

## ESSAY REVIEW

### BEYOND INDEPENDENCE : UNFETTERED COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

IT WAS IRONICAL that the most liberal and democratic policy to be evolved in the history of administration in Rhodesia — namely the policy of Community Development and Local Government — should have been initiated only six months before the shock election results of December 1962, which installed the most conservative and right-wing Government that the country had known. Equally, it was paradoxical that the Rhodesian Front Government should have espoused Community Development as one of the main planks in its election platform, and that this policy, promoting local representative institutions, should have continued to be implemented into the 1970s, despite the determination of that Government to concentrate authority in the hereditary chieftainships. Thus Holleman has described 'the odd sensation of watching two currents moving in opposite directions' — at the higher level of Government and political decision-making a flow back towards the political and authoritarian right, leading to a polarization of White and Black political attitudes, and at the lower level the current of administrative and technical activity with deliberately non-authoritarian efforts towards a better understanding and more effective promotion of African ambitions.<sup>1</sup> But it was more than a dichotomy between the legislature and the administration that was involved. Whilst the responsible section of the administration under the original civil servants continued along the substantive course of liberal policy, another element within the same ministry was being promoted to a position of authority in which the opposite approach might steadily be implemented. Thus there was a schizoid division within the administration itself, in which two opposing lines of action were pursued simultaneously, one promoting democratic institutions and the other the false notion of an all-powerful traditional leadership.

These fundamental distinctions have been ignored, however, in a recent pamphlet on Community Development by Michael Bratton.<sup>2</sup> In the opening pages (p.6) he declares: 'Community development in Rhodesia vests state power in the hands of white administrative officials and traditional chiefs'. This wrong assumption underlies much of the bias and many of the inaccuracies in his work, the correction of which is the purpose of this essay review.

There is some justification, in view of the contradictions that existed, particularly after 1969, for Bratton's observation (p.35) that 'administrative practices diverged widely from stated goals'. It is worthy of note from the

<sup>1</sup> J. F. Holleman, *Chief, Council and Commissioner* (London, Oxford Univ. Press, 1969), 290. Holleman describes how Community Development was essentially the product of 'the administrative mind' and never intended to be the subject of political decision-making. A non-racial policy, it was incorporated into the Rhodesian Front election platform as a result of the misplaced enthusiasm of Jack Howman, later Minister of Internal Affairs, who was the brother of Roger Howman, architect of the African Councils Act of 1957 and main inspiration behind local government and community development policy. Thus elevated to the 'battlefield of national politics' the policy was unjustly stamped as apartheid and prematurely exposed to 'violent attacks of an emotional and politically prejudiced nature', *ibid.*, 276.

<sup>2</sup> M. Bratton, *Beyond Community Development* (Gwelo, Mambo Press in association with the Catholic Institute for International Relations, From Rhodesia to Zimbabwe No. 6, 1978), 62pp., Z\$0.65.

outset, however, that in spite of a cynical and inadequately researched account, the author of *Beyond Community Development* has to admit (p.22) that, at the lower level of community development, 'peasants undoubtedly responded in some parts of the country to new opportunities to obtain desired social facilities by means of community action', whilst at the level of local government, 'despite the uneven impact of community development ... the settler state did succeed in establishing significant numbers of local government institutions where none of national scope had existed before' (p.25).

It is not possible to enter into a meaningful discussion of Community Development and Local Government without some attempt to locate this policy in its historical perspective. This task is attempted in Part III of Bratton's pamphlet; it is evident, however, that several notable facts have been omitted, and that the validity of others is highly debatable.

A significant aspect not mentioned, for example, is the fact that the introduction of Community Development policy in 1962, coincided with a genuine if short-lived trend towards greater liberalism in Rhodesian politics. It was a time when the country seemed close to legal independence from Great Britain, and the Prime Minister, Sir Edgar Whitehead, in an address to the Trusteeship Committee of the United Nations, announced the intention of his Government to end all racial discrimination, and in particular, to repeal the Land Apportionment Act of 1930, which had been the plinthstone of segregation between the races.<sup>3</sup> (It was this declared intention, according to Lord Malvern, which caused the backlash reaction of the White electorate and the victory of the Rhodesian Front.) This was also a period of heightened political tension engendered by the realization of nationalist aspirations to independence in neighbouring territories. Above all it was a time of widespread dislocation and misery among the African population of Southern Rhodesia, brought to a head by the Land Husbandry Act (No. 52 of 1951) in the late 1950s. Although Bratton's pamphlet pays some attention to this statute, it fails to appreciate its significance as a major precipitating factor in altering the direction of policy in favour of greater decentralization and local government.

