered generous development loans, financial security was not certain with Union either, for as Sir Lewis Michell commented:

We [in South Africa] are now reaping the harvest of ten years extravagance. The railway position is as bad as it can be and it will take a long period to equalize revenue and expenditure, especially as railway rates have reached their maximum, while the running costs can only be substantially curtailed by the loyal assistance of the operating and office staffs and it seems clear that this cannot be expected . . . Judging from the ill success of our last loan in London we shall find it difficult to borrow further large sums in that market until we put our house in order. Fresh taxation seems inevitable and an increased income tax is almost certain . . . Retrenchment and higher taxation may make Smuts unpopular . . . Smuts is a good fighter but has his work cut out to win through.³⁰

Similarly, it was not the actual provisions of the draft letters patent that unionists found fault with, but rather the fear that the 'wild men' of the R.G.A. would ruin the country by taxing companies to the detriment of the mining and commercial industries. British loyalists of both convictions were equally convinced that imperial interests would best be served by their particular course.

Table Ist
REFERENDUM : ESTIMATE OF VOTING

Occupation	Estimate of Votes to be Cast %	Regis- tered Voters	For R.G. %	N	For Union %	N
Public Services	75	1 784	75	1 003	25	335
Professional	60	540	50	162	50	162
Mining	60	1 586	60	570	40	381
Agriculture	55	3 050	40	672	60	1 005
Industries	60	1 248	80	599	20	150
Commerce	60	2 075	80	995	20	250
Commercial Services	55	620	80	272	20	69
Railways	75	1 370	85	872	15 ³¹	155
Independent	60	80	50	24	50	24
MALES	62	12 353	76	5 169	33	2 531
FEMALES	60	6 457	75	2 905	25	969
TOTAL	62	18 810	70	8 074	30	3 500

²⁹ *The Independent*, 26 Aug. 1922, R. G. A. Manifesto.

³⁰ Hist. MSS Colln, CH8/2/2/12 (Sir Lewis Michell, 4 Apr. 1914 - 5 June 1923), Michell to Chaplin, 1 Dec. 1921.

³¹ RC/3/1/125 [1922], 785, R.C. to H. C., 9 Oct. 1922.

³² This estimate was increased (and the proportion in favour of Responsible Government reduced) after propaganda by South Africa Railways in October.

The interests of each occupational sector were affected differently by the alternatives, and the voting was expected to follow occupational patterns to a great extent (Table I). The Resident Commissioner estimated that voting would favour Responsible Government by 70 per cent, with 30 per cent for Union, and also estimated the percentage vote from each sector. In fact this considerably underestimated the total percentage poll, which was 78 per cent in place of his estimate of 62 per cent, while the majority in favour of Responsible Government was lower than expected, 59.43 per cent. However, the more interesting aspect of the Resident Commissioner's analysis is in the distribution of votes from the various sectors, for it would appear that to a certain extent the split between Responsible Government and Unionist supporters followed this estimate, despite the overestimate in favour of the former, but with the major exception of the Railways group. Although it has been asserted frequently that the railway vote went to Responsible Government,³³ this was not the case; the majority appear to have voted for Union.

The occupations of the settler population in 1921 have been estimated as follows as a percentage of the working population:³⁴

Public Offices	12
Professions	3
Mining	15
Agriculture	27
Industry	11
Commerce/Finance	16
Railways/Communications	12
Commercial Services	4

Although it would appear that the agricultural sector was the largest, and therefore potentially the most influential group, a more accurate assessment for the purposes of this paper is to separate the Labour class from their employment categories. The majority of men employed in the mining industry were artisans, and their vote, which in earlier years had tended to follow the lead set by employers to a large extent, did not go the way mining magnates would have liked in 1920 and 1922. The 'Mining' proportion can therefore be reduced from 15 to a more probable 2 per cent, the remainder together with the majority of those in the group 'Industry' forming a new category of 'Labour' which totalled approximately 24 per cent of the male population. The 'Railways' sector could logically have been included in this new artisan or Labour class but for the fact that the railway vote at the last minute did not follow the pattern of the rest of the Labour group. Table II gives the distribution of voters within constituencies, based on an analysis of the 1922 voters rolls.

³³ Hyam, *The Failure*, 68; L. H. Gann, *A History of Southern Rhodesia . . .* (London, Chatto & Windus, 1965), 241; L. H. Gann and M. Gelfand, *Huggins of Rhodesia . . .* (London, Allen & Unwin, 1964), 60.

³⁴ Southern Rhodesia, *Report of the Director of Census regarding the European Census taken on 3rd May, 1921* (Sessional Papers, A.13, 1922), 18 (calculations by Dr B. A. Kosmin).

Table II³⁵

ANALYSIS OF THE 1922 VOTERS LIST

<i>District</i>	<i>Farm-ing</i>	<i>Mining</i>	<i>Art-isan</i>	<i>Public Service</i>	<i>Rail-ways</i>	<i>Com-merce</i>	<i>Other</i>	<i>Profes-sional/cler-ical³⁶</i>
Bulawayo								
District	350	152	210	157	52	171	271	
North	13	39	268	206	68	322	279	526
South	8	24	413	83	339	148	336	386
Eastern	418	90	270	159	191	160	336	
Gwelo	386	107	112	116	102	114	266	
Hartley	68	398	42	92	17	120	103	
Marandellas	744	35	13	63	39	54	103	
Midlands	462	285	61	93	36	119	101	
Northern	710	432	130	87	23	84	154	
Salisbury								
District	422	94	180	306	28	190	394	
Town	25	15	275	253	160	406	326	285
Victoria	683	402	75	140	21	139	142	
Western	458	258	149	121	189	114	193	

The combined mining and artisan vote makes the Labour vote numerically superior in the Bulawayo District, Bulawayo South, and Hartley districts, and second only to the farming vote in the Eastern, Midlands, Northern Victoria and Western districts, whilst also forming substantial blocks in the urban constituencies. Table III shows the preponderance of the Labour vote in comparison with the order of the majority achieved in favour of Responsible Government.

³⁵ I am grateful to Dr J. M. MacKenzie for assistance in the compilation of this Table; for full bibliographical details of the voters rolls, see below, R. S. Roberts, 'An historical bibliography of voters lists in Southern Rhodesia : Part I, 1899-1922, 111

³⁶ The Professional/Clerical categories were separated only in urban constituencies.

Table III
LABOUR VOTE

<i>Districts in Order of Labour Strength</i>	<i>For Responsible Government %</i>	<i>Districts in Order of Responsible Majority</i>	<i>For Responsible Government %</i>
Hartley	66.52	Bulawayo North	67.93
Bulawayo South	63.97	Hartley	66.52
Bulawayo District	64.98	Bulawayo District	64.98
Northern	60.34	Bulawayo South	63.97
Victoria	51.69	Salisbury Town	63.81
Western	59.32	Northern	60.34
Eastern	57.48	Western	59.32
Midlands	51.94	Eastern	57.48
Bulawayo North	67.93	Gwelo	57.34
Salisbury Town	63.81	Salisbury District	57.33
Salisbury District	57.33	Midlands	51.94
Gwelo	57.34	Victoria	51.69
Marandellas	49.43	Marandellas	49.43

With the exception of the Midlands and Victoria constituencies, the electoral districts with the highest proportion of Labour voters also returned large majorities in favour of Responsible Government.

