Rhodesia's history in the 1890s was mercurial. The British South Africa Company had won its Charter, and formed its Pioneer Corps, in the expectation of great wealth from the rumoured vast resources of gold in the relatively unknown territory of Mashonaland, and although more altruistic motives have been applied to Rhodes and the British South Africa Company, certainly the prospective settlers were attracted by this. Disillusionment rapidly set in, for not only was gold not to be found for the easy taking, but the Company had not made adequate preparations for the welfare of its pioneers, who suffered from shortages of food and almost every other commodity in their first rainy season in Mashonaland. On Rhodes' first visit in October 1891, he was inundated with protests and demands for reform (although Rhodes himself attributed this discontent to the lack of liquor(1)). A petition was also sent to the High Commissioner requesting jury rights, public elections and the reduction of taxation, and as a result, settler representation on the Sanitary Board was accorded to Salisbury in 1892.(2)

Towards the end of 1893 the war against the Ndebele came to a rapid and successful conclusion for the settlers and hopes were high that Matabeleland would prove to be the second Rand that Mashonaland had not. However the occupation of Matabeleland meant the relative depopulation of Mashonaland, and protest meetings, agitations, and opposition to the Chartered Company became almost the sole occupation of the depressed Mashonalanders, whose only gain was perhaps an increased confidence in their superiority over the original population. In 1894 came the first demand for the separation of the Company's commercial and administrative functions, and a representative element in the newly established Legislative Council,(3) but this was only from Salisbury, for Bulawayo's attention was fully occupied in speculation and rumours of gold strikes - The Rhodesia Herald's editor, W.E. Fairbridge, remarked of it, "Bulawayo is a capital in its way, but purely a mining capital, politics save in so far as they affect the labour supply or the price of Kaffir Meal, one hears nothing of."(4)

How far was the Company to blame for the early problems in Rhodesia? Certainly it was far from perfect in its administrative capacity,(5) but the Company had its defenders; as well as Hugh Marshall Hole, E.F. Knight, the Morning Post special commissioner who first visited Rhodesia in 1894, saw the settlers as purely at fault - their main grievance, the heavy 50% exacted from scrip on flotation of companies, was defended as being necessary security for investors;(6)

(2) C7171, No. 25, February 1892.
(3) Rhodesia Herald, August 1894 and 1 IV. 1896.
(4) O. Hansford, Bulawayo - Historic Battleground of Rhodesia, p. 75.
(5) The Milner Papers (ed. C. Headlam) Vol. I, p. 183; and MT 1/12 (S.A.H.) (Hist.MSS), W.H. Milton to his wife, 10 IX. 96, "...everything official here is in an absolutely rotten condition..."
(6) E.F. Knight, Rhodesia of Today, p. 70.
whilst the high cost of living was blamed on the middlemen and traders, who, he claimed "combined to keep up an unwarrantable high standard of prices... The average storekeeper in Mashonaland expects to make his fortune within the course of a year or two." (1) at the expense of his fellow settlers naturally. This assertion is difficult to prove, but the settlers certainly did little to help themselves. In 1895 Jameson wrote, "...the inhabitants more voracious for favours than ever, and I less inclined to give now that they can stand on their own legs..." (2) The Railway Mission priest, H.P. Hale, wrote, "The people must learn that the future of the country depends, not on English capital, but on their own energy. One is struck with the great difference between Canadians and Rhodesians in this respect. The latter are waiting for more cash, the former get a move on." (3) Blakiston commented on the poor quality of Rhodesian settlers who, he remarked, were either slaves to Mammon or Bacchus if not both; (4) and in 1899 the Resident Commissioner wrote in somewhat milder fashion that "there is now, and probably will be, for some time to come, a floating element in the population composed of adventurers of different Nationalities attracted by the mines from Johannesburg, and other populous centres." (5) Speculation was a more attractive occupation than prospecting (6) but, unlike the Rand, in Rhodesia on the whole it did not prove to be a quick way of achieving wealth - by 1903 Rhodesia had acquired an exceptionally bad name in the London market - and there was a general tendency to sit back and wait for better times to come. (7)

However, before Matabeleland could prove itself, and by 1896 there were not many signs that it would (total gold production up to 1898 being only £20,700), Rhodesia suffered from the first of its major setbacks. Rinderpest broke out at the beginning of 1896, and the form of transport on which Rhodesia, in the absence of railways, had perforce to rely - the ox-waggon - broke down almost completely. A consequent shortage of food in particular caused a rapid rise in the already high cost of living, and the importation of heavy machinery and supplies for the prospective mines came to a halt. This was followed by the rising of the Ndebele and the loss of 10% of the Matabeleland settlers in March 1896. The country had been deprived of its police by the Jameson Raid at the end of December 1895, but despite this no precautions were taken, or even thought given to the possibility of a rising, despite the fact that just 3 years previously the Ndebele had been considered one of the strongest military tribes in Southern Africa. The Ndebele had in the meantime been deprived not only of their land, for the use of which heavy rents were often exacted from them by the new landowners, and the greater proportion of their herds; and subjected to the imposition of a 'hut tax' from 1894; but had almost certainly suffered from pressure (direct and indirect) from the Native Commissioners and Native Police as well as the settlers to provide a labour force for the mines, where ill-treatment and high death rates prevailed. (8) Their failure to participate readily in the labour market resulted in a general attitude of resentment and hostility on the part of the settlers, who considered the Shona in particular "idle and [References]

(1) Ibid., p.111.
(2) Colvin, op.cit. Vol.II, p.21, Jameson to his brother Sam, 16.v.95.
(3) RA 4/1 f 3 (N.A.R.) Hist.MSS. 10.ll.04.
(4) RL 1/1/1 (N.A.R.) Hist.MSS. J.L.Blakiston to his father, 30.viii.95.
(7) ML 1/1/2, 2.ix.96 (N.A.R.Hist.MSS.), Milton to his wife.
unimprovable". (1) This lack of understanding of either the people or their politics is clearly shown in the general surprise, and horror, when the 'docile' Shona rose in June. The settlers never quite regained their complacency towards the African population - rumours of further risings occurred regularly until 1905, and even as late as 1923; and in 1904 the inhabitants of Enkeldoorn took these rumours seriously enough to go into laager. (2)

There was an almost complete stoppage of mining work throughout Rhodesia as a result of the risings. Although in 1897 a certain amount of work was recommenced, and the railway to Bulawayo was completed, the disorganisation resulting from the risings meant that this was slow, and the Rhodesia Chamber of Mines (Bulawayo) applied for exemption from development work or Inspection by Payment due to the insolvency of companies to comply, which was granted until the end of 1897. (3) Labour recruiting recommenced in April 1897 (4) but shortages greatly hampered further development work. Thus the realisation of the nature of the Rhodesian goldfields, and the different mining approach that would be required, was further delayed as far as investors, Chartered Company and the settlers themselves were concerned. This was again postponed by the outbreak of the Boer War in October 1899, although gold to the value of £125,867 (5) was produced in that year. The war, although it "did not spread into Southern Rhodesia, disrupted supplies and consumed her manpower to such an extent that during the years 1899 to 1901 economic progress was extremely slow... Because of these political interruptions however the Company was slow to attribute its difficulties to a basic over-valuation of the country's resources..." (6)