Based on the rising alarmist reports of the Natural Resources Board and agricultural officials concerning destruction on the land over a decade or more, the Land Husbandry Act of 1951 had been an attempt to re-deploy the peasant population by re-allocating land holdings according to strictly scientific criteria of conservation and husbandry. Its implementation involved the removal and re-settlement of thousands of families, as well as vigorous destocking measures. A consequence of the Act was extensive landlessness, exacerbated by heightened unemployment as the Central African Federation faltered. In a situation of threatened if not actual unrest, the need for a more liberal policy allowing of democratic participation in future administration became an urgent requirement. In this context the African Councils Act (No. 19 of 1957), which provided for the first time a representative system for elective local government in African rural areas, acquired a new significance.

Paradoxically the crisis of the early 1960s also heightened the anxiety of opponents of local government policy, and their determination to entrench the chiefs as sole recognized local authorities in Tribal Trust Lands. The compromise solution adopted was to follow a concept of institution-building put forward in the Howman Report years before, which would retain the

<sup>3</sup> United Nations General Assembly, 17th Session, *Official Records*, 30 October 1962, Fourth Committee, 1366th Meeting.

functions of the chiefs in their purely traditional role, namely in the allocation of land and judicial matters, whilst leaving secular development in the hands of elective local government.<sup>4</sup> Whilst considerable progress was made towards achieving this compromise, it will be seen that it was eventually submerged by Rhodesian Front policy to vest the final local authority in the chieftainship.

The African Councils Act of 1957, based on further extensive research by H. R. G. Howman (later Deputy Secretary for Internal Affairs until 1969 and awarded the M.B.E. for this work), provided for a modified form of local government modelled on the Westminster pattern. The object of the Act stated in the House was to provide education 'in the important responsibilities of citizenship by creating an environment in which democratic values, social responsibility, collective self-help and progressive leadership can emerge'.<sup>5</sup> This Act had special features in that the legislation was not to be imposed on African communities, for 'they must grow up to it and ask for it'.<sup>6</sup> Communities were to have freedom of choice in the purposes for which councils were established and 'freedom to develop at their own pace' (within a wide range of powers available to municipal, town and village authorities under sister legislation in other areas).<sup>7</sup> Out of respect to the remaining influence of traditional leaders in the tribal areas, the chiefs in any council's area was to be accorded nominal position of status (but not authority) as vice-president, whilst a headman was an *ex officio* member. The council's warrant could specifically exclude a chief or headman from the councils if this was indicated by local circumstances.<sup>8</sup>

Therefore the statement made by Bratton (pp.15 - 16) that 'the African Councils Act crowned for the colonial period a general trend in settler policy to reinvest traditional chiefs with lost authority', is not valid. Similarly inaccurate is his comparison of the African Councils Act of 1957 with its predecessor the Native Councils Act (No. 38 of 1937). Bratton claims (p.17) that, 'the composition of the councils and the role of the native commissioner, unchanged from previous years, revealed the consistent underlying pre-occupation of colonial administrators with the problem of political and administrative control', whereas in fact the 1957 Act differed materially from that of 1937, both in regard to the composition of the councils and the role of the Native Commissioner, as well as in other major respects. Under the earlier Act councils consisted of chiefs and headmen and such other indigenous persons as might be appointed by the Governor. Under the later Act councils were primarily elected. Whereas the Native Commissioner had formerly occupied the key position of chairman on a permanent basis, under the later Act councils were encouraged to elect their own chairmen and the Native Commissioner was made President with advisory powers only.

In the second place the Act of 1957 was designed to provide a medium through which democratic leadership might be evolved — the opposite of

<sup>4</sup> R. Howman, *Report on African Local Government for Southern Rhodesia* (Salisbury, Ministry of Native Affairs, mimeo, 1953).

<sup>5</sup> Southern Rhodesia, *Debates ... 1957*, XXXIX, 23 Apr., 1017, quoted in G. C. Passmore, *The National Policy of Community Development in Rhodesia* (Salisbury, Univ. of Rhodesia, 1972), 58.

<sup>6</sup> Southern Rhodesia, *Report of the Secretary for Native Affairs, Chief Native Commissioner and Director of Native Development for the Year 1957* (Sessional Paper[s], C.S.R. 11, 1958), 7, quoted in Passmore, *The National Policy of Community Development*, 59.

<sup>7</sup> Southern Rhodesia, *Debates ... 1957*, XXXIX, 23 Apr., 1017, quoted in Passmore, *The National Policy of Community Development*, 58.

<sup>8</sup> G. C. Passmore, *Local Government Legislation in Southern Rhodesia* (Salisbury, Univ. Coll. of Rhodesia and Nyasaland, 1966), 39.

'political and administrative control' suggested by Bratton (p.17) when he cites out of context Roger Howman who, he claims, had argued quite bluntly that 'if we can foster the corporate life of the African and design wisely the devices whereby leaders emerge, we may influence very greatly the kind of leaders we shall have to face in the future'. The full context in which Howman wrote was as follows:

African leadership is becoming a crucial problem. As we turn slowly away from the paternalism of the past we are faced with a new era in Native Administration, a time offered to us in which to lay the foundations of future African leadership. Sound administrative planning now can determine to a large extent the qualities of Leaders, for leaders are moulded by the groups out of which they emerge and take on the attributes and roles expected of them by their followers ...