The organization of Labour in unions, and the growing awareness of their separate needs as a class are largely responsible for the fact that their vote in the referendum, as in the 1920 elections, can be seen as a separate entity, rather than included in employment categories. The interests of artisans in the mining sector were not those of the managerial class, and, as Chaplin was to comment, somewhat wistfully:

Loyalty to employers in these matters is a thing of the past . . . The feeling on the part of the Trade Unionists and kindred elements is that as most of the better class people — merchants, representatives of large companies, and employers generally — were for Union, their proper course was to vote the other way.³⁷

The one exception to this rule is in the Midlands district, where the farming vote was the major factor in the relatively low proportion in favour of Responsible Government (as in the Victoria district), but where an element of 'loyalty' remained. The bulk of the voters in the Midlands were from the three villages: Enkeldoorn, the centre of a primarily Afrikaans farming area; Umvuma, a mixed farming and mining area; and Que Que, a mining centre. Table IV shows that Enkeldoorn and Umvuma returned Union majorities, though Que Que voted for Responsible Government. Since Umvuma had a large mining population, this result is surprising, until the influence of

³⁷ Hist. MSS Colln, CH8/2/1, Chaplin to Smuts, 30 Oct. 1922.

Table IV³⁸

VOTING ANALYSIS : MIDLANDS DISTRICT

	<i>For R.G.</i>	<i>For Union</i>	<i>No. of Voters</i>	<i>Mining</i>	<i>Artisan</i>	<i>Farming</i>	<i>Other</i>
Midlands	550	509	1157	285	61	462	349
Enkeldoorn	80	133	100	1	13	115*	74
Umvuma	147	189	262	143	8	90*	95
Que Que	323	187	313	141	36	100*	135

*Estimated figures, as the majority of farmers list farm names rather than village districts as their addresses in the voters rolls.

Willoughby's Consolidated Company is brought into consideration, for Umvuma is situated within the vast Central Estates, Willoughby's owned not only the greater proportion of the stands and buildings and controlled rents and rates but also owned the mining properties within the district, which were then leased to tributors and small-workers. The reliance of the bulk of the population on this Company for their livelihood is a partial explanation of the vote, although the farming vote would probably have been for Union without the influence of Willoughby's.

In other districts attempts were occasionally made to influence the voting of employees, for example at Wankie Colliery, where the General Manager, A. R. Thomson, an active Unionist until 1924, secured the resignation of the local R.G.A. secretary.³⁹ A further incident was reported from Banket of instructions received from a London Board for staff at a local mine to vote for Union.⁴⁰ It is noticeable that voting at some of the smaller mines (the Antelope, Fred, Jessie and Legion mines) went in favour of Union (Table V), although usually by a small majority; but whether this indicates pressure from management or personal inclination is impossible to estimate. Certainly J. G. McDonald considered that insufficient pressure was brought to bear by employers.⁴¹ At larger mining centres as well as several small mines, voting favoured Responsible Government.

³⁸ This and the following Tables giving the voting analysis are based on an analysis of the poll by R. G. A. Polling Agents, *The Independent*, 3 Nov. 1922 (incomplete returns) and actual polling-station returns for some districts, [*The Bullawayo Chronicle*], 8 Nov. 1922. Sufficient information is given between them to cover most districts. Occupational breakdowns are from voters lists, for reference to which, see above, n.35.

The discrepancy between the total number of voters registered for the station and actual votes recorded is due to voters from farms and outlying areas casting their votes at the village polling station.

³⁹ Hist. MSS Colln, NE1/1/1 [Papers of Sir Francis James Newton : Correspondence : Sir Charles Coghlan, 13 Nov. 1922 - 24 Aug. 1927], Coghlan to Newton, 5 Mar. 1923.

⁴⁰ Hist. MSS Colln, RH8/1/19 [Shamva, 26 June - 16 Oct. 1922], R.G.A. Banket to R.G.A. Salisbury, 14 Oct. 1922.

⁴¹ Hist. MSS Colln, CH8/2/2/11, McDonald to Malcolm, 13 Nov. 1922.

Table V

VOTING ANALYSIS : MINES

Polling Station	For R.G.	For Union	Un-known ⁴²	Mining/ Artisan	Farming	Railways	Other
Antelope	10	15		42	1	—	16
Fred Mine	28	29		42	—	—	29
Jessie Mine	10	18		23	—	—	5
Legion Mine	8	10		4	—	—	—
Wankie	152	20		164	47	139	116
Cam & Motor	105	55		135*	20*	1	6
Shabani	100	60		86	3	—	64
Tafuna	20	16	7	41	10	—	2
Shamva Mine	161	120	17	270	40	—	104
Penhalonga	89	54	11	90	7	—	44
Lonely Mine	80	30	6	86	2	—	45
Queens Mine	46	20	1	21	20*	—	10
Arcturus	94	36	—	43	50*	1	25
Duchess Mine	16	7	2	8	10*	—	2
Owl Mine	23	—	4	11	10*	—	2
Shagari	33	2	2	11	10*	—	5
Golden Valley	20	—	—	20	—	—	5
Eldorado	26	4	—	15	10*	—	5

* Estimates only.

Generally the Labour vote clearly supported Responsible Government. This is usually attributed to the South African government's suppression of the 1922 strike and hostility towards trade unionism; the Labour Party in South Africa was allied to the Nationalists in opposition to Smuts. Rhodesian Labour was unlikely to be willing to be used as a pawn in Smuts's game.⁴³ Local organization of trade unions in Rhodesia from 1916 had similarly strengthened opposition to exploitation by capitalist mining and other companies, including the Company government, and was unlikely therefore to submit to their pressure and propaganda to join the Union. Other factors were more directly economic, for wages in Rhodesia were on average ten per cent higher than in the South, with salaries below £1 000 per annum exempt from income tax in Rhodesia.

The position of the railwaymen was initially similar to the rest of the Labour group, but altered radically just before the referendum. Antipathy to the Union Government was originally strong; Keller, the Secretary of the Rhodesian Railways Workers Union, reflected general opinions in his comments on the labour record of Smuts:

⁴² 'Unknown' figures are from *The Independent*, 3 Nov. 1922. The first returns in the Table are polling-station returns and there are therefore no 'unknown' votes.

⁴³ Capitalists in South Africa favoured Rhodesia's entry, Hist. MSS Colln, NE1/1/1, Newton to Coghlan, 16 Nov. 1922.

