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1924-1938**



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MAKING NORTHERN RHODESIA IMPERIAL: VARIATIONS ON A ROYAL THEME, 1924–1938

TERENCE RANGER

Introduction

IN THE PAST I have devoted a good deal of time to seeking to explain African protest against colonialism. I have now come to think that what needs at least as much explanation is African acquiescence in colonialism. In Northern Rhodesia the colonial government made minimal demands and offered minimal services, resting content with extracting African labour and tax. But this minimalism—which demanded no sort of exclusive loyalty and which abstained from any thought of social engineering—nevertheless profoundly transformed the character of African rural communities. Old economic systems were undermined; old political systems were propped up but were increasingly devoid of function or legitimacy. There was a great deal for Africans to feel aggrieved about. Meanwhile, as Lewis Gann reminds us, ‘British authority rested on a minimum of force’.¹ In Northern Rhodesia, as elsewhere, colonial administration was ‘exiguous to the point of disbelief’.² Why then did African grievance not burst forth? Why was there such general acquiescence in Northern Rhodesia between the two world wars?

This is certainly a real question. African acquiescence was not to be taken for granted in Northern Rhodesia just after the First World War. At the end of that war there had been widespread defiance of the administration in north-eastern Rhodesia. Judge Macdonnell, who had carried out inquiries into the disturbances, conveyed his disquiet in a letter to the Administrator on 5 May 1919: ‘As one listened to the pleas and evidence which showed that the old words, obedience to elders, headmen and chiefs, obedience to the Boma, had lost their meaning, we realized the delicate and fragile nature of our hold over these people and at times we saw the abyss opening’.³ What we have to explain is not merely the continuance of acquiescence but its achievement.

Anthony Kirk-Greene has recently asked and answered the question for British colonial Africa in general. ‘How did the exemplars of Pax Colonica carry it out? Four answers suggest themselves: in coercion, collaborators,

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1. Lewis Gann reviewing A. D. Roberts, *A History of Zambia*, *Journal of African History*, 1977, 3.
2. A. H. M. Kirk-Greene, ‘The Thin White Line: the Size of the British Civil Service in Africa’, *African Affairs*, 79, 314, January 1980, p. 38.
3. P. Macdonnell to Administrators, 5 May 1919, cited in Karen E. Fields, ‘The ordinary and the extraordinary in social movements’, American Historical Association conference, New York, December 1979, p. 58.

confidence and competence.⁴ No doubt these go some way towards answering the Northern Rhodesian question also. There *was* coercion—after the temporary collapse of the administration in the north-east, armed police returned to restore order. There *were* collaborators—and they found ample scope in the formalized system of Indirect Rule for which Macdonnell tirelessly argued as a path out of the abyss.⁵ No doubt Northern Rhodesian administrators were as confident and competent as those elsewhere. But it is the purpose of this paper to explore a further dimension—the dimension of colonial ideology.

Like all systems of governance, colonial rule in Northern Rhodesia required a shared system of ideology which linked rulers and ruled. Kirk-Greene's emphasis upon the total authority of the District Commissioner does not take us far enough. Colonial ideology had to place the DC in a hierarchy of power which tied the locality to the apex of empire: it was from his situation in that hierarchy that the DC derived his authority. Because of the minimal demands it made on its subjects the colonial administration did not need to foster any very strong or elaborate ideology; it did not need or ask their exclusive loyalty, merely a sense of belonging to a larger system than their 'tribe', to which during Indirect Rule their primary loyalty was supposed to lie. Because of the minimal services which it was prepared to offer the colonial administration had no state schools through which it could inculcate an ideology; nor did it wish to become involved in any complex and binding network of mutual dependence and obligation. What was required was a generalized, simple, yet persuasive ideology of imperial governance. It is the argument of this paper that after 1924 the Northern Rhodesian government sought to create such an ideology around the idea of the Imperial Monarchy. This Monarchical ideology was at first very successful, but it contained within itself contradictions which were to undermine its effectiveness by the 1940s.

Sir Herbert Stanley and the Rituals of Empire.

When Sir Herbert Stanley arrived in Northern Rhodesia in 1924 as its first Governor after the Colonial Office's assumption of authority for the territory, he found an ideologically unsatisfactory state of affairs. Not only was there the recent memory of African unrest. There was also the fact that in his eyes the British South Africa Company had symbolized soulless capitalism rather than Imperial paternalism. Stanley had exerted much influence over the recent defeat of the Company's lobbyists in the recent Southern Rhodesian referendum; he was anxious now to dramatize the transfer of Northern Rhodesia from Company to Imperial rule.⁶ Stanley was sympathetic to the aspirations of white settlers, but only if they were of British stock, ardently loyal to the

4. Kirk-Greene, p. 38.

5. For Indirect Rule see Kasum Datta, 'The Policy of Indirect Rule in Northern Rhodesia, 1924 to 1958', doctoral thesis, London, 1976.

Crown. In Northern Rhodesia there were Afrikaner farmers, especially around Lusaka, whose children neither knew nor were prepared to learn ‘God Save the King’. English-speaking settlers in the Fort Jameson area celebrated the Rhodesian feast days of Rhodes and Founders rather than Empire Day. Finally, Stanley did not feel that either the black or the white population of Northern Rhodesia offered very promising material for ritual elaboration. When he was preparing to receive the Prince of Wales in 1924/5 he apologized for the inadequacy of official accommodation, for the lack of picturesqueness of the African chiefs, for the uncouthness of the settlers. There was, he wrote, ‘not very much to choose between any’ of the African chiefs ‘in the matter of dignity and importance . . . Generally speaking none are likely to look very impressive.’ The settlers would not be able to attend formal occasions since most had ‘no evening clothes and would hardly be able to provide themselves with fancy dress’. Falling back, as so many ceremonially minded Governors were to do, upon the Lozi, Stanley promised that at least their aquatic display was likely to be ‘a fairly picturesque affair as native ceremonies go’.⁷

Stanley set out to do what he could in this environment to elaborate rituals expressive of an Imperial ideology. So far as whites were concerned he aimed particularly at the children. A central point was the celebration of Empire Day, with Stanley himself taking an active role in initiating children into its mysteries. In 1925, for example, he spoke to a juvenile audience in Livingstone on Empire Day, ‘explaining the meaning of the celebration . . . and told them the meaning of the forthcoming visit of the Prince of Wales, their future king. The children then marched past and saluted the flag . . . Phyllis Scot recited “Empire Day” with considerable expression and quite impressively.’⁸ In 1927 ‘the children sang Kipling’s childrens’ song. This was followed by English and Welsh dances and three songs by Shakespeare . . . His Excellency then addressed the children and explained the symbolism of the reverse side of the medals . . . The Bridge typified the Bridge of Empire, which was built around the figures of Peace and Prosperity. The lamps were those of Justice and Freedom which it was the duty of us all to keep always burning, and the track was that of the pioneers who had made this the Empire over which the sun never sets.’⁹

Stanley also put a great deal of energy into establishing Boy Scouts and Girl Guides. Hitherto, he was informed, the Scout movement had not prospered in Northern Rhodesia, ‘owing to cheap labour and the custom of having a native servant at their beck and call (which) does not prompt the boys to fend for themselves as a good Scout should’. Yet, ‘Northern Rhodesia appears to be an ideal country for the energy of Scouts and doubtless the movement was born in

6. J. M. McKenzie, ‘Southern Rhodesia and Responsible Government’, *Rhodesian History*, i, 1978, pp. 29–30.

7. Herbert Stanley to Sir Geoffrey Thomas, 5 April 1924; 19 May 1925; 7 July 1925; files P 3/13/3/1, 2 and 3, National Archives, Lusaka.

8. *Livingstone Mail*, 28 May 1925.

9. *Livingstone Mail*, 26 May 1927.

Rhodesia'.¹⁰ Stanley called together leading officials, churchmen and settlers and told them that the Scout movement was 'rapidly spreading through the Empire', and inculcating 'chivalry, thrift, patriotism and the rules of health'. On 1 November 1924 he presided over the investiture of six boys as Tenderfoots at Government House. Stanley administered the oaths: 'Can I trust you, on your honour, to do your best to be loyal to God and the King; to do good turns to other people, to keep the Scout Law?'¹¹ He also gave the boys 'a few minutes Pow Wow on the fact that now they are real Scouts and Cubs at last':

'The wolf-cub of the jungle is like many other animals; he has four legs a head and a tail. So has a goat or a pig or a giraffe—but these animals are not all clothed in the same sort of fur, nor are they of the same shape or colour. But you can tell a wolf from these by his shape and by the colour of his fur, and all wolves are exactly like each other. So with the Boy Wolf Cubs—they are like any other boy in having each a head, and two arms and two legs, but you can tell a Wolf Cub at once . . . There are your fellow Brother Wolf Cubs in Australia, New Zealand, in Canada, in India—everywhere in the British Empire—all doing the same work and all wearing the same green shirts and shorts and hats . . . You are like a soldier or a sailor wearing the King's uniform.'¹²

Stanley's services to the Boy Scout movement were amply repaid by the tone of the material circulated to the Northern Rhodesian cubs by the Scout movement in Britain.

