

Those interested in the technical development of agriculture and in improving its service to farmers will be grateful to Dr Weinmann, the University and the various sponsors for making these two publications possible and it is to be hoped that the difficult task of continuing the story will be tackled before long.

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**Cold Comfort Confronted** By G. and M. Clutton-Brock. Oxford, Mowbray, 1972, 201pp., £1.25.

**Rhodesian Black behind Bars** By D. Mutasa. Oxford, Mowbray, 1974, x, 150pp., £0.95.

The Rhodesian Board of Censors has determined that neither of these two books will be available in Rhodesia. I am not entirely clear as to the purpose of reviewing 'banned' books in a Rhodesian journal. Is it to let the readers of the journal know that these 'illicit' books exist and give them an indication of their contents? Given the inevitable brevity of a review this cannot be of much help. Or is it to let some of the academic community abroad know that their colleagues in Rhodesia are not totally isolated and that they somehow still manage to get hold of banned books (usually on visits abroad)? Or is it to assess the potential value of such works for a limited circle of 'specialists' inside, and possibly outside, Rhodesia in terms of scholarly research, should they have, or be able to gain access to them? This last is probably the most realistic and useful objective. At the same time, the publication within the country of a review such as this could also be interpreted as a symbolic denial of the legitimacy of the political censorship which is practised in Rhodesia.

Be that as it may, the banning of these books as well as the fate of the authors, who have been closely associated with each other in the Cold Comfort co-operative farm venture, provide some significant pointers to the nature of Rhodesian society. I recall a meeting at the University of Rhodesia soon after my return to the country in 1969. It had been organised by the campus Current Affairs Association to commemorate the centennial of Ghandi's birth. The three speakers were Garfield Todd, Didymus Mutasa and Guy Clutton-Brock. Todd and Clutton-Brock obviously enjoyed the occasion and I remember the approving roar which issued from the predominantly black student audience as Clutton-Brock exclaimed: "This year our black mothers will bear more babies than there are Europeans in Rhodesia!" I also remember my own incredulity at the fact that such speakers could still address a student gathering within Rhodesia in such terms. Of the three speakers, Mutasa was the most subdued and circumspect in his statements, as behoves a black man in the situation. Today none of them can operate freely in Rhodesia. Mutasa was detained late in 1970 and was only released two years later on condition that he left the country for Britain where he was to pursue a university education. Early in 1971 the Cold Comfort Farm Society itself was declared illegal, Clutton-Brock was stripped of his (acquired) Rhodesian citizenship and was deported. Todd was detained and later restricted to his farm after the Pearce Commission had arrived in early 1972 to test the acceptance of the Anglo-Rhodesian settlement proposals.

If one compares *Cold Comfort Confronted* and *Rhodesian Black behind*

*Bars*, it is the Clutton-Brocks' book which now appears mild and relatively innocuous (despite their insistence on referring throughout to the post-1965 regime as 'illegal') against Mutasa's forthright and frequently impassioned account in which the impact of imprisonment and the subsequent experience of living abroad clearly shows. Both are essentially autobiographical accounts: Clutton-Brock's (for Guy is evidently the principal author) provides an outline of his whole career, and Mutasa's deals chiefly with his detention (although he fills the reader in briefly on his background). Yet in the end, it is clearly the intention of both to say something about Rhodesian society rather than simply about themselves. And both accounts are well worth reading for anybody wishing to gain a general acquaintance with the way in which the pernicious system of minority domination and racial discrimination operates.

Both books have limitations even when viewed as partial autobiographies. Coverage is highly selective and tendentious in the sense that the authors are intent on making a number of points regarding settler society, the failings of the church, the virtues of traditional African society and so forth. Yet, in the case of Clutton-Brock, the account reveals a considerable amount about the person. His is a story fluently, even pleasantly, told. It is possible that somebody might attempt a serious historical biography of Clutton-Brock in due course. But although the Rhodesian phase proved to be the major involvement of his variegated and interesting career, I believe such a study would cast more light on a peculiar strand of an idealistic British liberal socialism which emerged during the 1920s and 1930s than, say, on the rise of black nationalism or the prospect for collective enterprises in Rhodesia. One thing that strikes the reader about Clutton-Brock is how little his optimistic and rather ill-defined faith in the evolutionary potentialities of man had changed from the time that he started working in the East End boys' clubs to his forcible departure from Rhodesia. There is more than the ordinary contradictions apparent in the Rugby and Cambridge-educated son of a stockbroker's clerk who declined throughout his life to collect any possessions, but has always had friends in high places in Whitehall and in the respectable British left-wing establishment; who never really shunned publicity, but 'worked' all of these and a range of ecumenical contacts diligently to gather support for his various projects in Central Africa, or to bring more international pressure to bear on the settler regime.

As sources of specific historical data these books could be of some, if limited, value. We learn as much about a small body like the Makoni Students' Association from Mutasa as is likely to be known until such time as C.I.D. files might become available in archives. Clutton-Brock gives a bit of detail regarding the role that he personally, and St Faith's Mission in general, played in the founding of the 1957 African National Congress. But anybody who might eventually want to judge the successes and failures of the collective ventures which he helped to initiate at St Faith's, Nyafuru, Bamangwato, or Cold Comfort, would not find much data in these two books on which to base their assessment. Significant insights are more likely to be drawn from 'anecdotal' evidence which happens to be mentioned in passing. A case in point concerns the pervasive and partly informal surveillance of blacks which emerges from Mutasa's experience. Any essay on citizenship which he had written as punishment at Goromonzi secondary school during the fifties surfaced as a key piece of evidence at Review Tribunal hearings during his detention nearly twenty years later to prove that he nursed a hatred against Whites and was therefore likely to pose a threat to public peace and safety.