General Smuts has been held up by the Capitalistic press as a saviour of nations . . . [but] the foot-steps of the Prime Minister drip with blood. In 1913 the strike and shooting followed by the illegal deportations of labour leaders . . . The only crime of these labour leaders was that they struck for a living wage . . . The next was the native trouble at Port Elizabeth, which required more shooting; then Bulhoek, which 'victory' was won by more shooting. Now the Rand trouble — shooting once more . . . These are the usual tactics employed by this great(?) statesman to educate the working man.⁴⁴

On his return from the delegation to Smuts, Keller commented that he was: keenly disappointed with the results, and more than ever convinced that entry into Union would be *detrimental to the people of Rhodesia* in general and *fatal to the interests of Rhodesian Railwaymen* in particular.⁴⁵

He considered the tone of the discussions vague and insincere; the right of strike was restricted by the Railway and Harbour Services Act of 1912; promotion would be based on bilingualism; men were subject to 'Double Trial' — a trial by a Railway Board of Enquiry as well as by the court of law; and there was no guarantee that salaries would remain at the higher Rhodesian level. A heated correspondence was carried on in the press columns between Keller, Stewart and Unionist sympathizers, and initially the South African terms lent weight to their criticisms of Union. The position of railwaymen would depend on when the existing railway companies were liquidated, after which their conditions would be the same as those of railway servants in the Union, although pension rights would be secured.⁴⁶ The railwaymen were not satisfied with this, and after a petition was mounted, it was later ascertained that the conditions pertaining to civil servants would be extended to the railway employees.⁴⁷ The certainty that the railway system would be taken over by the South African government was not countered by a similar assurance from the R.G.A. who could only promise to guarantee the accrued rights of railway servants in the event of a Responsible Government take-over of the railways.⁴⁸ Since it was not certain that the purchase of the railways would be an immediate object, reassurances of this kind failed to convince some of the railwaymen of the advantages of Responsible Government.⁴⁹ However, the majority appeared to continue their support for the R.G.A.; a vote of confidence was passed in the R.G.A. almost unanimously at a public meeting of railwaymen in Bulawayo as late as the

⁴⁴ *Rhodesian Railway Review* (April 1922), 13.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 11 (emphasis in original).

⁴⁶ British South Africa Company, *Government Gazette*, 31 July 1922.

⁴⁷ *Bul. Chron.*, 3 Oct. 1922, General Manager's Circular No. 162; see also *ibid.*, 21 Oct. 1922.

⁴⁸ Hist. MSS Colln, RH8/1/1/11 [Umtali, 4 June-19 Oct. 1922], R.G.A. Salisbury to R.G.A. Umtali, 11 Oct. 1922.

⁴⁹ *Bul. Chon.*, 3 and 14 Oct. 1922, letters from 'Clavis' and 'Also an Anonymous Railway Clerk'.

6 October. On 27 October, polling day, *The Bulawayo Chronicle* commented that while:

the R.R.W.U. leaders have done their utmost to stampede the men in favour of R.G. . . . recently there has been a turnover of railway-men to Union, and today the Unionists claim that a large majority of railway votes are going their way.

This might merely have been an electioneering tactic, but is borne out by the results shown in Table VI. The turnover was attributed by the Resident Commissioner to the tour of the railway line by two emissaries from the South African Railways,⁵⁰ one of whom was Sir William Hoy's (General Manager of South African Railways) Personal Secretary.⁵¹

Unfortunately little is known of the propaganda so successfully used by these men, for the meetings were all private, but it was sufficient to swing the vote of Bulawayo's 'railway suburb', Rayton, to Union (Table VI). However, it was probably related to wage rates, which were in fact only marginally lower than in Rhodesia (a difference of 3s. 3d. per day), but which was compensated for by the 'bonus' system of payment for piece-work on which basis most of the South African men were employed.⁵² Prospects for promotion were better in the larger organization, and the security afforded from the point of view both of employment and pensions was also attractive. In contrast, Responsible Government offered promises of reduced railway rates; Downie and other speakers estimated reductions of £500 000 in expenditure, which raised doubts regarding the profitability of the railways under the R.G.A., and the fear that this would entail longer hours and reduced pay.⁵³

Table VI⁵⁴

VOTING ANALYSIS : RAILWAY SUBURBS

<i>Polling Station</i>	<i>For R.G.</i>	<i>For Union</i>	<i>Artisan</i>	<i>Railway</i>	<i>Clerical</i>	<i>Profes-sional</i>	<i>Other</i>
South Suburbs*	104	113					
Bulawayo South excluding Rayton			342	136	177	140	475
Rayton	196	214	71	203	59	10	43

* Apparently a return from one polling station only.

⁵⁰ RC/3/1/125, 785, R.C. to Imperial Secretary, 16 Oct. 1922.

⁵¹ *The Independent*, 13 Oct. 1922.

⁵² *Bul. Chron.*, 5 Oct. 1922.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 6 Oct. 1922, editorial; 14 Oct. 1922, letters.

⁵⁴ It has not been possible to separate the railway vote in Salisbury as the results for Salisbury's 'railway suburbs' are not obtainable, while no analysis at all of polling stations has been found for Umtali.

Although a substantial railway population was registered in the Wankie district (Table V) where the vote was overwhelmingly in favour of Responsible Government, it is unlikely in view of the low poll that the railwaymen, most of whom were resident along the main line from Bulawayo to Wankie, voted at this station.⁵⁵

The second major occupational group, the agricultural, similarly experienced division and a change from the voting pattern of 1920. It will be noted from Table I that only 40 per cent of the agricultural community were expected to vote for Responsible Government, even though this was traditionally the anti-company sector, and had led all movements to end Chartered rule and establish self-government.⁵⁶ The R.G.A. was originally a 'farmers party' and many of its leading figures were still farmers. The relatively low proportion expected to support it can be attributed to two reasons: firstly, the fact that the predominantly farming Afrikaans community voted for Union in 1922 in contrast to 1920; and secondly, that although the predominantly maize-growing areas in North Mashonaland continued to support Responsible Government, the ranchers and tobacco farmers of Eastern Mashonaland, the Midlands and Matabeleland appear to have opted for Union.

In 1920 the Afrikaners were instructed by the National Party in South Africa to vote for the R.G.A., but despite the continued opposition of the Nationalists to the entry of Rhodesia into the Union,⁵⁷ no such instruction was given in 1922. A suggestion that this be sought was vetoed by Coghlan.⁵⁸ Many Afrikaans people were also to be found in the ranks of the R.G.A. in 1920, and the clearest indication of the changed circumstances came with the resignation of L. P. Raaff, the well-respected grandson of a famous Pioneer, on the grounds that 'the antipathy of nationality is an openly avowed R.G. platform plank'.⁵⁹ This was supported by evidence from R.G.A. agents: one commented that 'those who are leaving R.G. tell me they are doing so because they believe there is a strong anti-Dutch feeling among the majority of Britishers'.⁶⁰ So much was made of the fear of Afrikaner nationalism succeeding in South Africa that the R.G.A. in their determination to retain

⁵⁵ Unlike Rayton, where railwaymen were 90 per cent British, the gangers registered at Wankie were mostly Afrikaans and therefore even more likely to have voted for Union.

⁵⁶ Murray, *The Governmental System*, 66, has incorrectly assumed that the alliance between the R.G.A. and the Rhodesia Agricultural Union continued in 1922.

⁵⁷ *Rh. Her.*, 4 July and 15 Sept. 1922.

⁵⁸ Hist. MSS Colln, RH8/1/3 (General Secretary, 2 June - 17 Oct. 1922), Monckton to Renniker, 2 Aug. 1922; RH8/1/5 [Assistant General Secretary, Rhodesian Party, 31 Oct. 1912 [1922] - 21 Feb. 1924], Eickhoff to Thornton, 17 Jan. 1923.

⁵⁹ *Rh. Her.*, 2 Oct. 1922, letter; Hist. MSS Colln, GI1/1/1 [Papers of Albert Giese : Correspondence and Other Papers : General, 20 May 1895 - 8 May 1938], Zutphen to Giese, 10 July 1922.