'Perhaps you may have been a bit disheartened by hearing the rumours which have been spread by some other countries that Britain is done for—down and out. Don't you believe it. We stood up in the war, we gave and we took some heavy knocks over it, but we are on our feet again once more. We are coming on, not merely to where we were before, but to be greater yet. This we can and will do if all our Empire Team play up and play the game, play in their places not merely for their own particular good but that the whole side may win. Scouts and Guides, you are going to be players in that team.'¹³

For white adults Stanley elaborated the celebrations of the King's Birthday.

If in these rituals Stanley was defining for white children an active role in the Imperial family, he offered to Africans a passive, and indeed child-like, membership. Here the stress was all upon the King as Father; all-knowing, all-caring; present through the delegation of authority to his Governor and administrative officers. One may take Stanley's addresses to *Indabas* of chiefs at Serenje and Ndola as representative statements of this ideology:

'The British South Africa Company no longer governed the Territory which was now ruled directly by the Crown and His Excellency was the representative

10. H. Parkin to Herbert Stanley, 5 June 1924, P 3/5/1, N.A.L.

11. Parkin to Stanley, 27 October 1924, P 3/5/1.

12. Parkin's draft for Governor's Powe Wow, P 3/5/1.

13. Baden Powell, 'New Year Message to Scouts and Guides Overseas', encl. in Pickford to Stanley, 27 January 1926, P 3/5/1.

of His Majesty the King, who was anxious for the welfare and prosperity of the people . . . All you here are one people—subjects of the King of England. It is the King's wish that all his subjects shall live together in peace . . . It is to ensure this that Governors are sent out. The Governor who lives in Livingstone and has a large country to administer cannot always be in one place but the District Commissioner or Assistant Magistrate or Native Commissioner at the Bomas throughout the country are representatives of the Governor and the King and their work is that the King's wishes should be carried out.¹⁴

A sharp-sighted observer has left us an account of the pomp which attended Stanley's *Indabas*. Meeting with the Ngoni chiefs at an *Indaba* in Fort Jameson in July 1924, Stanley, hitherto 'a portly gentlemen of great venerableness', was transformed into Proconsul:

'Sir Herbert Stanley, clad in white from tip to toe, with a snowy plume topping his white helmet, sailed like a majestic swan through the brilliant sunlight to his tree-shaded dais. The lesser swans from the Boma gathered round him. A tumultuous noise of clapping and muffled shouting rose into the air. "It's the *Bayete*, The Royal Salute", whispered Tom Page. "The Royal Salute is only given on very special occasions. It is the highest honour a native can pay a white man." . . . Now the Governor had arisen and was speaking in a clear resonant voice. A native interpreter from the Boma listened with great deference to the simple English words uttered phrase by phrase; and then by him translated into a strange musical language . . . The burden of His Excellency's address told of the good will of His Most Gracious Majesty King George towards his African subjects, of his desire that they should live peacefully and tranquilly and serve him with loyalty. That they should aspire to a wider and more useful life. That they should till the soil for their own uses in order that they might not suffer from want . . . (All) designed as a parade (in the Kintergarten sense) of His Majesty's benignity towards his untutored African subjects'.¹⁵

Whether or not they were convinced by these idioms of monarchical paternalism, the chiefs at Serenje, Ndola and Fort Jameson readily adopted them in their own representations, humbly requesting that King George be asked to provide them with gun licences, uniforms, salary increases. The picturesque Lozi were also more able to handle the monarchical idiom with disconcerting sophistication. The Lozi establishment had long appealed away from the British South Africa Company and to the British Crown. They were capable of describing Lewanika as 'a staunch Britisher and a devoted loyal subject to His Majesty the King'; they had congratulated the King on his 'brilliant signal Victory which His Majesty' had achieved in the First World War, and remarked that 'now the British Empire having manifested itself as the leading power, we hope it is going to extend more fully than it did before to all its British subjects

14. Proceedings of *Indaba* at Serenje, 29 October 1923, RC/301; at Ndola, 6 July 1928, ZA 1/9/59/1, N.A.L.

15. Winifrid Tapson, *Old Timer*, Capetown, 1957, pp. 39, 62–4; Tapson's account of the Fort Jameson *Indaba* is substantially confirmed by the official record in file RC/301.

irrespective of colour, race or nation, the same equal rights, privileges and advantages of freedom, liberty and justice'.¹⁶

Now in 1924 the Lozi hastened to press home the logical conclusions of direct Crown rule:

'We are today delighted to realise that we are now definitely under the direct protection of His Majesty and of His Majesty's Government and that we shall enjoy the protection we so much cried for . . . We realise that our previous petitions could not receive favourable response because the Company was a Commerical Body which worked for its own commercial purposes. But now we have a full hope that, as our country has now come under the direct control and is in the hands of His Majesty's Government, our petition will graciously receive favourable consideration'.¹⁷

To this Stanley could only reply by playing down the importance of the change of government. 'You must always remember', he replied, 'that the King is the supreme authority in Northern Rhodesia. That was the position before the change in the form of Government took place . . . and that position remains unchanged now'.¹⁸

But although the Lozi might thus call Stanley's bluff, he could regard with some satisfaction his initial elaboration of rituals appropriate to an Imperial ideology. When he heard that Edward, Prince of Wales, was to visit Northern Rhodesia to see the Victoria Falls and to take a break from the rigours of his tour of the Union, Stanley at once began to plan how best to use the visit to strengthen the Imperial impression.

The Prince of Wales in Northern Rhodesia

'The visit of His Royal Highness . . . is no political one', declared the Sotho paper, *Mochochonono*; 'At home the Prince does not take any part in the political affairs of the British Empire'.¹⁹ In fact the various administrations of Southern Africa made supremely political use of the Prince—as a symbol of the overwhelming pomp and hence power of the British Empire; as the living embodiment of the concern of the royal Father for his subjects; as a lecturer, speaking with the voice of the administration; as a patron of those organizations and causes which embodied forth the Imperial ideal. Stanley used the Prince in all these ways.

Colonial administrators had a somewhat crude view of African response to royalty. Kings had to glitter; pomp had to be resplendent; if not then Africans would be unimpressed. So in 1919, when the Paramount Chief of Basutoland visited England for an audience with the King he was refused permission to

16. Yeta III's address to the Duke of Connaught, March 1921, KDE 2/34/12, N.A.L.

17. '-Explanations to Petition', 21 August 1924, ZA 1/9/47/7, N.A.L.

18. Herbert Stanley's reply to Paramount Chief Yeta, 21 August 1924, ZA 1/9/47/7.

19. *Mochochonono* or *The Comet*, 6 May 1925, enclosed in Resident Commissioner to High Commissioner, 14 May 1925, National Archives, Maseru, S 3/28/1/10. I was able to work briefly in the Lesotho Archives and have used some comparative material from them.

proceed to Rome, for fear that he ‘might be unduly impressed by the pomp and state of reception at the Vatican and might form the conclusion that the Pope was more important than the King’.²⁰ In the same way Stanley pressed for the Prince to appear resplendently before the African *Indabas*. ‘It would be much appreciated if HRH at the meetings with Natives would wear some uniform more impressive than khaki. May I further take the liberty of mentioning that the Police, most of whom have seen service, are immensely proud of their medals and interested in the medals and decorations worn by others. It would therefore have an excellent effect if HRH would consent to wear a large number of medals and decorations at the Police Parade.’²¹ The Secretary for Native Affairs believed that if the Prince did not appear in full dress uniform at the *Indabas* it would be better for him not to meet the African chiefs at all.