As a result of the Jameson Raid and the rebellions, the Company was in disrepute with the Colonial Office, and although for various reasons its Charter was not withdrawn, after 1897 it was subjected to more control from the Colonial Office. The 1898 Order in Council saw the establishment of a permanent Resident Commissioner to act as the Imperial Government's local 'eyes and ears'; (7) tighter control over the Native Department, and the advent of 4 settler representatives on the Legislative Council. The demand for this latter had been largely - and constant - from Mashonaland; the editor of the Herald being a particularly keen proponent of settler rights, but the feeling was general and expressed in frequent Public Meetings in 1894, 1896 and 1897. In November 1896 Rhodes had actually conceded that the time had come for a thorough reorganisation of the Administration and had intimated his approval for the representative principle, with "finally complete self-government", but not for a settler majority until they were prepared to pay the expenditure. (8) The demand for representation continued into 1897, when Bulawayo also joined in with support. (9) In September 1897, Rhodes expressed the view that this would certainly be preferable to constant mass meetings and discussing matters in a hole-and-corner way. (10) Events were put in motion for the Order in Council as well as a reorganisation of the administration (for which purpose W.H. Milton had been expatriated from the Cape Civil Service in September 1896).

(1) Rhodesia Herald, 26.ix.98.
(2) A 2/9/2 f249, Milton to Fox, 22.iv.04. As late as 1926, on re-organising Rhodesia's Defence Force, this was planned so as to cope with possible risings.
(3) RH 2/2/1 f330-1, 334. (4) RH 2/2/1 f341 (N.A.R.Hist.MSS.)
(7) This post was never popular with the Administration - see A 2/9/2.
(8) Rhodesia Herald, 11.xii.96.
(10) Rhodesia Herald, 1.ii.97.
Although there had been occasional calls for the abolition of the Chartered administration up to this date (1) certainly these concessions satisfied the bulk of Rhodesia's white inhabitants, and they were optimistic about the possibilities of this limited representation. Despite some feeling that what the country really needed was paying mines, and an actual settler majority, at least the elected members would be "the thin edge of the wedge". (2)

Whether the settlers merited representation, let alone a majority, was of course another matter. The histories of the Salisbury Municipality and the Chambers of Commerce and Mines show a certain lack of responsibility as well as of experience. (3) Personality clashes, bickering and imminent bankruptcies frequently occupied the pages of the Herald and Rhodesia Times. (4) Salisbury's Defence Committee whilst in laager was notoriously incompetent, and that of Bulawayo was little better. Fairbridge himself acknowledged the difficulties in Rhodesian politics, which he maintained lacked shape or form — the inexperience of the settlers, and in that they, as well as the Company, were newcomers to administration, the country and its problems. Some preferred to leave everything to Rhodes, while others lacked interest as they had little intention of staying. (5) "Wits in those days used to say that the only true Rhodesian was a man who could not afford to leave." (6)

The first candidates for the Legislative Council in 1899 promised Rhodesian voters solutions to almost all their grievances — railway rates would be dealt with; free-hold farm titles, assistance with importation of breeding stock, irrigation and protection for their timber for the farmers; cheaper transport and better roads; the opening of 'locked-up' land (i.e. large land-owning companies to be forced to comply with the conditions of their grants); the native police would be abolished; the mining law simplified; native hut tax increased — and so on. (7) However, the session proved to be a tremendous disappointment, and the hopes of the settlers that the Company would prove a co-operative if larger partner in this venture were dashed. The Council was composed of the 4 elected members, 5 nominated officials, the 2 Administrators and the Resident Commissioner (who did not have voting powers), and the Company had used their majority to "steamroller" unpopular measures through the House, as well as disregarding most of the motions brought forward by the popular members, such as E. St. M. Hutchinson's that no natives be eligible as jurors, in the Juries Ordinance; and Dr. H. Sauer and Colonel R. Grey's that franchise rights be withdrawn from natives. (8) Although it was on such matters as these, and in particular the Land and Customs Ordinances, that popular agitation was focused (and as a result of which even Sauer, a close associate of Rhodes' and Director of several of his subsidiary companies, commented that it was a "hopeless proposition to expect ... [that] any civilised community could be governed by a commercial company") (9) this first session held an even more important debate than those on Land, Juries or Customs. Referring to Rhodes' O.G.M. speech in London, Sauer commented on his remarkable proposition to the effect

"that we should take over the capital debt, of say, ten millions, and pay interest on it at 4% and that the British South Africa

See for example Herald, 10.vii.93, 15.ix.93, 26.x.96, 20.1.x.97. (1)
Ibid, 16.ii.98, 2.iii.98; and Chronicle, 22.1x.98. (2)
Salisbury Chamber of Commerce formed 1894, Chamber of Mines 1895. (3)
See for example, Herald, 19.viii.93, 7.xv.95, 19.i.x.98, 23.ii.98. (4)
Rhodesia Herald, 27.vii.98. (5)
Gann & Gelfand, op.cit., p.37. (6)
See for example Fairbridge & Roberts Manifesto, in S.Rhodesia Legislative Council Debates, 1899. (7)
S.Rhodesia Legislative Council Debates, 1899, 29th-30th May. (8)
Bulawayo Chronicle, 1.vii.99. (9)
Company shareholders should retain the 50% interest in the mining rights with all the Crown lands and all the other rights, privileges and monopolies appertaining to the Company. This is equivalent to a man whose capital is invested getting it refunded, and yet continuing to draw for all time enormous returns on it. It is either a very bold or a very humorous proposition in finance. (1)

This proposition from the Company, and the indignant response of the settlers was to be repeated, and came to a climax in 1904.

The Legislative Council sessions during the Boer War were comparatively quiet, and few contentious issues raised. Although the demands for railway reform and revision of the Mining Law abated during the War, commercial discontent came to the fore, especially over the Company's decision to import and sell food to the mines in 1900. (2) The railways to the South had been commandeered by the Imperial Government, and the consequent restrictions of imports had meant shortages and high prices which the struggling mines could not afford, but the Government braved the traders' anger and continued to supply the mines so long as the merchants prices were unreasonable. (3) The Rhodesia Chamber of Mines during this period occupied itself with trying to keep the short-staffed mines going. White employees in particular were in short supply, the demand for native labour having fallen off to some extent with the temporary closure of several mines and the remission of compulsory development work on other claims and mines. Nevertheless the Chamber remained concerned to some extent with the supply of native labour, expressing disapproval of harsh treatment and poor food, and approving the appointment of Inspectors of Compounds by the Government. (4)