⁶⁰ Hist. MSS Colln, RH8/1/1/5 (Marandellas, 14 May - 23 Oct. 1922), Monckton to Renniker, 16 Oct. 1922.

the 'British' character of Rhodesia, became openly racialist themselves, alienating their former supporters, for whom Responsible Government was now less desirable than Union, however much Rhodesia's entry might aid Smuts. The occasional acknowledgement by the R.G.A. of the seriousness of this situation did not result in any action being taken to counteract it.⁶¹ Voting in areas densely populated by Afrikaners favoured Union (Table VII); the R.G.A. agent in Melsetter reported that 'Chipinga is a Nationalist stronghold and of the 87 votes polled, 13 possibly 14 were for R.G.', and that in Melsetter, 'Out of 33 that polled here I can safely say 11 were R.G. The rest were in favour of Union'.⁶² Enkeldoorn, the other major Afrikaans centre, also voted in favour of Union, and it is noticeable that the electoral districts with large minorities of Afrikaans voters scored low on the Responsible Government poll (Tables III and VII), namely Eastern, Midlands, Victoria, and to some extent Marandellas.

Table VII
VOTING ANALYSIS : AFRIKAANS AREAS

Area	For R.G.	For Union	Farming	Other	Afri- kaners	Total Voters
Chipinga	13	74				
Melsetter	11	22	} 250	83	238	333
Enkeldoorn (Charter District)	80	133				
Wildebeeste Laagte	1	40	41	—	40	41

There is little doubt that fear of Afrikaner Nationalism contributed to the success of the R.G.A.; Chaplin attributed the result of the referendum partly to 'anti-Dutch feeling, especially among the women'.⁶³ the reverse side of the coin was the loss of the 'Dutch' vote.

The Afrikaans vote in favour of Union to some extent explains the dramatic change in the political attitude of the agricultural sector, since the majority of the Afrikaners in the country farmed, and this in itself could account for almost half the Union vote of 5 989.⁶⁴ This does not, however,

⁶¹ Hist. MSS Colln, RH8/1/1/1, Hepburn to Renniker, 8 Oct. 1922; RH8/1/1/17 [Party Supporters, 2 Sept.-30 Nov. 1922], Myers to Renniker, 30 Oct. 1922; RH8/1/1/11, Mrs Tawse Jollie to Renniker, 18 July 1922.

⁶² Hist. MSS Colln, RH8/1/1/17, Gilbert to Renniker, 30 Oct. 1922.

⁶³ Hist. MSS Colln, CH8/2/1, Chaplin to Smuts, 30 Oct. 1922.

⁶⁴ There were 6 537 adherents of the Dutch Reformed Church in 1921, but a high proportion of these would be children, and not all adults were registered voters in view of the literacy qualifications, *Report of the Director of Census . . . 1921*, Table XVI.

TABLE VIII⁶⁵

VOTING ANALYSIS : FARMING DISTRICTS

<i>Polling Station</i>	<i>For R.G.</i>	<i>For Union</i>	<i>Unknown</i>	<i>Farming</i>
MARANDELLAS:	433	443		744
Headlands	16	57		60*
Marandellas	63	64		
Inoro	14	12		26*
Lifton Farm	3	34		35*
Wedza	14	14		24
Makwiro	6	20	4	45
Beatrice	27	26	3	48
SALISBURY DISTRICT:	845	629		422
Nyabira	2	55		50*
VICTORIA:	626	585		683
Vlakplaats	2	20		20*
Zishumba	4	23		25*
Danga	8	14		6*
Chibi	8	10		8*
WESTERN:	611	419		458
Bembesi	2	20		17*
Nyamandhlovu	10	15		67
Marula	8	11		18

* Estimates only.

explain the entire shift away from Responsible Government by the farming community. Results and estimates from polling stations in the Marandellas, Victoria and Western districts, where examination of the voters rolls shows the number of Afrikaners to be comparatively low, indicates that the vote still went in favour of Union (Table VIII) in certain districts. The first feature these areas have in common is that none are maize-growing areas; the Marandellas districts specialized in tobacco, and the remainder were primarily ranching areas. Prices for cattle had slumped in 1922, and cattle were virtually unsaleable, yet the drought made the sale of surplus animals an urgent necessity. The local market was saturated, and when a market was found in the Congo, Northern Rhodesia restricted the passage of Southern Rhodesian cattle on health grounds; the nearest and readiest market, Kimberley and the Rand, was similarly restricted.⁶⁶ With no facilities for the export of tinned or frozen meat, Rhodesian cattlemen looked to the Union as a solution for their serious economic problems. To a certain extent the fact that many large mining and land-owning companies were also involved in ranching is a con-

⁶⁵ This Table excludes maize-growing districts, which are included in Table IX.

⁶⁶ See Southern Rhodesia, *Report of the Committee of Enquiry in Respect of the Cattle Industry of Southern Rhodesia* (Sessional Papers, A15, 1923).

tributary factor, but secondary to conditions caused by the drought and slump.

The slump, of course, was not limited to cattle prices and seriously affected tobacco and maize producers who similarly experienced marketing difficulties. The principal market for Rhodesian tobacco was South Africa, which by the 1920s was thought to have reached the limit of its import requirements. Tobacco had not previously been widely grown in South Africa except the darker pipe grades, but in the 1920s attempts were made to foster production and a tax was imposed on Rhodesian cigarette tobacco.⁶⁷ Rhodesia's entry into the Union would remove restrictions and help to solve the marketing problem. Marandellas was the principal tobacco producing district and was the only constituency to vote in favour of Union.⁶⁸ Nyabira was similarly the centre of a tobacco area north-west of Salisbury.

Maize on the other hand was produced on a large scale in South Africa, as well as in Rhodesia, and the bulk of the Rhodesian crop was exported overseas rather than to South Africa. Entry into the Union might not upset existing marketing arrangements, but maize-growers feared that, as railway rates from South Africa were lower than those from Rhodesia to South Africa, the lucrative local Rhodesian market would be swamped in times of surplus by cheap South African maize; this section of the farming community was perhaps the only group in Rhodesia who would not welcome the lower South African railway rates.