How to ensure that methods of selection do produce leaders who are genuinely representative of the people is, therefore, the root of the problem ...

Thus it was intended that the 1957 Act, providing for elective representation in local government, would enable leaders to arise from the democratic process. The ultimate aim as reported by the Paterson Commission, quoting from an official memorandum, was to provide 'a widespread democratic social structure on the ground ... to serve as a foundation and training ground, of the whole political structure of the State, for such a State can only be sustained and nourished by a responsible and informed electorate'.<sup>9</sup> Howman saw the African Councils Act as the first in a triad of statutes which would fulfil his concept of institution-building — the remaining two being the Tribal Trust Land Act (No. 9 of 1967) and the African Law and Courts Act (No. 9 of 1969). Thus in 1961 the Mangwende Commission described the African Councils Act of 1957 as:

a rare and outstanding document ... it interprets change as a human problem and it seeks to meet this problem by the mobilization of human resources and ambitions within the African communities themselves ...

The Act recognizes that the process of transition involves both the traditional and the modern ... It embodies the essential administrative approach that might save rural African society.<sup>11</sup>

Whilst the African Councils Act had only been in application since 1958 and it was early to judge, councils had not been going so well. Apart from its unfortunate timing alongside the Land Husbandry scheme, the Act had suffered other disadvantages. More specifically, the Government had retained in its own hands most of the major local services, so that councils had little to offer that was of value in the peasants' eyes. It was urged that responsibility for primary education, health and other services should be

<sup>9</sup> R. Howman, 'African leadership in transition — an outline', *NADA* (1956), XXXIII, 13 - 14.

<sup>10</sup> Southern Rhodesia, *Second Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Organization and Development of the Southern Rhodesia Public Services* (Sess. Paps, C.S.R. 35, 1962), para. 1.26.

<sup>11</sup> Southern Rhodesia, *Report of the Commission of Inquiry into Discontent in the Mangwende Reserve* (Sess. Paps, 1961), paras 109, 119.

devolved to local government. Also the councils were seen by the rural people as hostile Government agencies rather than as their own representative bodies. There was a need for intermediary organizations which would bring councils closer to the communities they served and provide a two-way means of communication.

Bratton makes no mention of the important commissions and inquiries brought into being in 1961 and 1962, at the height of the crisis following the Land Husbandry scheme, whose recommendations played a major role in determining later policy. The list includes not only the Mangwende Commission which inquired into unrest and other questions in the Reserve of that name, and the Paterson Commission which inquired into the organization of the Public Services, but the Robinson Commission which inquired into the functions of the District Administration and Courts Departments,<sup>12</sup> the Judges Commission which inquired into Education,<sup>13</sup> the Select Committee which inquired into Resettlement on the Land,<sup>14</sup> the Agency for International Development which advised on Community Development,<sup>15</sup> and five Cabinet Working Parties which correlated the findings of all these bodies and made final recommendations to the Government.<sup>16</sup>

The findings of each of these agencies, arriving at its conclusions separately, helped to emphasize the need for greater decentralization and promotion of local government as a top priority of administration. The decision was placed on record on 14 May 1962 that: 'It is the policy of the Government of Southern Rhodesia to accept the philosophy, principles and practices of community development as the basis of district administration, local government and technical development.'<sup>17</sup> It might therefore have been useful if an attempt had been made by Bratton to clarify the relationship between community development and local government in the policy under discussion. The Project Agreement entered into by the Government with the United States Agency for International Development, for technical assistance, referred to community development as being based upon 'democratic programme planning and action and acceptance of responsibility at the community and local government levels'.<sup>18</sup> If, in a nutshell, the processes of community development might be described as organized self-help, local government was statutory organized self-help. James Green, Advisor on Community Development, described community development and local government as being two sides of the same coin.<sup>19</sup> Through community development people might learn the rudiments of democratic planning and management, forming groups which in turn could act as a link between the community and local government, helping to make the latter more effective. Some groups might become, or combine to form, local government bodies. Local government in its turn could materially help community agencies by providing funds and concrete assistance.

<sup>12</sup> Southern Rhodesia, *Report of the Commission Appointed to Inquire and Report on the Administrative and Judicial Functions in the Native Affairs and District Courts Departments* (Sess. Paps, C.S.R. 22, 1961).

<sup>13</sup> Southern Rhodesia, *Report of the Southern Rhodesia Education Commission* (Sess. Paps, C.S.R. 37, 1963).

<sup>14</sup> Southern Rhodesia, *Report of the Select Committee on Resettlement of Natives* (Sess. Paps, S.C. 3, 1960).