In 1901 however, this quiet came to an end. In Rhodes' speech at the Drill Hall in Bulawayo in June, he stated that the Company was but a passing phase, and that they were preparing the settlers to take their place in the federation of South African states, though not until first making revenue and expenditure balance. The Bulawayo Chronicle wondered whether they were fit to take over the Government or make up the deficit - "We are too happy-go-lucky ... [but] Rhodesia could no more continue under the aegis of the Chartered Board than the Transvaal under Kruger's despotic government." (5) They further stated that "the people of Rhodesia are too apathetic, too much engrossed in individual concerns, too small in numbers, too lacking in patriotism for their adopted country. They have got the Government they deserve, the amount of popular representation which their degree of public spirit merits." although "the secrecy with which the legislation is effected, the haste in which it is passed by the Juggernaut majority, show clearly that the Chartered Company considers that as yet the people of Rhodesia are a people to be governed as a parent governs a child." (6) The issue of federation came to the fore seriously for the first time at this stage, with the hope that a settlement could be effected with the Company at the end of the War. Rhodes had prophesied federation within 3 to 4 years - Dr. Hans Sauer agreed with this, and in an early Manifesto for the 1902 Legislative Council elections, Frank Johnson (who later withdrew) in July 1901 proposed buying out the rights of the Company in a settlement which he presumed would be precipitated by peace. (7) In Sauer's October address to his

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(1) Legco Debates, 1899, 7 June.
(2) Bulawayo Chronicle, 19.11.1900.
(3) Ibid., 24.ii.1900, and Rhod.Chamber of Mines, RH 2/2/2 f617, 664. (N.A.R. Hist.MSS). Although this also caused several differences to arise between the Mines and Government.
(4) RH 2/2/2 f708-9; RH 2/2/4 f17, 115-6.
(5) Bulawayo Chronicle, 19.vi.01 and 26.vi.01. Similar statements in regard to self-government were also made by the Administrator at a Salisbury banquet - Herald, 7.xii.1900.
(6) Bulawayo Chronicle, 7.viii.01.
(7) Rhodesia Herald, 20.vii.01.
constituents (he also withdrew later), he proclaimed himself in favour of immediate federation, but recognised that a settlement would first be necessary with the Company, as the settlers would not be prepared to pay them for the money spent on opening up Rhodesia (although this could perhaps be considered if the Company reduced the 50% clause to 10%).

The elections of 1902 were dominated by several issues, the first of which was the apathy of people in re-registering as voters. By November it was apparent that about one-third of those entitled to register had not done so. This was attributed to carelessness, and also the fact that voters were liable to Jury duty, although undoubtedly much of this was also due to loss of population. Secondly, the elections themselves passed off very quietly, with uncontested seats in Mashonaland and only three candidates for the two Matabeleland seats. Although a 65.5% poll was registered, it was generally considered that public interest would remain slight while the Company maintained their 'steamroller' majority. Dr. R. Wylie, one of the Mashonaland candidates, remarked:

"I cherish no delusions as regards the effective power of the position under present conditions... Representation was granted us more or less as a sop to Corberus, but at the same time, I believe it was an honest attempt of the Government, on the invitation of Mr. Rhodes, to prepare us for self government. Towards the speedy realisation of this my every endeavour will be directed." (3)

The two successful Matabeleland candidates, P.R. Frames and C.T. Holland, both advocated an early federation with South Africa, and that the Company be bought out lock, stock and barrel, whilst the unsuccessful candidate, J.E. Scott was only a little behind them. His 'timidity' in this was considered responsible for his defeat. All candidates favoured strict Registration and Pass laws for the native population, and stressed their inferiority to the whites.

Like the rest of South Africa, due to the war, Rhodesia was in the throes of a depression in 1901/2. "Stands have gone down in value... we have lost many of our best men in the Anglo-Boer war... there is no disguising the fact that business is dull... many well known men have fallen in the flight, supplies are restricted, men are out of work, and there is a tendency to despair," complained the Chronicle. Part of the blame for this state of affairs was however put on the shoulders of the Company, with a certain share to the Imperial Government who would not allow the Administration officials to help recruit labour, the shortage of which was felt to be one of the main causes of slow mining development. But the view that there could be no progress whilst a commercial company held the reins of Government was the most favoured explanation, particularly in connection with the 'high' railway rates which of course also came in for their share of the blame for the depression. (7)

(1) Rhodesian Times, 25.xi.01.
(2) It was estimated that S.Rhodesia lost 10% of its white population during the war, apart from those who left for other causes. From an estimate of 13,000 in 1898, the population in 1901 had fallen to 11,000.
(3) Rhodesia Herald, 15.xii.02. Dr. Wylie was a well-known and vigorous opponent of the B.S.A.C. and a former Mayor of Salisbury.
(4) Bulawayo Chronicle, 1.iii.02. Frames, a lawyer, was formerly solicitor and Political Agent to Rhodes and De Beers in Kimberley. He left Bulawayo in 1902 and later became Managing Director of the Premier Diamond Co. and Director of De Beers. Holland, an unsuccessful candidate in 1899, was a member of the Bulawayo Stock Exchange, Chamber of Mines, Landowners & Farmers Assn., and a former Mayor of Bulawayo (1898). He left Rhodesia in 1904.
was praised for the building of the railways, and for the increasing
gold output, but it was considered unsuccessful even outside the
colony:

"The Company has failed to attract settlers, and mining
adventurers have certainly been deterred by the ex-
tortionate system of royalties. We suspect that the
Company is afraid both of settlers and prospectors.
Certainly if any gold discoveries were made which preci-
pituated a rush into Rhodesia no free mining community
would submit without bloodshed to the exactions of the
present landlord, and while our colonists honourably
bear their burden of public debt, no British community
would long submit to be taxed in order to pay dividends
to foreign financiers. The success of the colony
would inevitably mean the sweeping away of the Company.
Already the interests of the Company clash with its
duties as a government."(1)

But the Chartered Company was not the cause of the depression.
Rhodesia could not provide, for an influx of settlers, as unemployment
during and after the war was rife(2) and it was certainly not to the
Company's advantage to grant as they did the continual remissions
of payment and development work to the mines. Although with the
Imperial Government they were considered responsible for the shortage
of labour in that Native Commissioners had been instructed not to
recruit, they attempted to alleviate the position by supporting the
various attempts to start labour bureaux (although the Chambers of
Mines considered Government should be solely responsible), and
readily consented to a system of Pass Laws, Registration of Natives,
and increased taxation demanded by the Chambers. When the
struggling cattle industry was hit by an outbreak of African Coast
Fever in 1902, the Government agreed to assist, though not compensate,
farmers by importing donkeys, reducing railway rates on fencing
materials, dipping chemicals and animal imports during the crisis,
as well as to make loans and advances for the purchase of new stock.
Despite suspicions in regard to the dual administrative and commer-
cial roles of the Company it is certain that at this time the Company
was not profiting from the arrangement. In the November session
of the 1902 Council, the Administrator pointed out that over the
past 5 years, receipts had amounted to £1,695,000 and expenditure
to £3,613,000, the deficit having been met by the shareholders.(3)

Discontent in 1901/2 manifested itself in several forms, not the least of which was the concern over "Black Peril" cases, and 'attacks' on white women by natives, particularly in Bulawayo,
which rose to a peak in 1902 with the near-lynching of suspects, and
demands for the death penalty for rape or attempted rape in the
Legislative Council. The blacks must be made to honour and respect
white women, for otherwise fear would deter would-be immigrants
and so affect the settlement of the country.(4) "There shall be

[footnotes from previous page];

(5) J.E.Scott was also from a Johannesburg/Kimberley background;
acted as the B.S.A.G.'s Solicitor in the 1890s in Bulawayo —
and for the Rhodesia Chamber of Mines. Mayor 1896, 1902.