Map Legend

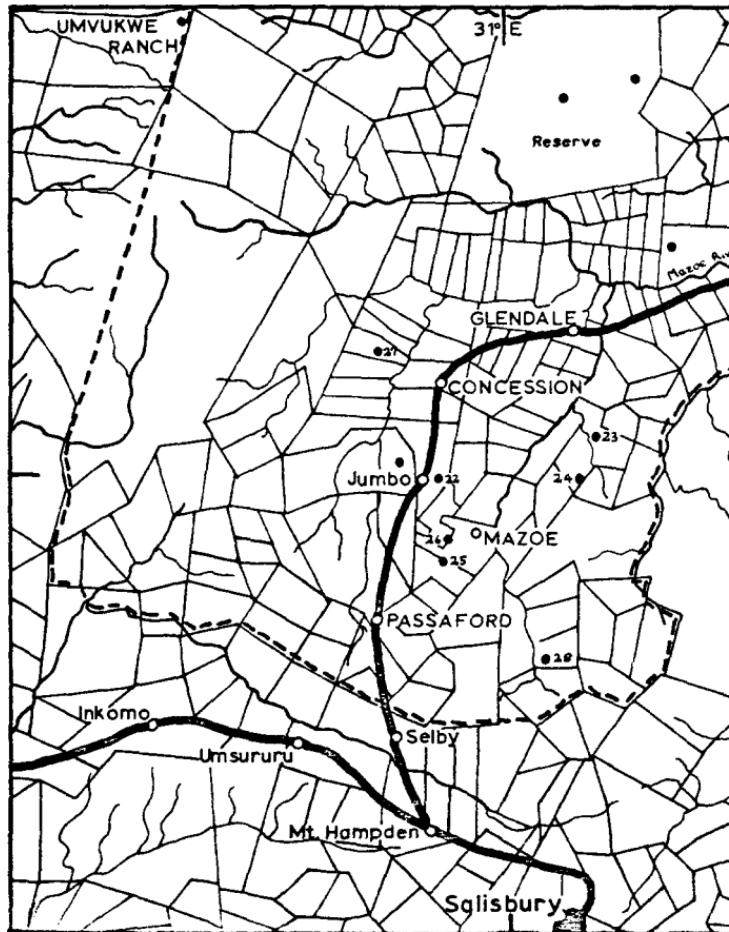
NAMES OF NUMBERED MINES

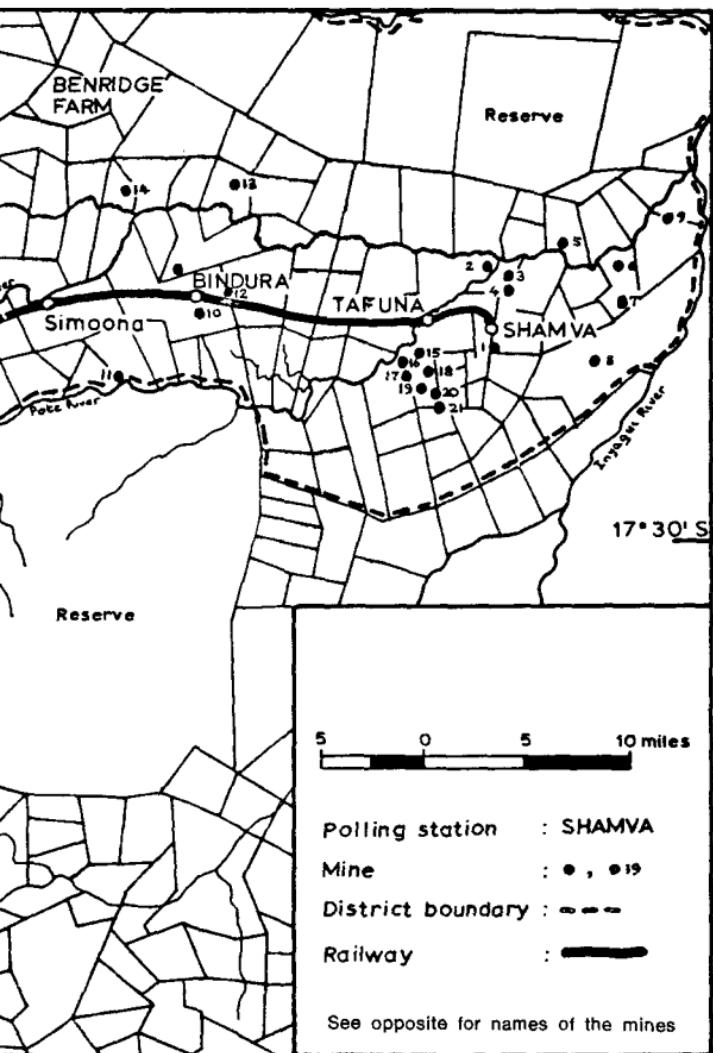
1. Shamva	12. Kimberley	23. Iron Duke
2. Left Bower	13. Kingsley	24. Yellow
3. Right Bower	Hoard	Jacket
4. Choobee	14. Slam	25. Alice
5. Crusader	15. Alliance Ext.	26. Golden Shaft
6. New Brixton	16. Alliance	27. Leopards Vlei
7. Montdor	17. Trio	28. Alpes
8. Red Dragon	18. Top	
9. Un-named	19. Tiptop	
10. Asp	20. Joking	
11. Prince of	21. Joker	
Wales	22. Jumbo	

⁶⁷ *Rh. Her.*, 13 Oct. 1922, letter from A. Pearson; E. A. Walker *A History of South Africa* (London, Longmans, 1947), 604; Rhodesian 'scrap' tobacco was totally prohibited in 1925.

⁶⁸ It is possible that some voters in this district (the only one to return a Responsible Government candidate in 1914) were also influenced by the conversion of McChlery to Union, although by itself this cannot account for the massive swing to Union. Marandellas as a constituency was abolished in 1923; the re-delimitation split it between Northern and Eastern districts.

MAZOE DISTRICT POLLING STATIONS 1922





Although marketing instability of all crops had existed in Rhodesia from 1920 as a result of the post-war depression, the seriousness of the situation had been heightened by the unprecedented drought of 1922, when there was an almost total failure of the normal annual rains. The insecurity of the farming community was increased and helped to convince many farmers that Union held the better prospects for them. The maize growers' vote, however, remained for Responsible Government, as is shown by a survey of the voting pattern for the Mazoe District (Map and Table IX), part of the Northern Electoral District and the principal maize-growing area in the country; this makes it clear that the two mining areas, Tafuna and Shamva, supported Responsible Government and that the majority of farmers in this district, with the exception of Benridge Farm, continued to sympathize with Responsible Government,⁶⁹ for economic reasons in addition to other factors such as fear of loss of their labour to South Africa.⁷⁰ Maize growers therefore lacked any incentive to vote for Union.

Table IX⁷¹
VOTING ANALYSIS : MAZOE DISTRICT

Polling Station*	For R.G.	For Union	Un-known	Total	Farming	Mining/Artisan	Other	Total
Mazoe	60	28	2	90	123	49	55	227
Passaford	19	12	—	31	29	2	12	31
Concession	59	12	4	75	58	6	6	70
Glendale	38	30	4	72	62	7	5	74
Tafuna	20	16	7	43	10	41	2	53
Shamva Mine	161	120	17	298	40	270	104	414
Benridge Farm	5	14	3	22	22	2	—	24
Umvukwe Ranch	21	4	—	25	25	2	—	27
				656				920
Bindura				147				
				803				
Other polling stations (Mazoe, Shamva)				117				
				920				

* See Map

⁶⁹ Hist. MSS Colln, RH8/1/1/9, Martin to Renniker, 4 Sept. 1922.

⁷⁰ Rh. Her., 20 Oct. 1922, letter from J. Mowbray of Shamva.

⁷¹ Although this district contains the most complete list of polling-station returns and estimates, no return for Bindura was included, and it is apparent from the low polls at turns are also omitted.