<sup>15</sup> See Passmore, *The National Policy of Community Development*, 84 - 103.

<sup>16</sup> See *ibid.*, 116.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 120.

<sup>18</sup> Quoted in *ibid.*, 314.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 97.

In its emphasis on expressed need, responsibility, collective action, self-help and freedom of choice, the African Councils Act embodied many of the principles inherent in community development. However, it is evident that the policy of community development and local government, though abbreviated to 'the policy of Community Development', was in fact a policy in which the greater emphasis was centred on local government. Thus in Rhodesia the Prime Minister's Directive stated that, 'at the district level Government's primary purpose is local self-government. The means or process whereby this purpose is to be promoted is community development.'<sup>20</sup> The policy required implementation on three planes:

At the level of the central Government, ministries were required to reorganize their functions and finances with a view to devolving such local services as possible to local governments.

At the level of local government, councils were to be promoted by District Commissioners to allow the maximum responsible participation of peasants in local affairs.

Finally, at the level of the grass-roots communities village-level workers known as community advisers were to assist the peasants to form community organizations for local action.

It is not true, as Bratton claims (p.21) that 'few powers of importance were devolved even then to African councils ... due in part to the protectiveness of white civil servants over departmental prerogatives'. In the early stages of implementation arguments primarily over the racial application of the policy as well as inter-departmental rivalries (notably between Internal Affairs and Agriculture) were responsible for holding up the all-important Prime Minister's Directive setting out the necessary instructions to ministries. Once this had been issued in July 1965, however, action for devolution went ahead in the fields of primary education, preventive health, veterinary services, road building, water supplies and other services.<sup>21</sup> The Directive which was published as a Government White Paper, instructed every ministry to:

address itself to the tasks of defining its role in relation to community development, of planning the necessary changes in its organization, of ensuring co-ordination of its efforts with those of all other ministries and arranging that its officers are fully instructed in the new approach.<sup>22</sup>

Devolution commenced in 1966 with the vesting of responsibility for preventive health services in African councils. By 1969 there were 66 council-run outpatient clinics, 16 councils running inpatient clinics, 26 council-run Red Cross posts, and 11 councils running ambulance services. In addition, councils participated in vaccination, anti-malarial and anti-bilharzial campaigns and made grants to hospitals, clinics and other medical services.<sup>23</sup> By 1972

<sup>20</sup> Rhodesia, *Statement of Policy and Directive by the Prime Minister: Local Government and Community Development. The Role of Ministries and Co-ordination* (Sess. Paps, C.S.R. 44, 1965), para. 16 (a).

<sup>21</sup> Passmore, *The National Policy of Community Development*, 189 - 241.

<sup>22</sup> *Statement of Policy and Directive by the Prime Minister*, para. 6.

<sup>23</sup> Passmore, *The National Policy of Community Development*, 236.

there were 97 clinics being operated by African councils.<sup>24</sup> The services provided included treatment for minor illnesses and injuries, outpatient treatment for diseases of public health importance such as eye infections and malaria, provision for accommodation on an emergency basis for sick and injured awaiting removal to hospital, maternity care with short-term maternity beds and facilities for normal midwifery, and the provision of mother and child welfare services in the form of ante-natal clinics, well-baby clinics and family planning services.

In the light of these functions, it can be seen that Bratton's statement (p.31) that, 'as for health, only preventive services, notably family planning, were devolved', is inadequate if not mischievous. At several points, in fact, Bratton reveals not only an ignorance of actual policy and developments in Rhodesia concerning local government and community development, but of common practice in these fields elsewhere. For example, his point that only preventive health services were devolved and curative services retained (p.31), ignores the fact that in the field of local government at large this is usual practice: curative services in the form of large-scale, expensive hospital and specialized care is regarded as beyond the capacity of local governments to maintain except where very high concentrations of population exist. A further instance is his reference (p.32) to cost cutbacks 'in the face of international economic sanctions', reducing primary education from eight to seven years. Bratton is obviously unaware of the widespread application of this change, for example in England and in many parts of Africa to the north of Rhodesia, where it has been recognized that, by utilizing more modern methods and improved teacher training, a better syllabus can be provided in a seven-year than in the former eight-year course.

In 1967 the decision to transfer responsibility for primary education to local councils was put into operation. The decision had been announced in the Governor's Speech from the Throne in June 1965.<sup>25</sup> It formed part of a new Education Plan to be implemented over the succeeding ten years, and phase one, allowing schools a clear academic year's notice, was due to commence on 1 January 1967. Therefore it is not only inaccurate but ludicrous for Bratton to state (p.22) that:

Problems of implementation within the state apparatus were addressed in the long-delayed Prime Minister's directive . . . *In an attempt to quell outside doubts*, formal responsibility for African primary education . . . was transferred from the State to African Councils in 1966 [emphasis is mine].