(6) Legco Debates 1902, p.127.

(7) Rhodesia Herald, 7.iii.02.
no equality in Church or State, between black or white'. We are not ashamed to accept and endorse this old Boer statute in its naked entirety," stated the Rhodesian Times.(1) Concern was again shown over the native franchise, and over the activities of the American Ethiopian Mission (and missions in general, since it was felt they taught the black to consider himself equal to the white).(2) Even the Resident Commissioner expressed views to the effect that in his opinion the natives should not have representation for their taxation, being 'quite unfit'.(3)

Bulawayo's Literary and Debating Society was enjoying a revival during this period. It 'comprised the town's best educated people, enjoyed the reputation of formulating the most advanced political demands..."(4) Percy Ross Frames had seen fit to announce his candidature for the Legislative Council at a dinner of the Society in December 1901, when he outlined his strategy for achieving a South African federation. "Like Milner, Frames considered the Transvaal as the key to the whole South African situation. A loyal and prosperous Transvaal would outweigh the risks involved..."(5) In July 1902 at a meeting of the Society, he put forward a motion that Rhodesia be annexed by the Transvaal "and that the money necessary to purchase this country should form a part of the debt of the Transvaal."(6) (Crown Colony Government was also considered - anything rather than a continuation of Chartered rule.) This suggestion was considered premature by Mashonaland, but welcomed by the Johannesburg Star. The Literary and Debating Society's next meeting in August continued on this theme, and proposed that the Charter of the British South Africa Company be abrogated. This debate took place at a mass public meeting, with such prominent men as Charles Coghlan, Frederick Eyles and Leopold Moore on the platform. Coghlan considered that "a Chartered institution did not recommend itself to any man of British instincts", Eyles thought that the Company should go, though on fair terms, and Moore wanted Crown Colony Government as soon as possible.(7) What had been the Company's achievement in Rhodesia? - 99% of the claims were undeveloped, the bulk of the land was locked up, there was no efficient Agricultural Department and the cost of living was high. The time was opportune, as there was shortly to be a visit from the Company's Directors, when the matter could be settled. Responses throughout the country came quickly. The Chronicle thought the motion premature, the Rhodesian Times (a paper with Company backing) deplored both this and the Frames' motion, and the Herald, which at first had thought the meeting would attract little attention, and was perhaps a little put out at Matabeleland's lead in this, at first decided that it would be preferable to have annexation to the Transvaal than Crown Colony Government. The Cape Times opposed any idea of annexation to the Transvaal. Such weighty institutions as the Rhodesia Chamber of Mines (representing mainly the large companies) considered that the country certainly had grievances but thought the motion premature, and with the Landowners and Farmers Association(8) maintained that abrogation views were not held by the 'responsible' sections of the community.(9)

(1) 24.vi.01.
(2) Legco Debates 1902.
(3) RC 2/4/2 £443, Resident Commissioner to High Commissioner, 9.vii.01.
(4) H.C. Hummel, from draft chapter of thesis yet to be presented.
(5) Ibid.
(6) Bulawayo Chronicle, 26.vii.02.
(7) Bulawayo Chronicle, 30.viii.02.
(8) A body consisting of landowning companies rather than farmers.
(9) Bulawayo Chronicle, 30.viii.02; Rhodesia Herald, 29.viii.02. RH 2/1/1, 29.viii.02 (N.A.R.)
The proponents of the 'abrogation' movement were mostly 'independent' men - Frames and Coghlan were lawyers, Moore a chemist, and Eyles editor of the Bulawayo Observer. The opposition came from the vested interests, the Managers and Directors of Mining and Land-owning companies and commercial men like Holland, Scott, W. Napier and W.H.Haddon. "The interests of the mining industry [they] maintained would be best served under Charter rule, pending the country's fitness for self-government."(1) This was certainly the more practical view, considering that the white population of S.Rhodesia in 1901 was only just over 11,000. The Chartered Company's policy moreover had always been more sympathetic to the demands of these companies, in their efforts to attract capital to Rhodesia. The Bulawayo Chamber of Commerce found itself in a dilemma, not wishing to alienate its market, and resolved "That the Chamber considers it inexpedient to set itself in opposition to the expressed wishes of the people as regards abrogation, but at the same time, vigorously protests against the form of any scheme - if such is in contemplation - having for its object the annexation of this country to the Transvaal or Cape Colony."(2)

The depression after the Boer War had hit Bulawayo more severely than Salisbury, which was closer to the port of Beira and whose supplies and population had not therefore been affected to the same extent. The rivalry between the towns explains why Mashonaland, and Salisbury in particular, did not follow their lead. By September, the Herald expressed itself as not in favour of abrogation and stated that "Salisbury was not carried off its feet by the humourous resolutions passed at the Grand Hotel, Bulawayo, about a month back. As a matter of fact, the local public have been so well drilled in the antics of a body of persevering, embryo statesmen in the sister town, that any fresh effort has come to be regarded with unmixed curiosity."(3) The agitations soon died down: Not only did the Diamond Fields Advertiser point out that unfortunately for the advocates of abrogation, the Imperial Government was unlikely to be willing to take over a country not yet self-supporting,(4) but the visit of the Company Directors (Alfred Beit, Dr. Jameson, Sir Lewis Michell and J.F.Jones) towards the end of September, during which they met public representatives on their grievances and promised certain reductions in railway rates, the exemption of 'small workers' from the 50% clause, and a new Mining Law, reducing the 50% clause to 30%, as well as other concessions, went a long way in satisfying the demands of the settlers.(5) They were also approached by Holland, Colonel H.M. Heyman and Coghlan with a view to increasing popular representation in the Legislative Council, which idea the former stated they seemed to favour, and he believed they would request a new Order in Council giving an equality in the numbers of elected and nominated members.(6)

The Council session in November approved the Attorney General's motion in regard to an increase in the numbers of popular members, and the Administrator denied that the country "was going back, that people were leaving the country and that there was less money to be spent in it than previously ... so far from retrogressing, losing population, and having reduced powers of expenditure, every item [in the Estimates] before them showed the contrary was the case."(7)

(1) Bulawayo Chronicle, 30.viii.02; H.C.Hummel, op.cit.
(2) Bulawayo Chronicle, 6.ix.02.
(3) Rhodesia Herald, 22.ix.02.
(4) Rhodesia Herald, 25.ix.02.
(5) A 11/2/7/3 (N.A.R.)
(6) Rhodesia Herald, 11.x.02.
(7) Legco Debates 1902, 17 November; p.120.
Nevertheless, Franes introduced a motion that a petition be sent to the King requesting the annexation of Rhodesia to the British Empire, and otherwise remained critical of the Company and its officials, although his policy now found little public support. It was also in this session that the Attorney General pointed out, in reply to a motion by Franes that the Company pay a fixed contribution to the country's revenue, that "...in the Charter and in the legislation of the country, it was distinctly laid down that the land and the minerals did belong to the Company..." Generally, however, hopes in Rhodesia were once again high, especially after the sympathetic reception given to the Rhodesian deputation by Chamberlain, in Johannesburg, January 1903.