Next to the artisan vote, the womens' vote was seen by the Resident Commissioner to be predominantly in favour of Responsible Government, a view with which Chaplin and others agreed.⁷² Undoubtedly a high proportion voted the same way as their husbands, but this was not always the case; the most celebrated instance of divided loyalties was that of Godfrey Huggins, a later Prime Minister of Southern Rhodesia, whose wife was an active R.G.A. supporter while he favoured Union.⁷³ A noticeable feature of the voters rolls is the frequency with which married women who qualified on their husbands' salaries were registered, while their husbands were not. It will be seen from Table XI that if their votes are apportioned in accordance with the estimated 75: 25 split, an accurate return is obtained. McChlery and the R.G.A. had championed the cause of women's suffrage, which was then introduced in the Legislative Council by Coghlan; and the continued support by the R.G.A. for women's rights and the organization of women voters⁷⁴ contributed to a continued loyalty. Certainly the 'pandering' of the R.G.A. to the women's vote was deplored by some Unionists.⁷⁵ The fame and popularity of Mrs Tawse Jollie might also have contributed to this support. Although Chaplin considered the women 'anti-Dutch', assertions regarding their stronger racialism or lack of economic sense are less ascertainable features of their widespread sympathy for Responsible Government. A more likely explanation lies in the fact that South African women did not have the franchise (which was obtained only in 1930); and although Rhodesians were assured that the women would not be robbed of their vote on entry to the Union, such a fear existed and it would certainly not be possible to return female members to the House of Assembly.⁷⁶

The higher percentage of Responsible Government votes in the urban constituencies reflects not only the concentration of women in the towns, but also the support of civil servants and clerical workers, who were of course also concentrated in urban areas (Table X).

One of the principal reasons for the formation of the Public Services Association in 1919 was to protect the rights of civil servants in the event of a change of government. In addition to the guarantees required of the R.G.A. for maintenance of existing conditions and rights, from the Unionists the Public Services Association demanded security in regard to bilingualism

⁷² Hist. MSS Colln, CH8/2/2/11, McDonald to Malcolm, 13 Nov. 1922.

⁷³ Gann and Gelfand, *Huggins*, 60.

⁷⁴ See correspondence in Hist. MSS Colln, RH8/1/1/4 (Gwelo, 24 June-25 Sept. 1922); RH8/1/1/6 (Mazoe, Glendale and Bindura, 1 July - 12 Oct. 1922); CH3/1/1 (Papers of Kathleen Esther Charter : Unpublished Articles : . . . Reminiscences from 1897 to 1939).

⁷⁵ Hist. MSS Colln, GI1/1/1. Major Jesser Cooper to Giese, 4 Sept. 1923.

⁷⁶ Hist. MSS Colln, RH8/1/1/19 (General, 3 June 1919 - 25 Nov. 1922), Mrs C. Blomefield to Coghlan, 14 Sept. 1922.

and the right of retirement with full pension benefits on transfer.⁷⁷ Since both parties pledged support for the demands made of them, the issue of bilingualism and the possibility of transfer outside Rhodesia were the deciding factors for the majority of public servants; and this resulted in the majority of the predominantly English-speaking junior civil servants supporting Responsible Government, which represented the greater security for their careers. J. G. McDonald reported after the referendum that 'a large majority of civil servants and police voted R.G.',⁷⁸ and Chaplin in fact considered members of the Public Services Association to be 'R.G. extremists'.⁷⁹

The vote of white-collar workers was also attributed to Responsible Government by Chaplin,⁸⁰ and similarly contributed to the large majorities returned from urban constituencies (Table X).

Table X
VOTING ANALYSIS : URBAN CONSTITUENCIES

	For R.G.	For Union	Un- known	Public Service	Cler- ical	Art- isan	Rail- ways	Profes- sional	Com- merce	Other
Bulawayo North	826	390	—	206	277	268	68	249	322	228
Bulawayo South	955	538	—	83	236	413	339	150	148	368
Salisbury Town	894	507	—	253	326	275	160	200	406	125
Avondale	175	38	65	79	46	35	4	63	46	15

It can be seen from Table X that the railway vote alone cannot explain the number of pro-Union votes, and once again the Resident Commissioner's estimate, that the 'professional' vote would be split 50:50 with 20 per cent of the commercial community also supporting Union, accounts for this to some extent, although it is felt that a more accurate return is obtained if the latter is increased to 40 per cent. In the light of the referendum results, a revised estimate has been made of the voting pattern, the accuracy of which is demonstrated in two constituencies (Table XI).

⁷⁷ See correspondence in Hist. MSS Colln, SR1/1/1/9 (The Southern Rhodesia Public Services Association : Correspondence and Other Papers : General, 28 Feb. 1919-28 Dec. 1936 : Change of Government, 18 June 1919-12 April. 1923), Murray, *The Governmental System*, 29, gives a full account of the conditions but is incorrect in assuming an actual 'alliance' of the Public Service Association with the R.G.A.

⁷⁸ Hist. MSS Colln, CH8/2/2/11, McDonald to Malcolm, 13 Nov. 1922.

⁷⁹ Hist. MSS Colln, CH8/2/1, Chaplin to Smuts, 30 Oct. 1922.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

Table XI

REVISED ESTIMATE OF VOTING PATTERN

<i>Occupation</i>	<i>Estimated % for Bulawayo North Voters</i>			<i>Bulawayo South Voters</i>				
	<i>R.G.</i>	<i>Union</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>R.G.</i>	<i>Union</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>R.G.</i>	<i>Union</i>
Public Services								
Services	75	25	206	156	50	83	62	21
Clerical	80	20	277	222	55	236	189	47
Artisan	80	20	268	216	52	413	331	82
Railways	40	60	68	27	41	339	136	203
Professional	50	50	249	124	124	150	75	75
Commerce	60	40	322	193	129	148	89	59
Other	60	40	228	137	91	368	221	147
Women	75	25	103	778	25	—	—	—
(unattached)								
100% POLL =				1 153	567		1 103	614
ACTUAL PERCENTAGE POLL:								
Bulawayo North	70,5		815		400			
Bulawayo South	89,5						949	527
ACTUAL VOTES RECORDED:			826		390		955	538

The comparative accuracy of these estimates would support the argument that the greater proportion of the clerical and commercial groups voted in favour of Responsible Government. The reduction of the estimate for the commercial sector from 80 per cent to 60 per cent not only follows the general distribution of Responsible Government and Union votes, but reflects the numbers of prominent commercial men found in the ranks of the Unionists, such as Johnson, President of the Bulawayo Chamber of Commerce. More important, economic factors do not adequately support a higher proportion favouring Responsible Government. Loss of the Rhodes Clause on entry into Union would mean higher import duties, but this would have been balanced to a great extent by the lower railway rates. Since any increased costs would be passed on to customers, neither argument was really valid for traders. However, as the majority of traders were locally based, or 'national capitalists', and had no ties with South African companies, the choice was less controlled by the desire for security of investments, which governed the mining companies, and more likely to be influenced by the higher tax rates in South Africa from which Rhodesia would only be exempt for three years.

Although the African and Coloured voters did not constitute a high percentage of the electorate, their vote tended to be against incorporation in the Union. Meetings for the Coloured population were held by the R.G.A. at which Coghlan and other speakers guaranteed that their rights would not be prejudiced by Responsible Government. It was reported that the Coloured

and Indian people were 'solid for R.G.'⁸¹ and that the latter 'had promised to subscribe handsomely to our funds'.⁸² The main interests of African voters lay not in Responsible Government or Union as such, but in the protection of their interests and rights; a petition by the Bantu Vigilance Society requested that rights to the franchise be preserved, that the High Commissioner's influence should not be impaired, and that provision be made for Native Councils.⁸³ Since the Colonial Office retained some control over 'Native Affairs' under the draft letters patent, but could not guarantee that South Africa would maintain the *status quo*, it is likely that most African voters would prefer Responsible Government;⁸⁴ certainly the R.G.A. reported in 1923 that the African voters were unanimously for Responsible Government.⁸⁵ However, there is a possibility that some division occurred, as reports were made of Africans requesting English church members to vote for Union.⁸⁶ Missionaries themselves favoured Responsible Government; the Empandeni mission in Matabeleland returned no Union votes, while the 11 votes for Responsible Government at Melsetter were thought to have come from the Mount Selinda Mission.⁸⁷

Victory was not in fact anticipated by the Rhodesia Union Association although McDonald believed that another two months would have made all the difference;⁸⁸ the Unionists claimed to have gained ground after the referendum, but this was a debateable point.⁸⁹ Although it had been hoped that Smuts's visit to Rhodesia in August would turn the scales, the considerable influence he exerted on the electorate⁹⁰ was dispelled by October, and his last-minute address to the Rhodesian voters, with its strong criticism of the letters patent, caused only increased antipathy to Union.