In the event the Prince obliged handsomely. His meeting with Yeta III of Barotseland made ‘a brilliant scene’ with the Prince in ‘the scarlet uniform of the Welsh Guards’.²² At an earlier Southern African indaba the *Daily Telegraph* had reported that ‘the Prince’s arrival was a splendid affair . . . His Royal Highness was ablaze with medals, a sight which deeply impressed the great, silent masses’.²³ If we can believe the 1925/6 Annual report for Solwezi it also impressed the chiefs who attended the second Northern Rhodesian *Indaba* at Broken Hill. ‘The outstanding event of the year from the point of view of those present has been the visit of HRH to Broken Hill. Chiefs Kapijimpanza and Mulimanzovu were the two chiefs chosen to represent this sub-district at the meeting . . . On their return both chiefs were highly excited (at) the pomp and ceremony connected with the visit—in Kapijimpanza’s words “the Bwana (Prince) shone so brightly in his uniform that we could not look upon him”.’²⁴

The idea of the Prince as the Son whose coming bodied forth the concern of his royal Father found expression both in African Addresses of loyalty and in administration uses of the visit. ‘To me this is a red-letter day’, cried old Chief Jonathan at the Basutoland Pitso; ‘I rejoice on this day like old Simon of the Holy Scripture because he had seen the Lord Jesus.’²⁵ The speech which the Northern Rhodesian Secretary for Native Affairs drafted for the Prince to deliver at his meeting with the Lozi paramount began: ‘It is one of our customs for the King to send his sons from time to time to visit the peoples of his Empire and so my Father has sent me to see all his peoples in Africa.’²⁶ And after the Prince’s visit Stanley made great play with this idea in his own addresses to local *Indabas*. ‘His Excellency said he had come far to see this part of the Territory’, runs a report of the Abercorn *Indaba* of 15 October 1925, ‘as

20. High Commissioner to Secretary of State, 19 May 1919, Maseru, S 3/28/2/4.

21. Stanley to Thomas, 19 May 1925, P 3/13/3/2, N.A.L.

22. *Livingstone Mail*, 16 July 1925.

23. *Daily Telegraph*, 30 May 1925.

24. Annual Report, Kasempa, Solwezi sub-district, March 1925–March 1926, ZA 7/1/9/2, N.A.L.

25. Chief Jonathan’s speech, 28 May 1925, Maseru, S 3/28/1/9.

26. *Livingstone Mail*, 16 July 1925.

representative of His Majesty the King, who takes the greatest interest in all his subjects. His Excellency recalled that His Majesty had sent his eldest son . . . to visit South Africa and Rhodesia where he was welcomed by everyone. Some of the Chiefs present had seen His Royal Highness.²⁷ 'That His Majesty is very much interested in all his peoples, so much so that he had sent out his son'; 'The British South Africa Company no longer governed the Territory which was now ruled directly by the Crown and that His Excellency was the representative of His Majesty the King, who was anxious for the welfare and prosperity of the people. His Majesty taking great interest in all the people had therefore sent His Royal Highness, the Prince of Wales, to visit them:' so the refrain ran from *Indaba* to *Indaba* throughout the length and breadth of Northern Rhodesia.²⁸

The Northern Rhodesian administration certainly made use of the Prince to deliver lectures to his African audiences. They made it very clear to the Africans that meetings with the Prince were not to be like a Governor's *Indaba* at which it was possible for them to raise grievances. 'It should be very carefully explained by the Native Commissioners to the Chiefs and their followers that they go to do honour to the Prince . . . and to hear what His Royal Highness may have to say to them, and that they will be expected to give HRH the Royal Salute of their tribe, but that this will not be an occasion for discussion of district affairs'.²⁹ As for what the Prince might say, the Northern Rhodesian administration took few chances. The Secretary for Native Affairs, Tagart, drafted addresses for the Prince to deliver at his meeting with the Lozi Paramount and at his meeting with the rest of the Chiefs at Broken Hill. Sending these drafts on to the Prince's aide, Stanley remarked that 'the notes for the speeches to the natives . . . are set out in greater detail than the notes for the speeches to Europeans as it was thought probable that HRH would prefer to read what he wished to say to natives on ceremonial occasions'.³⁰ The speeches were delivered as written, in their latter-day Rider Haggard style and communicating the very ethos of the Northern Rhodesian administration.

Thus the Prince lectured the Lozi on the virtues of giving up forced labour and of being grateful to the Europeans:

'It seems strange to you no doubt that Europeans should constantly be troubling themselves about your education and the education of your children and offering you the wisdom which they themselves have acquired. In the past you would have said that there was some hidden reason in all this—perhaps the white men thought that thus you would serve them better. Today I think you know that the reason is much simpler than this. The white man looks upon you as a human being like himself and he offers you his knowledge and his experience of life . . . His Excellency, the Governor, has told me how you, Yeta, and your

27. Minutes of Indaba at Abercorn, 15 October 1925, RC/301, N.A.L.

28. Minutes of an Indaba at Kasama, 22 October 1925; Indaba at Serenje, 29 October 1929, RC/301, N.A.L.

29. Secretary, Native Affairs, to all Resident Magistrates, 20 April 1925, RC/453, N.A.L.

30. Stanley to Thomas, 3 July 1925, P 3/13/3/3, N.A.L.

Councillors, recently agreed to give up one of your old customs, that of making your people work for their Chiefs without payment. I am glad to hear it. You have adopted one of the great principles of civilisation, that man is free to give his labour where he will and that the labourer is worthy of his hire’.

The logic of the migrant labour system had seldom been more elegantly set out. ‘We have learnt’, said the Prince, ‘that freedom of the individual makes for the strength of the Tribe . . . Today the young man of spirit goes forth to work, to seek knowledge and to earn money to make his life and lives of those dependent upon him more comfortable. We have a saying—“the dignity of labour”—it means that a man should not be ashamed of working with his hands but rather proud of it.’³¹

The message to the other Chiefs at Broken Hill was simpler:

‘Chiefs, I give you all greeting and I thank you for coming here to welcome me. I know that many of you have travelled far from your homes, but none I think so far as I, for I have been over three months upon my journey, and I have met the Chiefs of very many tribes upon the way, but nowhere have I seen so many different peoples gathered together at one time, and never before, I believe, have you all sat down together in one place.’

The Prince reminded them of the old days of tribal war and how they could now rejoice in peace and unity. It was not of course a nationalist message, but an Imperial one:

‘It will remind you and others, that though you speak different languages and have different customs, there is one thing you all have in common, you are the people of one great Chief, all members of one Empire, and so there is peace between you.’³²

Finally, the Prince’s visit was used to boost Stanley’s policies in relation to the white community. Afrikaner school-children were carried by ox-wagon and train to Livingstone to see the Prince and were taught ‘God Save the King’ in their farm schools before they went.³³ The Prince showed especial favour and interest towards the Boy Scouts.

All this was choreographed by the administration and merely danced by the Prince. But Edward added his own characteristic and informal grace notes, living up to his reputation as ‘the most popular representative of British Royalty known to history’.³⁴ After his meeting with the Lozi Paramount, and during the aquatic display by the Lozi canoes, the prince ‘had a dugout brought up, got into it, and went for a short voyage, being heartily cheered by the assembled spectators. The craft looked frail and unstable and His Royal Highness held on to the sides very firmly.’³⁵ At the ball in Livingstone the Prince invented a new Central African sport:

31. *Livingstone Mail*, 16 July 1925.

32. ‘Address by His Royal Highness to Chiefs at Broken Hill’, RC/465, N.A.L.

33. For the Afrikaner schools, see KDC 2/26/1, N.A.L.

34. *Livingstone Mail*, 9 July 1925.

35. *Livingstone Mail*, 16 July 1925.

'After the supper dance', as the *Livingstone Mail* delicately put it, 'a squad of about fifty munts came along to re-polish the floor; the modus operandi was for one boy to sit on a mealie sack and be hauled about by another. His Royal Highness at once perceived possibilities in this; he marshalled about a score of competing couples and gave the signal. Off they all rushed to the other end of the ballroom, spilling a few en route, but quite a good field got to the other end where the "hauler" had to touch the wall . . . perhaps half a dozen couples emerged and sailed down the dance floor at a great pace, with one of them well ahead; almost on the post the jockey fell, and the "field" went over them. The Prince took the winner.'³⁶

On Sunday 'after church, His Royal Highness produced his ukelele and with Miss Cloete, sang or rather hummed, a number of popular ditties'.³⁷

This royal condescension was irresistible. The habitually critical editor of the *Livingstone Mail* sang a paen to the Prince:

'The object of the statesmen who encourage the Prince to visit . . . is to knit their people in a common loyalty to an idea, and fortunate it is for all concerned that at this juncture there is a Prince who is not only willing to undertake these missions but conspicuously able to carry them out successfully. It is manifestly a most difficult matter to find a common tie between such a diversity of races, religious interests and ideas as comprise the British Empire. The Crown is the only symbol common to all and the House of Windsor the only family that would for a moment be tolerated in this most honourable station . . . The King is the bond of Union, the President of the Commonwealth of Nations, and for reasons widely appreciated it is the interest of all the Nations to maintain the supremacy of the Royal Family'.³⁸

Moreover, 'Northern Rhodesia will have received advertisement . . . The World will have learned to distinguish between the two Rhodesias . . . People and capital will be attracted to the country'. No wonder that 'the Crown has no firmer adherents than the people of Northern Rhodesia anywhere on earth'.