In 1903 the Government introduced the desired ordinance for the suppression of illicit sexual intercourse between white women and natives; attempted to increase the Hut Tax to £2, and was generally conciliatory in its attitude. When the elected members opposed the new Clause 40 in the 1903 Order in Council the Company immediately took steps to have the 1898 clause reinstated. This relatively quiet session (apart from unexpected opposition to the Mines & Minerals Ordinance) was partly due to the concessions of 1902, but also to the resignation of Franes, who left for the Transvaal in November 1902. The 1903 Order in Council had increased the number of representative members to 7, and in the election for the 2 vacant seats for Matabeleland, Leopold Moore, standing for the abrogation of the Charter, came bottom of the poll. The country was tired of "pyrotechnical displays", "inflammatory denunciations" and "impossible propositions".

Despite continuing depression and a drought affecting almost the whole of South Africa in the 1902-3 season (which at least had the effect of making native work), optimism continued for the first half of the year.

"There is a spirit of reform in the air. It is not confined to the agitation in progress which seeks to secure sweeping reductions in railway rates. Rumor [sic] has been persistent for months past touching changes pending in the Government service, and uncontradicted report has it that these changes are to shortly take effect."(5)

Nevertheless, Rhodesians could not take seriously the Company's Manager/Director, J.F. Jones' report that:

"Rhodesia is apparently a Happy Valley, tranquil and industrious... It has practically solved the problems of cheap transport and cheap fuel... the output of gold is rapidly increasing... agriculture is prospering, the railways are paying... Of popular discontent... we hear not a word."(6)

The situation was not to last. Discontent with railway rates was fostered by a Railway Reform Committee in Salisbury, which called forth the disapproval of Matabeleland as well as the Company - "...it is one long scream of exaggeration and misrepresentations... What will the Home public think of a country which 'seethes with discontent at the conditions to which it is subjected' and is such a statement likely to bring in fresh capital?"(7)

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(1) Ibid., 19 November, p.139. (2) Ibid., p.145. (3) This prevented the elected members from having any power to reduce expenditure, and had been inserted by the Colonial Office. (Africa South 702, No.404.) Milton wrote to Fox: "I really feel that if we wish to secure the best men on the council that we should give them more scope, & let them tackle & worry the Estimates to their hearts content." (4) Bulawayo Chronicle, 2.v.03. (5) Rhodesia Herald, 17.iii.03. (6) Rhodesia Herald, 7.ii.03; & Rhodesian Times, 12.iii.03. (7) Bulawayo Chronicle, 6.vi.03; also similar views expressed in a letter Michell to British South Africa Co. 2.x.03, in A II/2/92/18/7 (N.A.R.) (no folio nos. in this file).
Aid in July fears were expressed that the abrogation of the Charter issue was being revived. "It is usual to shout that it is the Chartered Company which is keeping back the country, but we fail to see this, since the Transvaal is in just as depressed a condition as Rhodesia."(1) But it was also considered by the press that the Company should take more of an interest in Rhodesia — perhaps by way of a Resident Director. The country had missed the personal touch, and policy, of Rhodes.

"...it is no longer the old man's country. None of his spirit animates the Board of Directors now; his atmosphere and tradition have died after him. Rhodesia, even Northern Rhodesia, has become a Government, it is no longer a Company of keen glorious adventurers. I was of the old tradition, and I resented Lewis Michell and Birchenough and the commercial atmosphere they brought with them..."

wrote Robert Coryndon to Albert Close in 1907.(2) On the installation of Milton Cleveland as Mayor of Salisbury, the Herald commented:

"Unfortunately for his own path of peace, Mr. Cleveland comes to the helm at a juncture which is perhaps without parallel in the history of the town. Trade is uncom­promisingly bad. On every side there is evidence of the effects of the transition from purely speculative times to those when commerce must be founded on something more substantial than mere paper if it is to survive."

Bulawayo became incensed over the removal of Government offices to Salisbury, but got short shrift from Milton and Sir Lewis Michell on the latter's visit at the end of September, and who wrote:

"The depression prevalent throughout Rhodesia is due, in my opinion, not to the trivial and temporary causes sometimes assigned, but to the inevitable reaction after a great war, including the sudden cessation of military expenditure, to overstocking by the mercantile community, and to the dearth of native labour except on prohibitive terms. The season had also been one of unusual drought, the rivers were low, crops poor, and the veldt in bad condition. Transport, moreover, was almost impracticable apart from the railway, owing to the very necessary restrictions on the movement of cattle; and the community were naturally anxious at Herr Professor Koch having issued three elaborate Reports on African Coast Fever without discovering any effective remedy there against. Perhaps, beyond all, there remained the fact that the Mining companies except where backed by strong financial groups, had practically arrived at the end of their resources, and were finding the London Market in no mood to absorb fresh issues of speculative capital. It seems quite clear to me that the Rhodesian Gold Mining industry has been started on inadequate working capital, has expanded far too much on surface works, has not studied economy of management either locally or in London, and hence that a process of reconstruction is inevitable in the near future... Over-capitalisation has been the curse of the country, and the scattered and often lenticular formation of the reefs in Rhodesia, leads me to think that the interests of the gold industry and therefore of the country and of our Company will best be served by the encouragement of small and economically worked concerns."(4)
The concessions requested by the Chambers of Mines in regard to small workings were therefore recommended, and certain reductions in railway rates, which Michell admitted were warranted.

In October 1903, the B.S.A. Company proposed to Sir George Taubman Goldie that he should be elected to a seat, and vice-presidency, on the Board of the Company, to which he assented. As this would require an alteration to their Deed of Settlement, an early reply in this connection from the Colonial Office was requested "as Sir George Goldie will proceed to Rhodesia in November should the desired appointment be approved". (1) Although certain newspapers and journals seem to have known of this proposed appointment (2) it is almost certain that the general public of Rhodesia had little idea of under whose auspices Sir George visited their country in January 1904. (3)

His visit to Rhodesia was welcomed by the settlers however, in the hope that he would be able to suggest a settlement with the Company. His proposals in this regard were transmitted to the Rhodesian public by C. T. Holland (4) and were such as to immediately provoke a hostile reception. Although Goldie and the Company thought it was Holland's misinterpretation of the scheme, it was rather that the proposals entailed recognition of liability for the Company's past administrative deficits, and acceptance of Company ownership of all land and minerals. Holland, Colonel Raleigh Grey (5) and Colonel H. M. Heyman did their best to persuade the people to either accept the scheme or variations on it, but Coghlan and others would not in any way admit their responsibility for the Company's expenditure. Holland gave the alternative to acceptance to be that

"the B.S.A. Company will have to reduce establishments to make revenue balance expenditure, the conveniences of civilization will be taken away, and the country will revert to the position of a frontier State." (6)

Failing a settlement, the Company would have to look to sources other than mining to recoup their expenditure. The only means left would be to encourage agriculture and land settlement, which could not by any means be other than a slow process. (7)

Briefly, the proposals were that the settlers were to admit a debt of approximately £8,000,000 to the Company, the repayment of which would be undertaken by loan and trust funds; £5,000,000 of this to go to the Company, who would undertake to spend the remaining...

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(1) In the event, however, Goldie did not join the Board: Africa South 746, No. 327. Africa South 717, No. 360; B.S.A. Co. to Colonial Office, 17.x.03.

(2) South Africa, 24.x.03.