In a post-referendum survey, Chaplin, too, considered that more time would have seen a swing to Union, particularly of farmers if the depression continued, but:

The real mistake, I think, was made by Churchill when he appointed the Buxton Commission and altered Milner's plan of leaving the question of Responsible Government to be voted upon at the general election for the Legislative Council which would have taken place in the ordinary course next year . . . As regards the campaign itself, — the Unionists had the most money but in Salisbury at any rate their organisation was none too good and as a party — though some of their people worked hard — they lacked enthusiasm. They were much handicapped by want of effective

⁸¹ Hist. MSS Colln, RH8/1/1/9, Martin to Renniker, 4 Sept. 1922.

⁸² Hist. MSS Colln, RH8/1/1/1, R.G.A. Salisbury to R.G.A. Bulawayo, 4 Oct. 1922; CH8/2/1, Chaplin to Smuts, 30 Oct. 1922.

⁸³ RC/3/1/114 (1921), 1516, dated Aug. 1921 encl. in R.C. to H.C., 22 Dec. 1921.

⁸⁴ Rh. Her., 31 Mar. 1922, letter from A. Twala.

⁸⁵ Hist. MSS Colln, RH8/1/5, R.G.A. to Coghlan, 4 Apr. 1923.

⁸⁶ Rh. Her., 13 Oct. 1922, report by Etheridge in *Rhodesian Church Record*; Hist. MSS Colln, CH8/2/1, Chaplin to Smuts, 30 Oct. 1922.

⁸⁷ Hist. MSS Colln, RH8/1/1/17, Gilgank to Renniker, 30 Oct. 1922.

⁸⁸ Hist. MSS Colln, CH8/2/2/9, McDonald to Chaplin, 21 Oct. 1922.

⁸⁹ Hist. MSS Colln, NEI/1/1, Coghlan to Newton, 25 Nov. 1922.

⁹⁰ Hist. MSS Colln, RH8/1/1/11, Renniker to Mrs Tawse Jollie, 17 Aug. 1922.

speakers . . . They put their case soberly and truthfully, but they did not do enough to counteract the aggressive and frequently unscrupulous tactics of the other side . . . Their method of putting the case seemed to be based on the assumption that the electors generally were reasonable and reckoning people, the support of such people they did as a rule secure, but unfortunately these are only a minority of the electorate.⁹¹

'The R.G.A. were equally suspicious of the tactics of the Unionists, but they do seem to have had the advantage of more vociferous supporters, and the use of 'trained hecklers'.⁹²

It has been seen that company managers and other 'responsible' sections of the community (who had favoured Union in 1920 and before the terms were known) led the Unionist movement and were supported by the railwaymen (who were won over by the terms) and Afrikaans farmers. Artisans generally and white-collar workers favoured Coghlan and self-government in preference to the leadership of little-known mining company men and domination by the South.

Economic considerations were of vital importance, but, in addition, self-government held the greater appeal; however generous Smuts's terms may have been, Responsible Government gave Rhodesia a chance to prove itself on its own, instead of moving straight from rule by the Company to domination by the strong South African states. Moreover it did not preclude Union should Responsible Government fail, but if it succeeded, the possible menace of Afrikaner nationalism and bilingualism would have been avoided. Rhodesia's white settlers were predominantly English-speaking, and their 'jingoism' found expression as much in this fear of bilingualism as in the wish to keep Rhodesia a loyal part of the Empire. As a high percentage of this English-speaking population were in fact from South Africa,⁹³ an interesting feature of the referendum is that their vote was also divided; it was reported that 'of the old Colonials, the Cape people are as a body in favour of Union, with some outstanding exceptions, but those from Natal are all against it'.⁹⁴

The war was over with the referendum, although some battles remained to be fought before the actual achievement of Responsible Government on 1 October 1923. However, Coghlan's problems were not exclusively connected with constitutional questions, and an equally important feature of the years 1923 and 1924 was the continued struggle against the Unionists, and even more serious, against divisions within the ranks of the Rhodesian Responsible Government Party itself.

⁹¹ Hist MSS Colln, CH8/2/1, Chaplin to Smuts, 30 Oct. 1922.

⁹² Hist MSS. Colln, RH8/1/1/3 (Gatooma, 15 Sept.-16 Oct. 1922), R.G.A. Salisbury to R.G.A. Gatooma, 29 Sept. 1922; RH8/1/1/13 (Victoria, 19-29 Sept. 1922), R.G.A. Gatooma to R.G.A. Salisbury, 23 Oct. 1922.

⁹³ The 1921 Census was the first to show more settlers to have been born in the Union than in Great Britain (11 634 to 10 544), but the majority of the South Africans were of British origin, *Report of the Director of Census . . . 1921*, Table XXI.

⁹⁴ Hist. MSS Colln. MI1/1/1 (Papers of Sir William Henry Milton : Correspondence and Other Papers : Official, [c.1896] - 8 May 1930), Tredgold to Milton, 31 Aug. 1922.

The Unionists did not immediately abandon their attempts to subvert the Responsible Government movement after the referendum; McDonald informed the Company that:

General Smuts strongly urges that Unionist Association should be kept going. He says he will continue to give us his whole hearted support. It is his intention to keep his offer to your Company open . . . Negotiations between your Board and Union Government should not be allowed to drop. Can you move in this. He will I think keep our Press right. He gives R.G. two years of life only if things are well handled.⁹⁵

Malcolm however advised against the proposed policy of subverting the new government.⁹⁶ The Rhodesia Union Association was obliged by the B.S.A. Company's attitude to change its tactics. McDonald clearly set out the new policy of ex-Unionists in an address to mine and land-owning companies, which was to 'do what we can irrespective of party to return as many sound thinking men as we can' in the elections of 1924.⁹⁷

Some of the candidates thus appointed were returned as Independents, such as Sir Ernest Montagu, a former Company official, while ex-Unionists infiltrated the Rhodesian Party (as the Rhodesian Responsible Government Party was renamed) itself. In the 1924 elections successful Rhodesian Party candidates included C. F. Birney, the General Manager of the Rhodesia Railways, 'Wankie' Thomson, W. M. Longden, and G. M. Huggins (all ex-Unionists) and the Company's former treasurer, Sir Percy Fynn. In a by-election later in 1924, Percy Inskip, the former Manager of the Company's commercial interests in Rhodesia and Director of the Company, was also returned for the Rhodesian Party.