But what of the African response? Elsewhere the Prince's visit had run into articulate African opposition. In South Africa the African National Congress called for 'a passive resistance movement to the Royal visit' so as to call attention to 'the culmulative effect of the grievances under which we labour'. 'While as private individuals', wrote Professor Thaele, 'we would welcome His Royal Highness in our midst, as an organisation representing the African races, we regret that we cannot render public that genuine homage and cordial greeting which otherwise we, as loyalists, would be only too willing to extend'.³⁹ The Industrial and Commercial Workers Union joined in the boycott, though much less tactfully. 'The Prince of Wales spent forty-eight hours in Johannesburg', wrote the *Workers' Herald* contemptuously. 'During that time he spent fifteen

36. *Ibid.*

37. *Ibid.*

38. *Livingstone Mail*, 23 July 1925.

39. *Mochochonono*, 6 May 1925.

minutes with the builders of the Rand—the Natives. He will be able to tell his father, the King, all about us now!’ ‘Let the British Labour Movement give up worshipping at the shrine of Monarchy’, cried Kadalie, founder of the ICU, in the most direct of challenges to the royal myth, pointing out that the glamour of kingship thinly covered the realities of Imperialism, ‘national trusts, monopolies and corporations’.⁴⁰

Even within Southern Africa the boycott appeal had been very largely unsuccessful. ‘Whatever the grievances the Natives have, it is against the Union Government, not the British Government, much less against the Throne’, scoffed *Mochochonono*. ‘Besides everybody, a subject or no subject of the King, is anxious to see the Prince of Wales and the Natives more than any other people are anxious to see their future King. Whether the African National Congress passed a resolution of non-co-operation or not, what does that matter to them? It is a resolution against their wish and will not be respected . . . The Congress may just as well pass a resolution that all South African river waters be stopped from flowing into the sea.’⁴¹ In Northern Rhodesia the rivers of African response flowed into excited gatherings to see the Prince. No-one called for boycott: instead all African interests competed for access to their ‘future King’, in person or by petition. They did so in such a way that the administration had good reason to suppose that the Prince’s visit had had just such effects as they had hoped.

The Annual Reports recorded for district after district that ‘the outstanding event of the year was the visit of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales to Broken Hill. The chiefs . . . went to tender their homage to the heir to the throne and were much impressed with all they saw and heard’.⁴²

But it was left to the spokesmen of ‘progressive’ African opinion in Northern Rhodesia to match the extravagance of the colonial administrations themselves. Thus the High Commissioner, addressing the great *Pitso* held to greet the Prince in Basutoland, solemnly assured them that ‘It is the greatest honour that has yet been given to your country to welcome your future King. In the days to come your children will tell their children of the honour which was bestowed upon their fathers, and will be led thereby to continue to show that reverence and respect which you, as a nation, have always had for the Throne’.⁴³ In Northern Rhodesia it was the Ndola Native Employees whose Address most nearly caught this exalted tone:

‘We especially welcome Your Royal Highness to Northern Rhodesia, a terri-

40. Sylvia Neame, ‘The ICU and British Imperialism’, *The Societies of Southern Africa in the 19th and 20th Centuries*, ICS, London, volume one, 1970, pp. 142–3.

41. *Mochochonono*, 6 May 1925.

42. Annual report, Kasempa, 1925–1926, ZA 7/1/9/2; for chiefly gifts to the King see the file devoted to that topic, Sec. 3/222. The usual rule was that the king would only accept gifts from the Paramount Chief of Barotseland. In 1940, however, a ceremonial axe and hoe were accepted from Chitimukulu, after the symbolism had been explained, as ‘the equivalent of a royal telegram rather than gifts in the usual sense’.

43. Address by High Commissioner, 28 May 1925, Maseru, S 3/28/1/9.

tory that has never received royal footprints before. It is more than a blessing to us to receive amongst ourselves the Heir to the Throne, whose image has been spoken of and never seen, but whose flag waves in the territory for his token. We hope native voices of various tribes will not bring ill-feeling to Your Royal Highness, but that each and every Native speaker and writer will receive the benefit of privileges that Your Royal Highness will on each one sprinkle accordingly. Your Royal Highness' footprints must not be blotted out in Livingstone or Broken Hill. They must remain as a token to Native British Subjects and others.⁴⁴

All in all it certainly seemed that Northern Rhodesia was becoming very satisfactorily Imperial.

Manipulation of the Prince's Visit by Black and White

The very acceptance of the idiom of royalty, however, meant that things were not so straightforward as they seemed. Beneath the appearance of passive listeners to royal exhortations lay the reality of men contesting for access to the Imperial rituals in the interests of profit or power. At their simplest such men wanted to make money out of the royal visit. The administration was approached by several men wanting to be given an official monopoly of photography on the Prince's visit; an optimistic entrepreneur suggested that a presentation be made 'to each native present when the Prince of Wales visits your territory' of a photograph of the Prince on HMS *Repulse*, to which he happened to have copyright; an industrial missionary sent the price list of goods 'made in our Workshops by "boys" only one generation removed from heathenism... in case His Royal Highness should notice any particular article'.⁴⁵

Such direct lobbying was easy to rebuff politely. The administration was much more open to other forms of pressure. The administration presented the Prince with texts of his speeches fully drafted—but what went into those texts was only partly dictated by the school-masterly messages the administration wished to convey to Africans. Particular interests could obtain favourable references to themselves.

So far as the Prince's speeches to Africans were concerned, the most successful lobbyists were the missionaries. The Paris Evangelical Mission reminded the administration of its services in bringing Barotseland under British protection and towards 'the uplifting of this native population towards the ideals of justice, love and peace'.⁴⁶ Remarking that in some senses Britain owed the whole country to the missionaries, the administration had the Prince say to the Lozi: 'If you are wise you will always look upon the officers of the Government and the Missionaries who labour so devotedly among you as your

44. Ndola Native Employees' Address, 4 July 1925, RC/465, N.A.L.

45. S. Gillingham to Secretary, Native Affairs, 4 May 1925; Bernard Turner to Secretary/Native Affairs, 16 June 1925, RC/453, N.A.L.

46. Address from the Paris Evangelical Mission, 9 June 1925, RC/453, N.A.L.

best friends'.⁴⁷ Missionaries elsewhere reminded the administration of *their* services in educating and civilizing. They were given their reward in a long passage in the Prince's speech to the assembled chiefs at Broken Hill:

'For those who desire to learn, the knowlege of the white man is waiting. They have but to go and seek it. The Missionaries will receive them and teach them. These men give their lives to this work of teaching and to nothing else. Many there are among you who have taken advantage of this and are the happier for it. It is my fervent hope that still greater opportunities will be given to your children to acquire knowledge and not only that knowledge which enables men to read and write. There are many other kinds of knowledge more valuable than this, which these good men who teach you of God will be willing and ready to offer you. So learn from them, if you are wise. Learn to look after your children better, to keep your village clean and so avoid diseases, to grow better crops and to improve livestock. . . . Many human beings in the past have thought that any new wisdom came from some power of evil, but as men grow wiser they learn that the new things that are good come from the power of good—from God. Bethink you, then, whether the men who teach you about God and teach you other wisdom as well would be more likely to be giving you the knowledge of evil of of good.'⁴⁸

Individual missionaries could gain a similar reward. Thus Bernard Turner of the London Missionary Society's Industrial School at Mbereshi wrote to the Secretary for Native Affairs asking that the Prince accept the gift of 'a walking stick in native wood with ivory handle and band of buffalo horn . . . made entirely in our Workshops by "boys" only one generation removed from heathenism', and that the Prince's attention be specially drawn to the Mbereshi display at the Kafue Agricultural Show.⁴⁹ This was done and a passage drafted into the Prince's speech to the Broken Hill chiefs: 'I saw yesterday at Kafue', the Prince was made to say in a speech written weeks before, 'some examples of what natives can do in producing crops and making articles from wood and ivory, and I was astonished at the excellence of the work done. . . . You are going forward fast along the path of civilisation upon which the whitemen have set your feet, and so far safely, but remember one thing, you require the guidance of those who have trod the path before, if you are to continue safely on your journey'.⁵⁰

Father Stanislaus Siemienski, a Polish Jesuit, made his own personal request 'to be introduced to HRH'. He asked as a representative of the Catholic church, as a personal friend of the Pope, as a Pole, and because 'for my work among Natives it would be very important the Chiefs present the 15th of July can see me near to the Prince, as many of them are from villages I have my schools'.⁵¹ The administration arranged for him to be presented to the Prince in front of the whole *Indaba*.