(3) Africa South 746, No. 230; Gordon Forbes to Colonial Office, 4.vii.03. Also a statement by Sir George Goldie in South Africa, vol. 62, l.6.04, in which he denied any connection with the Company.

(4) A most unfortunate choice in the opinion of the Rhodesian Times, "one whose utterances carry less weight with the thinking section of the population..." would have been hard to find. S.v.04. This was also Milton's opinion - A 2/9/3, Milton to Fox, 12.x.04.

(5) Grey was a suspected "Company man", e.g. over the railway agitation: J. F. Jones suggested to Michell that "Grey, or anyone who can look at the question from our point of view" persuade the press to change their views - KT 1/1/1. Also A 11/2/18/26, BSA: Milton, 31.v.04.

(6) RH 2/1/2/1 151, 5.v.04.

(7) Agriculture had been very much neglected before 1903. The settler until approximately this time relied heavily on native produce as imports. Apart from keeping a few cattle, which had been seriously hit by African Coast Fever, white farmers did little but cut wood for sale in towns and mines. Various attempts had been made to start Farming Associations in the 1890s, but it was only after the...
£3,000,000 on the further development of the country. The Company would keep all their land, mineral and administrative rights, and the settlers would not have any additional representation in the Legislative Council.

Not only the proposals, but the elected representatives' method of handling the issue caused ill-feeling, it being suspected that they were in favour of accepting, and wished to keep the matter in their own hands in order to either accept this, or a similar scheme. (1) A Conference was organised in June, to which delegates from all major towns and public bodies were invited. Although all present claimed to oppose the Goldie scheme, there was an almost immediate split between 'stalwarts' (2) and 'conservatives'; (3) those who felt that a delegation to the Company in London to arrange a settlement should be composed of men elected by the Conference, and those who felt that either the elected members themselves should go, or at least have delegates chosen in the same ratio as for representation in the Legislative Council, i.e. 3 for Matabeleland, 2 for Mashonaland and one each for Eastern and Midlands districts. This might also soon be seen as a split between radicals and conservatives, as the 'stalwarts' represented the group in favour of elimination of Company rule, the 'conservatives' basically preferring reform but retention of the Company, although they voted for a resolution on elimination "to secure unanimity". (4) The views of the 'stalwarts' prevailed. "The old leaders who had grown to feel that they could impose their will upon the country, have been deposed from popular favour to make room for a new generation who have grown with the times." (5) Although few people expected to achieve an immediate end to Chartered rule, it was hoped that the preliminaries of a bargain could be arranged. (6)

This delegation to London was not on the initiative of the Conference, but on an invitation from Dr. Jameson who wrote:

"It is the strong wish of my fellow Directors and myself to be given an early opportunity of conferring with representatives of the people of Rhodesia, and I trust your Conference will result in the appointment of a deputation to proceed as promptly as possible to London for this purpose. I would suggest that the delegates should be entrusted with a summary of your views on all matters of administration and finance that they may be in a position, not only to discuss with the Board questions as between us, but to come, if possible, to a practical understanding thereon, to be ratified by the people on their return." (7)

[Note 7 contd. from previous page...]

formation of the Rhodesian Agricultural Union in 1904, and with increased Government assistance after this date, that farming began to make any progress.

(1) Goldie's proposals had been submitted to the elected members in April, although it was only in May that they were made public. See also CO 81/1/1 f1–6.
(3) Dr. H. Sauer, W. H. Haddon, C. T. Holland, Col. R. Gray, W. Napier, Col. H. M. Heyman, J. E. Scott, W. Dempster, W. Howard, (Haddon, Holland, Grey, Napier and Heyman being Legco representatives). T. Rixon and Johnson voted with the 'conservatives' but did not join them when they walked out of the Conference.
(4) Bulawayo Chronicle, 11.vi.04.
(5) Bulawayo Chronicle, 25.vi.04.
(6) Bulawayo Chronicle, 9.vi.04.
(7) 8.vi.04 – Africa South 746, No.219; and in Conference Minutes.
Although the Company later maintained it could only negotiate with the elected members, it was eventually agreed to see the delegation as elected by the Conference, provided elimination of the Charter was not discussed.

This deputation, which proceeded to London in July, can be seen as the first serious attempt by the settlers to come to a settlement with the Company. That it failed was due largely to the incompatibility of their demands with the various proposals of the Company, any acceptance of which would mean recognition of responsibility for deficits and Company ownership of the land. Moreover, they came to realise that whilst they were in no position to do so, the Imperial Government were not prepared to take over the Administration. (1) The status quo had of necessity to continue. The sole achievement of the delegation was what the 'conservatives' had initially wanted, namely retention, with reform of certain aspects of the Company. These reforms were largely commercial - further inducements to small workers, certain railway rate reductions, and aid with fencing. The Directors refused to split the commercial and administrative revenue, for long a sore point with the settlers, who suspected that administrative went into the commercial 'pocket'. (2)

The behaviour of the delegates, (3) both at the Rhodesian conference and in London, in particular Guy Marshall, however, brought the settlers into a considerable amount of disrepute. The normally sympathetic journal African World wrote:

"...the opinion obtains at the Cape that the low ebb at which Rhodesians are is due not to the Chartered Company's exactions, but to their own lack of economy, to their large and expensive 'establishments' and generally to their devotion to the market rather than to mining..." (4)

and South Africa, on the breakdown of the London talks:

"It is now, however, apparent that while the Directors were anxious to do what they could, having due regard to the interests of their shareholders, to bring about a satisfactory arrangement, the delegates were altogether without a practical working scheme of their own and were not in any sort of position, even if they had been willing to do so, to pledge the credit of those whom they represented by accepting the terms laid down by the Board of the Chartered Company. Under these circumstances a deadlock was inevitable. Mr. Gordon Forbes assured us on his arrival in England that the delegates had come over with 'a distinct programme' and had 'certain well-defined proposals ready for the Directors' consideration. Exactly what that programme and those proposals were he would not divulge, but the abortive results of the conference is tolerable proof that they were not of a very practical kind, and one is inclined to wonder why, if they had not a workable scheme ready for presentation to the Chartered Company, the delegates ever took the unnecessary trouble of coming to England at all." (5)

"They hoped all things, they talked, and talked again, they advanced grievances, all more or less imaginary;

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(1) Africa South 746, Nos.238, 260. They had also been advised by the High Commissioner that the likely reply from H.M.G. would be that it was purely a matter between them and the Company - RC 3/8/9 HC171 - High Commissioner, telegram to Resident Commissioner, 21.vi.04.

(2) Africa South 763, No.53, enc1. Fox to Milton, 1.iv.05.

(3) The delegates were: Marshall, Wylie, Cripps, Forbes, T. Haddon, Rixon.

and when ... the Directors of the Chartered Company placed before them a proposal of a definite nature, they found themselves in a position which prevented them even discussing it."(1)

It might at this stage also be considered why the Company were so keen to come to a settlement. The demands of the settlers cannot be seen as the sole motive, which perhaps lies more in their realisation in 1903 that Rhodesian mines would provide but few and small fortunes, if any,(2) (the concession to small workers in 1902 and 1903 is indicative of this). The Company was not in a good financial position. In 1904 every effort was made to cut down Administrative expenditure, and Milton wrote to Jones, "I must admit that until quite recently I had no very distinct idea of the actual position. Had I been aware of it at an earlier date I should have done everything in my power to stop all expenditure that was not positively indispensable..."(3) although he did manage to reduce the Estimates by £15,000.