As early as 1921 McDonald had been advised that 'if R.G. did happen in Rhodesia our party should not let the R.G. party nobble Labour . . . the party which stood best with Labour would hold the reins'.⁹⁸ It was naturally impossible for the Unionists to attempt to win Labour over, but since serious divisions were appearing in the Labour-R.G.A. coalition, they were able to take advantage of Coghlan's own desire to drop Labour and take up his offer of a 'best man' government. Coghlan in fact had no wish to alienate the 'Companies',⁹⁹ but he showed some caution in regard to the Union policy and certainly did not 'intend to lose the support of Labour until the Unionist crowd have shown by their deeds as well as professions, that they have dropped Union'.¹⁰⁰ The Union party was therefore abandoned, after a failure to

⁹⁵ Hist. MSS Colln, CH8/2/2/9, McDonald (Charter, Cape Town) to Malcolm, telegram, 28 Nov. 1922.

⁹⁶ Ibid., Malcolm to McDonald, 20 Dec. 1922.

⁹⁷ Hist. MSS Colln, M013/1/1 [Papers of Howard Unwin Moffat : Correspondence : Political], J. G. McDonald, 'Memorandum re the New Political Situation . . .', 30 July [1921].

⁹⁸ Hist. MSS Colln, CH8/2/1, McDonald to Ludlow, 7 July 1921.

⁹⁹ Hist. MSS Colln, NE1/1/1, Coghlan to Newton, 14 Nov. 1921.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., Coghlan to Newton, 25 Nov. 1921.

reconstruct it under a new name, on which H. T. Longden commented that 'we should lose the Dutch vote. The Railway vote would also probably go'.¹⁰¹

In the meantime Coghlan had to tread warily in his abandonment of Labour. Coghlan realized that his party's weakness lay:

not in the strength of our opponents, but in the lack of homogeneity in our party and it is going to tax all our ingenuity and tact to avoid the sectional danger . . . Being an advanced Liberal myself, I hope I shall be able to make some impression on the Labour element, but I fear that both Keller and Stewart are likely to be uncompromising.¹⁰²

Yet despite Coghlan's claim to 'advanced Liberal' views, his sincerity in regard to his expressed desire to retain the Labour link is questionable. His own attitude to Labour could not have helped to improve relations between the R.G.A. and Labour; he refused to consider Stewart for a Cabinet post,¹⁰³ and when Theo Haddon (Manager of the Globe & Phoenix mine) was refused permission to stand for election, commented that it would be as well for Haddon's company to realize that 'it is highly desirable that men like Haddon should be encouraged to stand whenever they can get the party support rather than that we should be forced to take other men, however good, such as labourites'.¹⁰⁴

Squabbling with the Labour Party over delimitation of 'party seats' arose, and Coghlan stated in February 1924 that 'it was utterly impossible for them to make any sort of alliance with the Labour Party'.¹⁰⁵ Rather than directing policy towards a reconciliation of differences with Labour, the Rhodesian Party concentrated on winning over ex-Unionists, a policy with which McDonald's views were in accord.¹⁰⁶

In the event, the Labour Party put up candidates independently of the Rhodesian Party, but secured only 14.7 per cent of the vote, and did not succeed in taking a single seat. This failure of the Labour Party to attract support from the considerable working-class population amongst the settlers can be attributed to three causes: the propaganda¹⁰⁷ and popularity of the Rhodesian Party, which had won self-government for the country under Coghlan; the desire of the settlers to see unanimity replace the former political divisions in order that Responsible Government succeed; and lastly, the decline of Trade Unions by 1924, as the Labour Party lacked the influence it might otherwise have had with the support of a strong trade union element.

¹⁰¹ Hist. MSS Colln, M013/1/1, Secret memo. to Major Jesser Cooper, encl. in Coghlan to Newton, 9 Nov. 1923.

¹⁰² Hist. MSS Colln, NE1/1/1, Coghlan to Newton, 5 Dec. 1922.

¹⁰³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵ Hist. MSS Colln, RH8/1/5, Coghlan to Rhodesia Labour Party, 17 Oct. 1923; RH8/4/2 (Minutes : Central Executive, 20 Dec. 1922-15 July 1938), Minutes, 23 Feb. 1924.

¹⁰⁶ This policy had first been proposed by J. W. Downie, Hist. MSS Colln, LE3/1/2 (Papers of William Muter Leggate : Correspondence : Miscellaneous, 1 May 1919-16 Apr. 1939), Downie to Leggate, 26 Dec. 1922.

¹⁰⁷ Murray, *The Governmental System*, 212.

With the Unionists converted, and Labour divided and helpless, the remaining problems were the farmers and disgruntled members of the Rhodesian Party itself,¹⁰⁸ for discontent was rife after Coghlan's distribution of the five portfolios.

The difficulties with the farmers were not overcome by Coghlan, whose ministry rarely showed much sympathy to farming demands. To some extent this rift had reflected the personal conflict between Coghlan and Fletcher, and Coghlan and McChlery, who had been disappointed in the new government's failure to amend the Gold Belt title.

Coghlan and the Rhodesian Party survived these sectional splits, and also survived the more serious challenge of Frank Johnson's Progressive Party, which secured 30 per cent of the vote in the 1928 elections, and which was a strong threat even before Coghlan's death in 1927. Support for the opposition party resulted from widespread dissatisfaction with the government by this date. So much had been expected of Responsible Government by the many diverse elements which supported it in 1922 that many groups were disappointed — not only the farmers, but also the civil servants and commercial groups, as well as individuals whose political ambitions had not been realized; amongst the Progressives were F. L. Hadfield, F. P. Mennell, H. Bertin and R. D. Gilchrist, all former supporters of the Rhodesian Party. With the death of Coghlan, and the subsequent mediocre leadership of Moffat, the Rhodesian Party did not survive the 1933 elections.

Responsible Government had been achieved and, despite predictions to the contrary, it succeeded. However, considerable changes had been seen in the structure of support for the movement; it was initiated by the farmers, who with the support of white-collar workers and Labour, returned R.G.A. members to the 1920 Legislative Council. The referendum of 1922 saw further changes; farming support was lost to some extent, but the Labour vote was still an important factor in the vote in favour of Responsible Government despite the loss of the railwaymen. The party had become that of 'the man in the street' The later changes in name, to Rhodesian Responsible Government Party and then Rhodesian Party, meant more, however, than a superficial alteration in nomenclature. Coghlan had liked neither the farmers nor Labour, and under his leadership from 1919 the alliance with these groups was broken; by 1924 it had been replaced by a firm association with former Unionists and the mining sector — the 'responsible' sectors of the community. Although economic causes can be seen to have been the major force behind the voting pattern in the referendum, Coghlan himself was primarily responsible for the subsequent alteration in the structure of support for his party. As a result, Responsible Government did not prove to be the radical and destructive 'poor man's' government that had been feared, and it continued many of the traditions established by the Company.

¹⁰⁸ Hist. MSS Colln, C08/1/3 (Papers of Sir Charles Patrick John Coghlan : Correspondence : Personal, 4 June 1881-6 Mar. 1927), Coghlan to sister, 1 Jan. 1924; NE1/1/1, Coghlan to Newton, 31 Dec. 1923.



This work is licensed under a
Creative Commons
Attribution – NonCommercial - NoDerivs 3.0 License.

To view a copy of the license please see:
<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/3.0/>

This is a download from the BLDS Digital Library on OpenDocs
<http://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/opendocs/>