47. *Livingstone Mail*, 16 July 1925.

48. Address to Chiefs at Broken Hill, RC/465, N.A.L.

49. Bernard Turner to Secretary/Native Affairs, 16 June 1925, RC/453, N.A.L.

50. Address to Chiefs at Broken Hill, RC/465, N.A.L.

51. Father Stanislaus Siemienski to Venning, 25 May 1925, P 3/13/3/2, N.A.L.

Few Africans could manipulate the Prince's visit so directly. Nevertheless, the administration had put so much emphasis upon the importance of the visit that many Africans realized that a good deal of prestige was to be gained by association with it. Yeta III of Barotseland was quick to realize that he possessed a useful advantage in being able to stage the only 'picturesque' occasion for the royal visitor. In April 1925 Stanley wrote personally to him to say that 'His Royal Highness would, I feel sure, like to see something of the Barotse River craft and methods of paddling and I hope that you will be able to arrange for a suitable display'.⁵² The Governor desired 'that as good a display as possible on the river should be given by the Barotse'.⁵³ Yeta was asked to provide 'a dozen of the best Royal Barotse Mats for the reception Hall for the Prince of Wales at the Kafue Show'.⁵⁴ Yeta responded, sending 'some of his own best household equipment', and setting in train the very complicated and laborious arrangements needed to convey the Lozi flotilla all the way from the flood plain to a point on the river near Livingstone. The Lozi put on a good show. Yeta arrived 'in a canoe about the size of a barge, and standing in it were perhaps forty paddlers, uniformly attired in feathered head-dresses and red cloth. They rhythmically paddled up to the scene, the drums beating. . . . There was much manoeuvring with river craft and something that might have been a race took place'.⁵⁵ But Yeta was careful to stress in his speech that 'it would have been a great pleasure to us to receive and welcome Your Royal Highness at our home with proper ceremonious welcome according to our native customs due to Your Royal Highness, were it not for the underdeveloped state of this country owing to lack of proper and quick means of transport. Your Royal Highness would then have seen for Yourself the real Barotse Native Life'.⁵⁶ Yeta thus managed to stress how much more picturesque the Barotse were capable of being while returning to his old grievance about the failure of the white administrations to develop communications.

Yeta gained several things from the meeting. In the first place, the fact that the Prince came to meet him as Lozi Paramount by himself, and then went on to Broken Hill to meet chiefs brought from all the rest of Northern Rhodesia nicely dramatized the very special status of the Lozi. Secondly, he was able in his Address to reiterate the Lozi desire for perpetual royal 'protection'. And as a side benefit he was able to point up an embarrassing piece of administrative hypocrisy. A few months before the meeting Stanley had prevailed upon Yeta to give up his right to tribute labour: a passage in the Prince's speech patronizingly congratulated him on this, and welcomed him into the new dawn in which the labourer was worthy of his hire. At the same time the Governor asked for an impressive turn out of Lozi paddlers. As Yeta's Secretaries blandly pointed

52. Stanley to Yeta III, 9 April 1925, RC/467, N.A.L.

53. Secretary, Native Affairs to Resident Magistrate, Mongu, 9 April 1925, RC/467, N.A.L.

54. Secretary, Native Affairs to R. M., Mongu, 24 April 1925, RC/453, N.A.L.

55. *Livingstone Mail*, 16 July 1925.

56. Address of Yeta III, RC/453, N.A.L.

out, there was some inconsistency here.

‘The Paramount Chief is most desirous [of meeting the Prince on the river] but there are great difficulties in connection with the new conditions as to labour. It is necessary to go with a large following of Indunas and people, otherwise everyone would think the Paramount Chief showed a lack of respect to the Prince. There ought also to be the proper persons for the due ceremonies and dances. If the Paramount Chief has to pay all the people out of the £2,500 [compensation for giving up tribute labour] what will there be for [public] works? . . . Under our old customs, the Paramount Chief would require everyone to accompany him without pay on such a state occasion. The Paramount Chief would provide food for his own paddlers, but his Indunas and their people would have to provide food for themselves.’⁵⁷

The administration had to concede that the ‘difficulty is a real and serious one’; to make an exception for State Occasions and demand tribute labour ‘might cause misunderstanding coming so close upon the Proclamation’.⁵⁸ In the end the administration was obliged to provide £200 for the costs of Yeta’s journey. It took some getting used to to realize that the picturesque paddler was now worthy of his hire. And with alarm the administration realized that the same problem might arise with the chiefs who were expected to travel from all over Northern Rhodesia to the Broken Hill Indaba; that these chiefs, too, ‘will be unable to get their people to accompany them and perform the ordinary services for them when travelling without payment’; and that ‘a reasonable number of food carriers’ would have to be employed ‘at Government expense’.⁵⁹

These other Northern Rhodesian chiefs were in a very different position from the Lozi Paramount. Imperial rule in Northern Rhodesia was eventually to produce the elaborations of Indirect Rule; a complex classification of chiefly grades; and a passionate support of supposed tradition. None of these things characterized Stanley’s Governorship. In her recent thesis on Northern Rhodesian Indirect Rule, Kasum Datta remarks that ‘Governor Herbert Stanley, with his long South African background, was evidently reluctant to grant Africans any semblance of rights’.⁶⁰ As we have seen, Stanley regarded the chiefs as an unimpressive lot:

‘Mpeseni and Chitimukulu are probably the two most important of these Chiefs, as their tribes, the Angoni and the Awemba, were the dominant military tribes in North-Eastern Rhodesia prior to the European occupation. Kazembe of the Balunda is also a fairly well known Chief, but there really is not very much

57. Minutes of an interview between Resident Magistrate, Mongu and the Paramount Chief’s Secretaries, 14 April 1925, RC/453, N.A.L.

58. Resident Magistrate, Mongu to Secretary, Native Affairs, 16 April 1925, RC/453, N.A.L.

59. Secretary, Native Affairs to Magistrate, Fort Jameson, 30 April 1925, RC/453. Meanwhile the administration was using its own form of tribute labour. Road repairs were needed to prepare for the Prince’s visit to Kafue. 25 tax defaulters were sentenced on one day by Melland in Mazabuka, and the next day sent to work on the Kafue roads for a month. KDC 2/26/1, N.A.L.

60. Kasum Datta, ‘The Policy of Indirect Rule in Northern Rhodesia, 1924–53’, London, 1976, p. 47.

to choose between any of them in the matter of dignity or importance. The BaIla . . . will probably be the most picturesque in appearance. The Angoni, if they wear their Zulu head-dress, may also be fairly picturesque, but generally speaking none of these Chiefs are likely to look very impressive.⁶¹

Still, there were others in the Northern Rhodesian administration who were already concerned to argue for increased status for the Chiefs, and arrangements for the Broken Hill Indaba involved a rough and ready classification of Chiefs into categories. In April 1925 the Secretary for Native Affairs wrote to all Magistrates, except the Magistrate in Mongu, asking that they 'convey to a selected number of the more important Chiefs of your district the invitation of His Excellency, the Governor, to meet His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales at Broken Hill . . . It is to be understood that only chiefs of high standing are to be asked and that the number of followers who accompany them should be strictly limited'.⁶² This instruction opened up two avenues for acquisition of status—first to be invited at all; second to obtain more followers than other Chiefs.