Rhodesia's first political associations had sprung into being over this period - the Mashonaland and Matabeleland Political Societies. The latter was the more active of the two, and its membership rolls contained all the leading Matabeleland names. The policy of both was to promote a settlement with the Company, ultimate self-government and eventual federation with the other South African states, and reform of the Administration of the country, with fuller powers of control to the elected members, especially over revenue and expenditure. The extremism of the June Conference days was considerably modified, the Matabeleland Society in late August denying "that all Rhodesians with the true interests of the country at heart are anxiously striving for a form of Crown Colony Government..."(4) In a letter to the London Spectator, the Society listed their grievances against the Company - that large areas of land had been alienated but not occupied, the retention of interest in all mining claims (which meant share jobbing was more attractive than mining), high railway rates, and an Administration that, although honest and efficient, was too elaborate and expensive. The country could not be saddled with the Company's deficits, although the mining and commercial rights would have to be purchased ultimately. What was desired was a bargain or settlement as to the price, and method of payment.(5) Although even in October their meetings were poorly attended, by January 1905 the Society claimed to have several hundred members. At this meeting they seemed to expect an early settlement, and on Coghlan's resolution, decided to give their support only to Legislative Council candidates who would refuse to acknowledge any liability in regard to the deficits.(6) The Mashonaland Society had long since collapsed, over the 'Banket Boom' - "the inhabitants of Salisbury were far too busy in forming mining syndicates to attend to politics."(7)

(1) Vol.63, 27.viii.04.
(2) 1903, gold value - £709,461; 1904 £845,359.
(3) A 2/9/3, 5.v.04.
(4) Bulawayo Chronicle, 30.viii.04.
(5) In Rhodesia Herald, 15.xii.04.
(6) Bulawayo Chronicle, 28.i.05.
(7) P.F. Hone, Southern Rhodesia, p.168.
In the event, however, no seats were contested in the 1905 elections, not even that of Colonel Grey, who had been so unpopular over his support for the Goldie proposals. "His distinguished political record ... showing independent and fearless action in the face of spastically hysterical opposition..."(1) made him a welcome candidate. Political interest and activity had died away after the halcyon days of 1904. The depression appeared to be lifting, and the Company's finances were on a sounder basis (an issue in November 1904 was oversubscribed).(2)

In fact the 1905 financial year showed the first administrative surplus of revenue. The concessions to small-workers and the steadily improving gold output meant a greater measure of stability in political affairs. Of the 1905 Council session, the Resident Commissioner commented that "the proceedings throughout were characterised by a spirit of moderation and cordiality on both sides."(3) The only controversy was over the proposed Loans Ordinance (for agricultural assistance) but only Colonel Grey maintained his opposition to it, and that the Ordinance was not assented to was due to British Treasury opposition, not that of the settlers. Minor issues of course continued in plenty - the perennial railway rates, rivalry between Mashonaland and Matabeleland over their respective routes; the periodic shortages of labour; and the need for immigrants and a land settlement scheme. Although more interest was by now being taken in farming by both Company and settlers, the shortage of 'bona fide' farmers was of concern, for Rhodesia was still importing the bulk of her food requirements (and continued to do so until about 1914). As a result, the Company set up a small Land Settlement Department under Mr. C.D. Wise in 1906.

In 1906 this relative quiet was broken by an outcry from Gwelo over the discovery of diamonds near Somabula, the De Beers monopoly, the concession for sole diamond prospecting rights over 200 square miles to Sir John Willoughby (which dated from 1904), and the failure of the Government to grant suitable Diggers Permits or provide acceptable legislation. Opposition was renewed to the Company's 30% share of flotation scrip. The 1906 Council session was the scene of conflict between elected members and Government, Milton commenting:

"They all vote solidly this session without much argument except by Forbes and Longden and do not give any consideration to facts or explanations. This is no doubt due to the 30% and the De Beers' rights aggravated by Willoughby's concession, which are at present the popular planks in agitation... I have constantly to give a casting vote which is a nuisance..."(4)

At the June 1906 Agricultural Union Congress, it was stated that there was "no incentive to become a landowner and farmer in Rhodesia so long as the present uncertain title only was issued... The tampering with titles [Diamond and Water Rights Ordinances] only left the settler in the uncertain position of a squatter in the country who could be ejected at the will of the Company."(5)

By the time the High Commissioner, Lord Selborne, visited Rhodesia in October, widespread discontent with the Company had again reached a serious state, and there was a demand for a Royal Commission to investigate past and present administration and a separation of commercial from administrative revenue,(6) and the elimination of

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(1) Rhodesia Herald, 5.ii.05.  (2) Bulawayo Chronicle, 19.xi.04.
(3) RC 2/4/5 f170, Resident Commissioner to High Comm., 26.v.05.
(4) A 2/9/3 Milton to Fox, 25.v.06.  (5) Rhodesia Herald, 23.vi.06.
(6) Once again an administrative surplus had been achieved in 1906, which was nullified by the Company's claim that certain receipts - £70,000 - were derived from the commercial side.
the commercial interest of the Company in public affairs. At a public meeting in Gwelo, a resolution that Company rule should be replaced by Representative Government under the Crown was passed and found support from other public bodies throughout the country. At a public meeting in Gwelo, a resolution that Company rule should be replaced by Representative Government under the Crown was passed and found support from other public bodies throughout the country. (1) The 30% clause, increased representation on the Legislative Council, railway rates, the question of land titles and the ownership of the land were brought before Selborne, who, despite being confronted with certain less responsible demands such as the removal of all natives to the north of the Zambesi, and the taxation of native produce, (2) considered the settlers’ case fairly sympathetically. In his report to the Secretary of State, Lord Elgin, Selborne praised Milton and the administration, but “unanimous as I find the population in their praise of, and confidence in, the Administrator and the Civil Service, I found them equally unanimous in resolute protests against the policy of what they termed the ‘commercial side’ of the British South Africa Company ... there is no doubt as to the strength of this protest...” (3) Although he considered Representative Government not feasible for so small a population, (4) he felt the settlers had achieved much in the face of three wars, two periods of virulent cattle disease and recurrent drought, and recommended the idea of a Royal Commission. This was refused by Elgin, in view of the fact that the Company had decided to send out a commission of Directors to investigate the situation. (5)

The Directors did not visit Rhodesia until July and the 1907 Council session was again a scene of conflict, particularly over H.T. Longden’s (6) motion that the time had arrived when the Company should be relieved of their administrative duties, since the country was now paying its own way. The matter was allowed to rest, pending the Directors’ visit, although the settlers were somewhat sceptical about it, previous visits having proved unsatisfactory. (7) This period of crisis once again saw the formation of political associations. The Mashonaland Progressive Association demanded fuller representation of the people and certain administrative reforms, and was formed (by Grey and associates) to counteract the Rhodesia Constitutional League (8) with its stated policy “of endeavouring by all constitutional means to bring about a change of Government”.