Equally misleading is Bratton's description (p.32) of the process of transfer:

By 1973 fewer than half of the African primary schools slated for transfer were actually under the control of local authorities. 1,655 of 3,147 schools remained under the control of either the state or of religious organizations. The 'interim measure' whereby the Division of African Education assumed management of primary schools until local authorities were financially capable had about

<sup>24</sup> G. C. Passmore, 'Evolution of CD in Rhodesia', *The Rhodesian Community Development Review* (1973), III, iv, 7.

<sup>25</sup> Passmore, *The National Policy of Community Development*, 195.

it, after a decade of community development, an air of permanency.

The Division of Education, in fact, took over the schools in 1971 — hardly a decade before as implied — and the reason for this emergency step was the relinquishing of responsibility for their management by certain missions in protest against Government policy.

The majority of primary schools in African rural areas had been administered by missions under Government subsidy, and their transfer to African councils commenced in 1967 on a voluntary basis. In September 1969, in further keeping with the policy to devolve financial responsibility from central to local government, it was announced in the Legislative Assembly that as from January 1971 the grants for teachers' salaries would be 95 in place of 100 per cent as previously, the difference going towards expanded secondary education. The missions reacted strongly to this announcement, presenting a statement to the Ministry for African Education in November 1969, to the effect that they found it impossible to make up the additional 5 per cent either from church resources or by imposing extra fees on the parents. Further enquiries revealed that the missions wished to relinquish control over some 2,308 primary schools for which they had been responsible, leaving 640 in church hands.<sup>26</sup> Not all of the schools to be abandoned were in areas served by African councils willing and able to take them over. In many areas no council had yet been established. The net result was that some 1,312 primary schools were in danger of being left 'shepherdless'. To meet the situation interim legislation was passed enabling the affected schools to become 'sponsored schools' under the control of the Ministry, assisted by parent-teachers associations who were given guidance from specially mobilized corps of schools supervisors. This was intended as a temporary arrangement to continue up to the end of 1975, when it was hoped there would be sufficient councils to assume final responsibility.<sup>27</sup> By the end of 1973 in addition to the 1,111 primary schools already administered by councils, a further 1,093 still awaited takeover. Missions retained control of 562 primary schools.<sup>28</sup>

It will be seen that Bratton's claim (p.19) that 'the administrative reforms that accompanied the adoption of the policy of community development were of form rather than substance' does not seem to be borne out by the facts. In 1973 there were 159 African councils in existence out of 260 estimated as the total required to blanket the country. They were responsible for an infrastructure which included the maintenance not only of 1,111 primary schools and 97 (in 1972) rural clinics, but 485 dips and 8,052 kilometres of roads. Councils also provided bridges, dams, weirs and piped water supplies; ran business centres, beerhalls, timber and grinding mills; and operated school-furniture and clothing factories, as well as other services. The council centres were acting as the foci of growth in the rural areas.<sup>29</sup> Councils employed thousands of persons and the foundations of a local government service had been laid, with provision for pensions and minimum standards of qualification tied to salary scales and subsidies. Their combined annual revenue expended on local government services amounted to approximately Z\$8.5 million.<sup>30</sup>

<sup>26</sup> Southern Rhodesia, *Annual Report of the Secretary for African Education 1973* (Sess. Paps. Cmd R.R. 8), 42.

<sup>27</sup> The outcome of the Sponsored Schools scheme is reported in *Teachers Forum* (1976), III, ix, 8.

<sup>28</sup> *Annual Report of the Secretary for African Education 1973*, 42.

<sup>29</sup> Passmore, 'Evolution of CD in Rhodesia', 7.

<sup>30</sup> Information from the Ministry of Internal Affairs, 1973.



Roughly 50 per cent of the revenue of the councils, about Z\$4 million, was derived from Government subsidies. They included initial grants given to councils in the first year to help them establish themselves, block grants on a formula basis varying with the amount of rates collected (this formula diminished after a figure of Z\$10,000 had been raised in rates, to allow of increasing autonomy to councils that were reliably established); salary grants; percentage grants for expenditure on agriculture, animal husbandry, forestry, water supplies, roads and bridges; and finally *ad hoc* assistance.<sup>31</sup> Thus Bratton's statement (p.32) that 'the government has endeavoured to absolve the state at the centre of a responsibility for social services at the periphery' and the oblique comment (p.55) that 'administrative decentralization and community development have been used in the past as a means of absolving the state of responsibility for assisting the rural poor' seem to be ill-founded.