The response was very varied from district to district. In Petauke 'there are really none of sufficient importance to send'.⁶³ In Kasama, however, there was very effective competition among Chiefs, and 'it was impossible to keep within the number you gave without seriously curtailing the number of Awemba Chiefs or leaving out the Chiefs of the other tribes. The latter course did not seem possible, as each of the three tribes in addition to the Awemba has their Paramount Chief in this district. To curtail the number of the Awemba was also impossible and even now many have been left out, including the chieftancies Chandamukulu and Mukukamfumu'. Moreover, 'the Awemba chiefs are always carried when they travel and this necessitates a good number of followers. The younger chiefs have, of course, been told that they must walk'.⁶⁴

The eventual composition of the Chiefs' Indaba at Broken Hill, then, was a compromise between administrative choices and Chiefly pressure. Some men gained favour by promising to provide a touch of colour—thus the District Commissioner, Mumbwa, was asked to include as many Ila chiefs as possible 'possessing *Isusu*, (though) this form of head-dress has very much gone out of fashion and the adornment is not only expensive but it cannot be built up in a hurry. I have no doubt', wrote the DC optimistically, 'that we shall be able to find a certain number'.⁶⁵ In other cases, the need for a district to send *somebody* enabled a man to gain advantage. Thus in Chilanga the Lenje Chiefship of Mungule was vacant in June 1925. The caretaker was one

61. Stanley to Thomas, 7 July 1925, P 3/13/3/3, N.A.L.

62. Secretary, Native Affairs to Magistrates, 20 April 1925, RC/453, N.A.L.

63. District Commissioner, Fort Jameson to Secretary, Native Affairs, 29 May 1925, RC/453, N.A.L.

64. District Commissioner, Kasama to Sec/N.A., 21 May 1925, RC/453, N.A.L.

65. District Commissioner, Mumbwa to Sec/N.A., 25 May 1925, RC/453, N.A.L.

Shabwalala, who was most anxious to attend the Broken Hill meeting and thus be 'established in the Chieftancy'. The Native Commissioner's candidate was one Mulanda. On 10 July—only five days before the Broken Hill *Indaba* was due to take place—the Native Commissioner cabled urgently: 'Mulanda now here and agrees to accept Mungule Chieftanship. Although not properly appointed yet is rightful successor. Do you agree to his going to the Meeting? This will tend definitely to establish him in the Chieftanship'. Mulanda went.⁶⁶ And once a Chief had gone to the *Indaba* there were regular reminders of this fact at every Governor's *Indaba* as Stanley emphasized the fact that the King had sent his Son to see the people and that 'some of the Chiefs present had seen His Royal Highness on the occasion of his visit to Broken Hill'.⁶⁷

The royal visit was an occasion for Chiefly politics. That might have been expected. But it was also an occasion for the same sort of political activity on the part of educated and 'progressive' Africans. Nyasaland clerks and labour migrants obtained permission to make a gift to the Prince at Broken Hill 'immediately after the natives of the Territory have paid their respects'.⁶⁸ The Ndola Native Employees Address to the Prince was 'compiled unaided and on his own initiative' by the Boma clerk, Ernest Alexander Muwamba, graduate of Livingstonia Mission, cousin of Clements Kadalie, and later to become the first Chairman of the Ndola Welfare Association. Muwamba was in correspondence with Kadalie, who was scornfully boycotting the Prince in South Africa. In Northern Rhodesia strategies were rather different. Ernest's brother, Isaac Muwamba, clerk at the Lusaka Boma, acted as Interpreter for the Prince at Broken Hill. No doubt he interpreted with particular pleasure the passage in the Prince's speech which praised the help given to 'the work of Government' by 'clerks and messengers in the offices'.⁶⁹

These examples illustrate the multiple significance of the Imperial Monarchy at this time. It was monarchical and hence accessible to the imagination of chiefs and paramounts; it was Christian and hence attractive to missionaries and their converts; it was the patron of 'progress' and hence appealed to by the clerks and teachers. The alliance between chiefs and Christian 'progressives' which became characteristic of the Indirect Rule period in Northern Rhodesia was aptly symbolized by loyalty to the Imperial Monarchy. As for the administration, their capacity to portray the passive constitutional monarch of Britain as an active, decision-taking ruler provided them with a romantic cloak for some very mundane and sordid measures. Finally, the way in which the idea of the Imperial Monarch could be exploited by the ruled as well as by the rulers—even though much less effectively—defined it as a real ideology of governance, partly limiting even while greatly benefiting the colonial ruling class.

66. Native Commissioner, Chilanga to Assistant Magistrate, Lusaka, 27 June 1925; N. C., Chilanga to District Commissioner, Broken Hill, 10 July 1925; KDC 2/26/1, N.A.L.

67. Abercorn *Indaba*, 15 October 1925, RC/301, N.A.L.

68. District Commissioner, Broken Hill to Sec/N.A., 24 June 1925, RC/453, N.A.L.

69. For Muwamba see D. J. Cook, 'The Influence of Livingstonia Mission upon the Formation of Welfare Associations in Zambia, 1912–1931', in T. O. Ranger and John Weller, eds., *Themes in the Christian History of Central Africa*, London, 1975, pp. 118–9.

Ambiguities within the Imperial Ideology: the Coronation of 1937

The visit of the Prince of Wales embodied the statement of the royal theme within the Imperial ideology at its most confident and successful. By the time of the Coronation of 1937 a whole series of ambiguities were apparent. One of these arose from the nature of the Coronation itself. When the Northern Rhodesian Government began to prepare for local celebrations it was assumed that Edward, the Prince to whom Northern Rhodesians took an almost proprietorial attitude, would become King. The Coronation took place on the declared day, but by then Edward had abdicated and another king was crowned in his place. The change caused the smoothly running sequence of royal ritual in Northern Rhodesia to falter—in 1937 there were two official King's Birthdays gazetted as public holidays, one left over from Edward VIII and the other picked up with George VI, causing the *Livingstone Mail* to wonder whether 'even a King could have two birthdays in one year'.⁷⁰ Fortunately the administration had turned down a proposal that would have caused them more permanent embarrassment. The irrepressible 'Chirupula' Stephenson, now proud proprietor of Chiwefwe Orchards, had suggested in November 1936 that chiefs and headmen be instructed to plant mango trees in prescribed patterns so that every village would possess its memorial of the Coronation in the shape of a mango grove spelling out 'King Edward VII 1937'.⁷¹ Otherwise there is little evidence of the effect on people's thinking when the King Emperor was unceremoniously deposed and replaced by his brother.

Over and above this there was deeper-rooted crisis in the manipulation of Imperial symbolism in Northern Rhodesia, which is best seen in the history of the Boy Scouts. By the 1930s the system of Indirect Rule was in fully fledged operation. But by the 1930s also the copper mines had become crucial to Northern Rhodesia's economy. More and more Africans were living in towns and posing the question of where an African urban culture was going to fit into the Imperial pattern. Many missionaries and some administrators thought that an ideal answer might be found through bringing African urban youngsters into the Scout movement.

This idea caused all sorts of passionate debate. Attempts were made to adapt Scouting to Africans in the spirit of Indirect Rule. A fascinating document in the Governor's file on the Scout Movement proposed a whole boarding school for Africans, run on Scout lines, and yet 'in close contact with native life'. The passage from one Scout grade to another would be replaced by 'initiation rites at a certain age . . . to approximate as closely as possible to the old initiation rites of the Bantu tribes'. 'In the evening each troop will gather round their troop fires at which Native Dances will be danced, Native Songs and Choruses sung, and Native Stories told.' The boys were to reside on the basis of one patrol per hut—'modelled on African Village Huts, but slightly improved'—and four such

70. See file Sec. 3/221, vol. 1, 'King's Birthday', N.A.L.

71. J. E. Stephenson to Chief Secretary, 7 November 1936, Sec. 1/1792, N.A.L.

patrols would constitute a troop, the basic unit of social life and school discipline. Afternoon work at the school 'will consist of practical training along the lines of Scout Badge work. This will be the main part of the training and normal school-work will be subsidiary to it. . . . Badges will be along the lines suitable for Village life—Agriculture, Basket Work, Hygiene, Care of Cattle . . . an attempt will be made to revive the old African keenness on the trail and knowledge of wild life'.⁷² But this extraordinary returning to Africa of the gifts it had given to Baden-Powell was not going to provide a model for the mainly urban African Scouts. Had it done so, European Scouts would have been much less worried. So far as they were concerned the problems with African Scouts was that they were too much like themselves.