However, the 13-week visit of the Directors (9) saw full discussions on all issues, and considerable concessions to the settlers - the promise of a reduction from seven to five nominated members in the Legislative Council, (10) a separation of commercial

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(1) Rhodesia Herald, 5.x. and 12.x.06.
(2) P.F. Hone, op. cit., p.172.
(3) Africa South 802, No.222, 5.xi.06.
(4) 14007 in 1907, with an estimated African population of 700,000.
(5) Africa South 872 Nov.52 and 56. It is apparent that Elgin would not have welcomed any change of administration, believing Rhodesia would soon be entering a federation of South Africa.
(6) Longden was described as the leader of the party desiring abrogation by the R.C.'s Secretary, to Imperial Secretary, ES 3/7/15 121, 12.v.08.
(7) ES 3/7/15, 247.
(8) Formed in Salisbury in May, with support for Longden's Legco motion, the editor of the Herald apparently being the chief mover. Africa South 872, No.93 enclosure, ES 3/8/3, 242.
(9) Dr. Jameson, Mr. H. Birchough, Marquess of Winchester and Mr. B. Hawksley. A 11/2/7/4 contains all reports and their Declaration.
(10) The failure of the Company to make this settler majority official through an Order in Council gave rise to considerable ill-feeling in 1910.
from administrative revenue, the substitution of a graduated royalty in place of the 30%, the appointment of a Commercial representative to be stationed in Bulawayo, Civil Service reforms, and a simplified Land Title being the major points. The Directors' Statement of Policy was, in the words of Forbes, "better than we expected" and led to a period of comparative co-operation, peace and quiet in Rhodesia, and the following statement from the Constitutional League:

"Today the situation is totally changed... The Directors have visited us, have in the main admitted the justness of our complaints, and further have already taken practical steps towards many much desired reforms.

We are not fanatical theorists ready to sacrifice to the Fetish of some particular form of Government. We are practical men who desire good Government, its form being of quite secondary importance.

Therefore we frankly accept the declaration of the Directors, and are ready to meet them in the same spirit of conciliation.

As proof of our seriousness we hereby declare that the Constitutional League no longer has any reason for existence and is hereby dissolved."

The Company felt that it had done all that could legitimately be asked of it for the present, and for a time relations between the Company and settlers improved considerably. When Selborne visited Rhodesia again in 1909, he wrote to the Secretary of State:

"Anything more delightful than the change between the position of matters now and in 1906 cannot be imagined. Your Lordship will remember how in 1906 I was inundated with deputations and that I found the gravest discontent prevailing against the management of the British South Africa Company and generally a condition of political unrest today all is changed. I have heard no complaints and everybody is in a happy frame of mind. This is no doubt largely due to the steady wave of prosperity, both in agriculture and mining, which is now flowing over Southern Rhodesia, but it is also, I am convinced, very largely due to the much better understanding between the British South Africa Company and the people of Southern Rhodesia..."

However, it was not until 1909 that the Company managed to restore the confidence of the market in themselves. A proposed issue of shares in 1908 failed through lack of subscription, but was successful in 1909, when the Company's shares saw a rise and crossed par for the first time since 1907, which although attributed by certain London papers to rumours that it resulted from the Transvaal Government's contemplation of the purchase of the railway guarantees and/or the purchase of the country for inclusion in the United South Africa, was perhaps more an indication of the sounder position both of the Company and Southern Rhodesia.

After 1907 politics in Southern Rhodesia took on a different emphasis. Although old issues like the ownership of land continued, the Union issue came to the fore both before and

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(1) Neither settlers nor H.M.G. were satisfied with the division. Africa South 899 No.53, C.O. to BSACo, 15.iv.08. Legco Debates
(2) However other reforms in favour of the farming interests were bitterly opposed by the Mining Companies in 1908.
(3) See also Africa South 872, No.181.
(4) R.F 3/7/18, f14/1910, 15.xi.09.
after 1910, and "abrogation of the Charter" died away. Rhodesia, by the effort of both settlers and Company, was out of its doldrums, and between 1907 and 1911 gained nearly 10,000 new settlers (after having shown a gain of less than 2,000 between 1904 and 1907), a large proportion taking up farming as their livelihood. "People are simply pouring into the country and Lomagundi is rapidly being taken up - they are all men with money from £1,000 to £10,000. You will no doubt find us hemmed in when you get back and I am very anxious about it..." wrote O.C. Rawson to his partner Dimmock in 1908.(1) The increased sale and occupation of land also meant a new policy towards the African population, who from this period posed a threat to the markets and produce of the white farmers, and who were no longer welcome to 'squat' on land previously under-utilised or not occupied. It also meant increasing conflict between the Mining and Agricultural sectors of the population.

The more settled conditions meant that Rhodesia no longer mainly attracted the adventurous, free-booting speculators of the early days, who wanted to make their fortunes as quickly as possible and then get out, and was rapidly becoming a somewhat more sober, settled, middle-class society. Before this period, the country had been hard put to find suitable men to fill all public roles, for 'frontier' conditions do not often attract the successful and responsible citizens from more established countries, and efficiency in both the public and private sphere had suffered from having to resort to employing untrained or unsuitable staff. The hardships and problems of an inexperienced and pioneer Administration were often overlooked, and the Government criticised for failing to give the facilities and standards provided by older 'Home' countries. That this government was also a commercial company was not quite the drawback it was often considered, for, desirous of getting a return out of its investments, it spent a great deal more on the development of the country than might have been the case with the Imperial Government. The economic policy of the Company however had been based on an over-estimation of Rhodesia's mineral resources, and the 50% and 30% clauses had meant over-capitalisation and the consequent failure of many Rhodesian companies. Similarly, their railway policy had been based on this erroneous assumption, and over-extension meant a far heavier burden of rates than the settlers could bear. Some of the early protests were more orientated towards South African politics than against the Company, but when in 1904 the settlers attempted to eliminate the Charter, it quickly became evident to them that they were in no position to take over the government, whilst the Imperial Government would not. Few had ever seriously considered annexation by the Transvaal or Cape (or whether they would have then). The demands for the abrogation of the Charter largely ceased, the settlers contenting themselves with efforts to increase their representation on the Legislative Council.

"Abrogation" had been the least practical of the settlers' demands. The Company itself admitted the justness of many of their other grievances in 1907, and had amended its policy accordingly where possible. In particular, more attention was given to the individual settler - the small worker and the farmer, as opposed to their earlier policy of attempting to attract capital by giving generous concessions in the form of land or prospecting rights to large companies, which had resulted in large areas of 'locked-up' land and a sympathetic attitude on the part of those companies. No compromise was possible however on the important issues of land and revenue.

(1) RA 4/1 f256, 31.vii.08 (Hist.Mss; N.A.R.)
Although Rhodes himself maintained that wherever a community of Britishers could be found a demand for their civil rights was bound to follow, the non-participation of Bulawayo in political agitation in its heyday before 1897, for example, gives weight to the fact that "when times are dull, people have time to grumble and air their grievances", (1) and the depression of the first few years of the 20th century in Rhodesia had certainly much to do with the discontent against the Company. A more affluent community might have demanded economic and administrative reform in this period rather than the spasmodic and ill-considered demands for the abrogation of the Charter.