The Prime Minister's Directive stated that Community Development:

may be summed up, in so far as central Government's role is concerned, as an active, planned and organized effort to place responsibility for decision-making in local affairs on the freely chosen representatives of responsible people at the community and local government levels, and to assist people to acquire the attitudes, knowledge, skills, and resources required to solve, through communal self-help and organization, as wide a range of local problems as possible in their own order of priority.<sup>32</sup>

Published figures for 1969<sup>33</sup> indicate what progress has been made towards the ideal of decision-making placed in the hands of freely chosen representatives of people in local government areas:

#### *Council Members*

Chiefs ( <i>ex officio</i> Vice-Presidents)	96
Headmen ( <i>ex officio</i> Members)	171
Elected Members	1 099

#### *Council Chairmen*

Chiefs	6
Headmen	3
Elected Members	81
District Commissioners (non-Members)	8

Bratton makes much of instances reported by Dr A. K. H. Weinrich (Sister Mary Aquina) in the Victoria Province where in seven cases of proposed council formation, five evidenced strong local opposition.<sup>34</sup> He reaches the astonishing conclusion (p.24) from these cases that 'the proportion of successful to unsuccessful instances of project initiation found by Weinrich is probably generalizable to the rest of the country for the decade up to 1972'. This conclusion mirrors Weinrich's own tendency to over-generalize from a

<sup>31</sup> Passmore, *The National Policy of Community Development*, 329.

<sup>32</sup> *Statement of Policy and Directive by the Prime Minister*, para. 7.

<sup>33</sup> Passmore, *The National Policy of Community Development*, 234.

<sup>34</sup> Bratton, *Beyond Community Development*, 24; A. K. H. Weinrich, *Chiefs and Councils in Rhodesia* (London, Heinemann, 1971).

study of nine Karanga-speaking communities centred on land shrines or local schools, and situated in three Tribal Trust Lands and two Purchase Areas. These she claims to be 'sample communities', without indicating the method by which the 'sample' had been arrived at or on what grounds it might be taken as representative of the country as a whole. In Rhodesia at the time there were seven main African language divisions, and 248 chiefdoms spread over 167 Tribal Trust Lands and 66 Purchase Areas, evidencing considerable differences in ethnicity, religion and other features. No less than 45 per cent of the people in her 'sample' studied were stated to be Roman Catholics, as contrasted with the Census figure of 10 per cent among Rhodesian Africans generally. Since the communities, according to Weinrich, had been specifically warned by Catholic missionaries against community development, because, it was thought, the Government was using it for political ends, it is hardly surprising that the result of the study revealed a negative response to projected councils. Bratton's conclusions in this context would seem, therefore, to illustrate the way in which biased results from unscientific research in the relatively little-studied Rhodesian situation may tend to become perpetuated, unless corrected, and to be passed on until they cease to be questioned.

It is necessary to correct Bratton's statement (p.23 footnote) that only 14 per cent of community boards were composed purely of elected members, 59 per cent of mixed elected and traditional members, and 20 per cent of traditional members, comprising councils of elders. The actual figures were 14 per cent composed of purely elected members, 67 per cent composed of mixed elected and traditional members — giving a total of 81 per cent containing elected members (in more than eight out of ten of these cases elected members were in the majority)—and only 13 per cent made up of purely traditional members. Thus it is not correct, as Bratton states (p.23), that 'community boards followed the same mixed structure which incorporated a strong tendency to reinforce traditional forms' (i.e. as the appointed councils from 1973 onwards, after the policy had been transmogrified). The interesting thing was that the community boards, although in a traditional society, did precisely the opposite, and revealed the interest of the peasants in forming structures with a democratic representative element.<sup>36</sup>

There was further indication of the response of the rural people to the opportunity afforded by the policy of community development for exercising self-determination in local matters: a University Survey, conducted two years after completion of training by community advisers and their placement in the field, discovered the notable fact that 84 per cent of these workers by then had functioning community action groups in their areas, whereas experience elsewhere has shown that it often takes up to two years for a community worker to become accepted in a conservative community. It is all the more ironical to note that already the number of community advisers had been reduced, from an original 252 selected to 226 (losses due to normal wastage from retirement, transfer, or other causes having not been made up).<sup>37</sup> Indeed only 252 workers had originally been selected in place of 300, who in turn were to have been the first out of a total of 600 ultimately projected. This was because of strenuous resistance put forward by the Secretary for Agriculture towards removing the cream of the agricultural demonstrators, from whom community

<sup>35</sup> Passmore, *The National Policy of Community Development*, 247 - 305

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, 280.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, 250.

advisers were recruited.<sup>38</sup> Thus almost before Community Development had begun to be implemented, its ground workers were virtually being phased out. (They were partly replaced by a corps of women advisers whose task was to promote development through women in the villages.)