It is true that Africans were organised within the structure of the distinct Pathfinder Scout movement. As early as November 1926 the Secretary to the Scout Association in the Transvaal had written to Stanley to advise him on how to keep the two movements separate: 'In the Transvaal the Pathfinder Movement is entirely and absolutely different from the Boy Scout Movement in every way. They wear separate and distinctive uniforms, and their badges are different . . . The Pathfinder Movement consists of some 2000 boys, but they do *not at any time* parade with Scouts, nor do they do anything which might confuse the two Movements . . . It has been necessary to keep a very close watch on the method of dress and the system employed, so there would be no over-lapping'.⁷³ When the Pathfinder Scouts were constituted in Northern Rhodesia, their structure and regulations were modelled on those of the movement in Southern Rhodesia. The movement was defined as being 'for the purpose of according to boys of Bantu origin the benefits of the principles and practice of the Scout Movement'; 'A Pathfinder Scout is loyal to the King, to the King's representative in Northern Rhodesia, to his Chief, and Tribal Elders, to his officers and to those under him'.⁷⁴

But the careful separation of the movement and the careful spelling out of this special hierarchy of loyalties, did nothing to reassure the European Scouting movement. If blacks could be Scouts, whites did not want to be. 'Scouting fell on bad times between the years 1936 and 1940. . . . There was a decline in Scouting from the year 1936 (and) lack of support and guidance from some of the Local Associations and the Scouts Council'.⁷⁵ In 1937 Baden-Powell himself visited Northern Rhodesia and 'endeavoured to establish a formula under which Pathfinder Scouts could secure full membership of the Scout Movement which he had started some forty years ago'.⁶⁵ No compromise was reached. The African Pathfinders were impeccably loyal—they had to 'know and be able to

72. 'Adaptation of Scout Training to African Conditions', n.d., P 3/5/2, N.A.L.

73. Secretary, Boy Scout Association, Transvaal to Stanley, 27 November 1926, P 3/5/1, N.A.L.

74. For evolution of the Pathfinder Scout Constitution, see P 3/5/3/, vols. 1 and 2, N.A.L.

75. Report of the Colony Commissioner of the Boy Scout Association, November 1940–May 1941, P 3/5/3 vol. 2, N.A.L.

76. Report for year ended September 30 1943, P 3/5/3, vol. 2, N.A.L.

recite one verse each of "God Save the King" . . . and know the composition and history of the Union Jack, how to fly it and what it stands for—but white Scouters were not prepared to share their loyalty. It was a poor omen for the more general diffusion of the Imperial ideology.

And in fact the Coronation of 1937 reveals clearly enough that the administration itself, while appealing to Africans in the name of the monarchy, nevertheless reserved to itself a special, higher range of monarchical feeling. For Africans the simple notion of the King Father was enough. For the administration and other leading Europeans there was access to the inner mysteries of kingship.

Colonial Governors were asked where possible to stay in their territories so as to lend weight to the local celebrations. But Governor Young extended his leave so as to attend the Coronation in Westminster Abbey. There too were representatives of the Northern Rhodesian settlers including Sir Leopold Moore, often an outspoken critic of the colonial administration. On their return to Northern Rhodesia, Moore moved a loyal address in the Assembly. Speaking to this motion, the Acting Chief Secretary, Major Dutton addressed himself to Governor Young: 'Like Your Excellency, the Honourable Mover has just returned from witnessing the Coronation, that tremendous act of devotion by an Empire foregathered at its centre, and I am sure he must have been charged during these moving moments of ceremony with a profound realisation of the significance of kingship, doubtless more profound than we possibly could have had who perforce had to remain behind'.⁷⁷

District Officers felt so deprived of this profound realization that one of them suggested that 'some arrangement be made whereby all members of the Colonial Service may have an opportunity of seeing the film of the Coronation. If the film could be shown once a week for four years at some centre in London every member of the service will have been home on leave and could see it if so desired'.⁷⁸

Such was the importance attached by whites to the ritual of the Coronation. But when the British Broadcasting Company offered to provide for mass distribution 'a pamphlet dealing with the ceremonies which will take place on the day of His Majesty's Coronation, the object of (which) is to assist listeners in the Empire overseas to appreciate the events that will be broadcast on that day', the Northern Rhodesian administration refused to take any. 'The pamphlet would convey nothing to the great majority of natives.'⁷⁹ Arrangements made for African celebrations were purely formal and external. 'At each administrative station, including townships, meetings of all the Chiefs in the District (will be held). They will be addressed by the District Commissioner and will be

77. Northern Rhodesia Hansard, 26 June 1937.

78. District Officer, Kasama to Provincial Commissioner, Kasama, 19 August 1937, Sec. 1/1792, N.A.L.

79. Minute on Secretary of State to Governor, 6 February 1937, enclosing BBC statement of 1 February 1937, Sec. 1/1792, N.A.L.

given copies of the Coronation Souvenir Programme together with any special message which the Governor may send them. No doubt the Chiefs will submit addresses in their turn.’⁸⁰ This they did. ‘Far away as we were in Northern Rhodesia’, said Major Dutton in the Assembly, ‘we too celebrated the dedication of the King’s Majesty’, and he drew attention to the many loyal addresses from ‘Chiefs and natives in humbler stations of life.’⁸¹ But it was all rather like the ‘traditional’ accessions of African kings, stories of which were being collected by Indirect Rule ethnographers. Like the Litunga of Barotseland in the old days, King George had been initiated in a closed ceremony of great power from which the great majority of his loyal subjects had been by definition excluded.

Once again it was Yeta III of Barotseland who tried to break out of this ascribed ‘African’ status. Above all things he wanted to be present for himself at this ceremony which stood at the heart of the mystery of empire. The obstacles were formidable, not least among them the fact that the Secretary of State had decided that no African potentates should be invited to the Coronation—there were too many of them, and none had reached the level of sophistication of the Indian Princes. But Yeta was in favour with the administration; he had given way to their demands for a reorganization of Barotse government; it was decided that he should be rewarded. The Governor backed his application to visit England; the Secretary of State at last agreed; a seat was allocated in the Abbey; the difficult problems of finding the Paramount adequate seats on segregated trains and boats and adequate accommodation in London was tackled. Yeta set off on the great journey to the heart of the Imperial mystery.

The official accounts of his journey make fascinating reading, full as they are of the ambiguities which characterized Northern Rhodesia in the 1930s. There was trouble over the accommodation provided on the train through Southern Rhodesia; G. R. Stevens, the officer detailed to accompany Yeta, asked ‘if it were the intention that Yeta and crowd should travel as natives. I imagined that they were to be the same as second class Europeans. At present as arranged they will be treated as second class natives. Is this right? If they go as common natives it seems incongruous somehow that they will be first-class passengers on the ship and treated as Europeans at home’.⁸²

Once ‘at home’, Stevens’ reports are an amusing mixture of rather condescending comments on Yeta’s awestruck response and of equally awed reactions on his own behalf:

‘Yeta’s life ambition is now accomplished’, he wrote on 27 May 1937, ‘and the last week has been a stirring one both for him and me. On Friday 21st we answered a command by Queen Mary to go to Marlborough House to be received in audience . . . We were ushered in through a large hall, and two doors opened and there was the queen standing in the middle of a huge room, she

80. Acting Chief Secretary to Trade Commission, East African Dependencies, 12 February 1937, Sec. 1/1792, N.A.L.

81. Hansard, 26 June 1937.

82. G. R. Stevens to Hudson, 25 March 1937, Sec. 2/364, vol. 2, N.A.L.

came forward, and addressed all her questions to Yeta through me . . . It was a strange but wonderful experience, and especially as there was nobody in the room but the Queen, Yeta and me Yesterday we received another command to go to be received by the King. We got to Buckingham Palace at 11.20 a.m. and the Secretary of State was there receiving the Emirs, Sultans and Chiefs. We waited a little and when our turn came were shown through the doors into the room where the King was receiving . . . The King shook hands with Yeta; welcomed him to London; asked him about his journey and how he had come, and made a few other kind remarks, to which Yeta replied in monosyllables, being completely nonplussed . . . At length the King accepted Yeta's gifts . . . then the King stepped back and handed Yeta a signed photo in a beautiful silver frame, which Yeta took from him and turned to me and asked me to hold it. To my amazement he then got down on his knees in front of the King . . . and did the *shoelela* [the Lozi royal salute]; it looked rather strange to see his old bald head facing upwards from the carpet, and then he got up and raised his hands, etc as you know, and said the *Yo sho, shangwe, mwaliange*, etc. He did all this twice, and the King seemed very surprised at it . . . On the way home Yeta said that nothing that mattered now remained to be done . . . I personally feel very glad about it all for Yeta's sake. He has behaved so well and is so courteous and I had not the faintest idea that he would *shoelela*, and it was a complete surprise.⁸³

On this return to Northern Rhodesia Yeta commissioned his secretary, Godwin Mbikusita, to produce a blow by blow account of the great journey. After much delay, debate about its literary value, and loss of the manuscript, the book was finally published in 1940.⁸⁴ It stands as a monument of an African exploration to the heart of the Empire. The Northern Rhodesian Government did not think Africans capable of understanding the Coronation ritual: Mbikusita spent more than twenty pages describing for his readers every detail of the rite. He also spelt out the theory of Imperial monarchy in a way that made it plain that he felt it almost equally applicable to the Lozi paramount. The book is, in fact, a superbly royal document.