Bratton asserts (p.24) that 16 per cent of the community advisers 'were willing to admit "no action" as a result of their efforts and at least some of those who claimed action may have done so simply for self-protection'. It is necessary to contradict the second part of this statement, since the survey questionnaires were compiled by community advisers under the direct supervision of the District Officers to whom they were responsible in the normal course of their work. These officials were fully aware of the local situation, and in turn were answerable to the District Commissioners concerned, by whom the questionnaires had finally to be certified. This part of the survey was conducted as a semi-official exercise under circular instruction from the head office of the ministry, to which questionnaires were returned. The argument might further be adduced that officials at these higher levels had a vested interest in returning figures that seemed favourable. Such a notion would serve to overlook, however, the fact that there were a number of officials in the Ministry, supporters of rival policy promoting the chieftainship, who would have welcomed 'proof' that Community Development, which they either did not understand or trust, was unworkable.

The bias and inaccuracy with which Bratton approaches the administrative policy of Community Development and Local Government is revealed in many paragraphs, too numerous to be dealt with individually. An example, where an extract from an official document has been quoted out of context (p.29), is the statement concerning the functions of District Commissioners:

Above all, the District Commissioner's role included the brief 'to inculcate a proper understanding of the disciplinary and penalizing influences of Government in regard to national matters' including education, human and animal health, natural resources and public administration.

In fact, this function related to the need to help peasants to appreciate the reasons for certain compulsory measures and the consequences of infringing them, ranking eighth in a list of ten functions in which the prime emphasis was not, as Bratton would imply, on the disciplinary role of the district administrator but on his non-authoritarian functions. It is worthwhile to quote the instructions concerned (taken from the Prime Minister's Directive of July 1965), which appear to have been drawn up in a genuine attempt to carry the policy into effect in the spirit in which it was intended (item (viii) is quoted in full for purposes of comparison):

- (i) to bring before the district conference ... all matters where he considers plans or actions are inhibiting or undermining the process of community development;
- (ii) to encourage people to act collectively as communities, to assist continuously councils and their committees (and community boards ... ) to reach sound and useful conclusions, to give guidance in resolving difficulties, to place all the known facts before them, to stimulate discussion ...

<sup>38</sup> Southern Rhodesia, *Debates* ... 1963, LIII, 21 June, 169.

- (iii) to examine and report on the extent of progress achieved in the various schemes of councils and the attainment of reasonable standards of efficiency;
- (iv) to communicate the intentions of Government to the people of his district ... and to remind people of their responsibilities and the financial and technical assistance available to them ...
- (v) to expose councils and community boards to situations and responsibilities which will elicit the maximum degree of decision, self-help, self-determination and public interest; and, at the same time, to ensure that outside technical and financial aid is promptly forthcoming ...
- (vi) to make recommendations on grants-in-aid to councils and community boards ... [relating] the reward, in the form of grants-in-aid to the effort and performance of the councils and community boards;
- (vii) to forge effective links between the specialist committees of councils and advisory personnel of all ministries ...
- (viii) to issue appropriate warning about possible repercussions from and to take steps to inculcate a proper understanding of, the disciplinary and penalizing influences of Government in regard to national matters concerned with human labour, social services and standards of public administration and finance (audit);
- (ix) to inculcate at every opportunity an appreciation by councils of their full responsibilities to the communities they serve and to their officers who serve the local government body as a whole, not individual members nor chiefs;
- (x) to expose any matters of corruption or improper influence by members of staff of councils and community boards seeking personal gain or nepotism.<sup>39</sup>

How far district administrators were able in the circumstances to match up to the high demands made upon them by these requirements was largely governed by the staffing and training facilities available, and officials' own philosophy and attitudes. Staff shortages were chronic and increasingly acute. Extra district positions envisaged for Community Development and Local Government never materialized. Several approaches made to the University College of Rhodesia from 1962, to set up a degree course which would help meet the needs of district administrators, were unsuccessful. In 1964 brief assistance with training was provided by Advisors from the Agency for International Development. However, bizarre methods of sensitivity training employed by one expatriate trainer, led to all further training for officers in Community Development being discontinued.

In 1968 the Branch of Community Development Training was set up under the former Chief Training Officer of the Department of Conservation and Extension and four provincial training institutes formerly under that Department (a section of the Ministry of Agriculture) were transferred to the Branch a year later. Its brief was to provide 'awareness training' in the provisions of the Prime Minister's Directive for all echelons of the public service.

<sup>39</sup> *Statement of Policy and Directive by the Prime Minister*, para. 29.

The work of the Branch increasingly became concerned with the adult education input necessary to back up the work of councils and other organizations, including the training of council secretaries, treasurers, clerks, works supervisors and other operatives. The Branch also undertook in large measure the training of chiefs and headmen in conservation and development. In the later stages it began to specialize in more sophisticated training in methodology for extension workers. The changing pattern of training, the early disappearance of instruction in Community Development processes, the shift to training for Local Government, emphasis on training for chiefs and headmen and on conservation and extension, was a reflection of wider changes in policy.