'It was a fine evening', the story began, 'in summer, after the *Kuta* (Council) was closed and every counsellor was at his home, when a drum signal "to assemble" was suddenly sounded. This was caused by two messengers who brought a letter from the Provincial Commissioner to the Paramount Chief urging the latter to go and see the Commissioner the next morning without fail. People then assembled and paddlers were picked in the usual way. The Paramount Chief left Lealui before sunrise . . . The journey was shortened because the Royal Barge, *Notila*, was manned by the usual 40 paddlers of great renown . . . No-one in the capital knew the cause and purpose of the journey . . . Everybody in Lealui, male and female, counted every minute of

83. G. R. Stevens to Hudson, 27 May 1937, Sec. 2/364, vol. 2, N.A.L.

84. For debate about the publication of the book, see Sec. 2/364, vol. 2, N.A.L.

the Paramount Chief's absence as a complete day.'⁸⁵

The narrative continues in the same high style. 'All the people in Barotseland were very anxious to see the Paramount Chief going to England, as it had been everybody's wish in the country ever since Yeta had been proclaimed.' Inside Barotseland people flocked to say farewell; all along the line of rail Lozi migrants flocked to greet their Paramount and to hand in money for the expenses of his journey. It was a royal progress.⁸⁶ Once in England the Lozi party made a series of properly monarchical observations. Seeing the crowds outside Buckingham Palace they reflected that 'the great love that English people have for their King is the thing that enables them to have and form a good Government, famous throughout the World'. Sobhuza II of Swaziland, whom Yeta had never met, cabled to him 'wishing you and others to hail the King with African royal spirit and etiquette'. But if the book is very conscious of Yeta's own royalty and concerned to draw the moral that loyalty to him was the foundation of Lozi progress, it was also properly awed at the scale and enlightenment of Imperial monarchy.

The Coronation was 'the greatest event we ever saw or that we will ever see in our lives again. Nobody could think that he is really on earth when seeing the Coronation Procession, but that he is either dreaming or is in Paradise'. Mbikusita's long account of the Coronation ritual is interspersed with moralizing reflection. The rite 'shows great cooperation between the Crown and the People, and this shows that although the people are the subjects of their King, he is also their subject . . . England is a country of peace and freedom. Happy is he who lives under the Union Jack. . . . It is quite easy for everyone to see that the British Government has a firm trust in God, and it is on account of their firmness in God that they are powerful . . . In our native custom, the Coronation is only for the Paramount Chief; the *Moyo* [Queen] does not even participate in the ceremonies of the Coronation. She is regarded, although she is given high respect, as one outside these ceremonies. Therefore, it is a great surprise to us to see that the Queen of England shares the Coronation with the King. It is a sign of irrevocable marriage and true partnership in life. European civilisation has taken centuries to appreciate this and we hope that, by the teaching and examples given to us by this civilisation, the generation to come may acquire such realisation'.⁸⁷

Nothing could seem more submissive. And yet *Yeta III's Visit to England* is a complex little book. It is partly an attempt to depict Lozi monarchy itself as in full flower at a time when the changes in Lozi government had created great internal unrest. It is partly an attempt by Mbikusita to articulate the hopes of 'progressive' Lozi. Mbikusita Godwin Lewanika, after all, played a leading role in the rise of the welfare associations, in elite trade unionism, and in the first

85. Godwin Mbikusita, *Yeta III's Visit to England*, Lusaka, 1940, p. 2.

86. This version of Yeta's journey is amply confirmed by Steven's reports.

87. Godwin Mbikusita, *op. cit.*, pp. 52, 53, 56–62, 63.

stages of the Congress movement. Publication of his book was urged by Ernest Alexander Muwamba, fellow Welfare Association leader and a member of the African Literature Committee.⁸⁸ The book ends with a careful recording of addresses made to Yeta III on his return by young 'progressives'. 'We hope that Your Highness has seen many wonderful and good things in that civilised country', declared the Nalolo Native Teachers Association, 'and we hope that Your Highness will do the best to uplift the country by adopting some of the civilised lines existing in England'. Ebeazar Sikatana, Supervisor of the Jeanes School, expressed himself 'very glad for the honour that the British Empire has bestowed upon Barotseland by inviting Your Highness to attend the Coronation and more than all in giving Your Highness one of the best seats in the Abbey, which is a privilege that only a few people among thousands and millions of people have enjoyed . . . We trust it is a sign of the Empire's confidence in Your Highness. We come together as children of the great Empire'. Sikatana also congratulated Mbikusita and Suu, the two Secretaries, 'in the name of the educated class in Barotseland like themselves . . . We trust that any little good they did will open a door for the Barotseland educated class'.⁸⁹ Obviously the book is also an indication of the extent to which the Imperial idiom was accepted and internalized—at least by Lozi royals and 'progressives'. Above all, though, the book was a statement that if Africans were going to operate within the Imperial idiom they wanted the fullest access to it; they wanted to be there in the Abbey; they wanted fully to participate and on their own terms in the elaboration of an Imperial culture. The ambiguities of the administration towards the Coronation celebrations, on the other hand, make it clear that Africans were not readily going to be admitted to Imperial ritual on equal terms, any more than 'progressive' Africans were going to be allowed to compete freely in the economic sphere—or than African Pathfinders were going to be allowed to become fully-fledged Boy Scouts.

Conclusion

In March 1938 the scholar-settler, Henry Rangeley wrote a long assessment of the essential ambiguities in the operation of the Imperial ideology in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland:

'The Colonial Office hankers after native development and self rule on the West African style. You cannot apply this system when you have a white population, mostly recruited from South Africa, living in part of the country and producing, directly or indirectly, most of the revenue. Sufficient account has not yet been taken of the social colour bar. The white people of South Africa have the colour sense inherited from a slave-owning people, coupled with a fear inherited from the people who had, in many cases, to fight for their lives against the black man, the whole stimulated by the Labour Party in protection of white

88. E. A. Muwamba, 10 June 1938, Sec. 2/364, vol. 2, N.A.L.

89. Mbikusita, *op. cit.*, pp. 105, 117–119.

standards of pay. . . . You make a fuss of a native Chief like Litia (Yeta) in England, where you have no colour sense, but very few South African born people would treat him as a social equal or sit down to a meal with him. When Lewanika went home, a far more picturesque figure than his son, he had Royal carriages placed at his disposal, the horses were taken out of his carriage in a Dorset village so that the village people could drag the carriage, he was taught to play simple games at tea parties by people like the Duchess of Abercorn; but when he got back to Africa he was hustled off Kimberly platform by a railway porter and the Committee of the Bulawayo Club refused to receive letters addressed to him at the Club. His remark to Colonel Harding on the platform incident was “Now I know that I am back in Africa”. Now if this is the attitude towards Chiefs who have been received by Royalty and have been the guests of the British Government, you can imagine the low social status that would be allotted to a native civil servant. . . . I am always a little irritated when I hear people talk of native “loyalty”. There really is no such thing as we understand the word. The white man as a race is not liked and his Government is not liked either. . . . The majority of natives in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland do not take any interest in Royalty and the demonstrations and addresses on occasions like the Coronation was merely the ebullience of native clerks and the like, who know that such things are welcomed. The native is loyal in the sense that he is law-abiding and that is all.’⁹⁰

To my mind the progression of Imperial ideology from 1924 to 1938, and still more the growing tensions which manifested themselves on royal occasions after the Second World War, go far to validate Rangeley’s analysis. Many Africans, I am sure, were *not* interested in Royalty—though by the nature of things such Africans have not appeared in this paper. Those who *were* interested, whether through ‘ebullience’ or a sense of political advantage or through genuine conviction, were bound ultimately to reach disillusion. The Imperial ideology, like the colonial economy, was essential hierarchical. There was room for Africans at its lower levels; its upper reaches were reserved for Europeans. Already by 1938 there was prefigured the censorship of African Representative Council addresses to the King in 1947, and the boycott by Congress of the Coronation celebrations of Elizabeth II in 1952. One element at least in the alienation of Northern Rhodesian African ‘traditional’ and ‘progressive’ elites was the reality of their earlier participation in the Imperial ideology and of their subsequent disillusionment with it.

90. Henry Rangeley to ‘Dear Mr Cohen’, March 1938, Historical Manuscripts 20, Lusaka, RA 1/1/1, N.A.L.