The pursuit of Community Development at the grass-roots level had begun to be overtaken towards the end of the 1960s by events following the Tribal Trust Land Authorities legislation of 1967. Agriculturists of the Department of Conservation and Extension who had originally opposed Community Development as an obstruction to their work, had seized on the opportunity afforded by recognition of Tribal Land Authorities to use these bodies as agencies through which to promote modernized land use practices. These authorities, at first concentrating on agriculture and conservation, became the focus of 'tribal group development', through which development areas, intended from 1970 to embrace ultimately all aspects of rural growth were promoted, bypassing community boards and councils.

Within two weeks of the retirement of Roger Howman in July 1969, moves had been renewed towards giving local government councils 'a tribal nucleus'. Councils became known first as Tribal Councils and then Chiefs' Councils, and proposals to subordinate them to decisions of the *dare* began to be put into gradual effect. It was some time before the prostitution of representative local government reflected itself in the legislation. Short amendments to the African Councils Act made in 1971 and 1973, and selective repeal of subsidiary regulations, however, finally paved legal way for the transmogrification of the councils system. The 1971 Amendment Act (No. 57) gave chiefs a delaying power and virtual veto over council decisions, authorized council revenues to be used for the purposes of Tribal Land Authorities, Tribal Courts and chiefs and headmen, and excluded former restrictees and detainees from voting and election. The 1973 Amendment Act (No. 53) empowered chiefs to perform functions as administrative and executive officers of councils and to give approval for candidates for election. By a final amendment to the regulations and administrative action involving changes to individual warrants, councils ceased to be elective. From July 1973, all new councils were appointed on chiefs' nominations by the Provincial Commissioners. Other councils were converted to an appointed basis as retirement of members fell due by rotation. Thus legal provision was completed for the conversion of elected councils to appointed tribal bodies, undermining and destroying the efforts of more than a decade in attempting to encourage democratic local government. Yet Bratton fails even to take note of the 1971 Amendment and (p.26) actually observes of the amendments made in 1973 that: 'These administrative arrangements were aimed at sustaining community development and local government policy'. Finally with the acceleration of the guerrilla war, the infrastructure which had been built up in council areas became the object of arson and destruction along with other symbols of the old order.

Any achievements which resulted from the policy of Community Development and Local Government, notably in the councils' sphere, tend to have been overshadowed by its persistence under the Rhodesian Front regime. Thus the policy is wrongly debited with illiberal precepts for which it was not responsible. Provincialization, for example, first introduced under the Regional Authorities Act (No. 50 of 1972), is described by Bratton (p.29) as 'no more

than the extension from local to national level of the philosophy of community development ... a Rhodesian version of balkanization by Bantustan'. The closer emulation of South African apartheid might have been the aim of the Rhodesian Front Government, but to attribute provincialization to Community Development, which in any event had been virtually phased out by that time, is incorrect. Community Development was suspected from the outset as being 'apartheid in disguise', not the least due to election and other Party statements. Segregation on the land, however, had already been in effect for more than thirty years under the Land Apportionment Act as amended. To attribute this policy to Community Development which had, on the contrary, been launched alongside the declared intention to repeal land apportionment and other discriminatory legislation is not justified.

In the effort to rectify defects in Bratton's exposition, the impression should not be conveyed that no faults existed either in the system of Community Development and Local Government as implemented, or in the wider governmental and political structure of Rhodesia. There is much to be learned from a study of the bureaucratic, procedural, and ideological constraints under which the policy was attempted. Attention should not, however, be distracted from more immediate issues: what were the problems of local administration which the policy aimed to resolve and to what extent are they likely to persist under majority rule? What pointers, if any, did the policy have to offer for the benefit of future planners? The Land Husbandry scheme had shown the folly of vigorous application of agricultural and conservation reforms without due regard to human considerations. The policy of Community Development and Local Government had attempted to encourage the growth of democratic institutions through which peasants might participate in rural development. It had been undermined first, by the separatist aspirations of specialists unable to see beyond their own technical targets, and finally by vested political interests inimical to the democratic process.

In the final pages, Bratton attempts to outline some of the requirements for reconstruction and development facing the first independent Government of Zimbabwe. Just because self-help did not constitute an effective strategy for rural development in the context of settler colonialism, Bratton (p.54) suggests, this is no reason why it should not be effective strategy for rural development in the future. Does he then propose a new look at Community Development? Further, Bratton deplors the fact (p.51) that 'Zimbabwe will be decolonized without an adequate framework of local government institutions', and advocates (p.51) priority to 'the reconstruction of local government councils'. He suggests that attention should be given to the conversion of African Councils into District Councils<sup>40</sup> and the replacing of appointed councillors with elected councillors: that provision might be made for the honorary minority representation of chiefs; that the councils should have many of the same functions as African councils had before; and that they should be given State subsidization. It will be noted that none of these ideas are new, that provision, in fact, exists for most of these things under the African Councils Act of 1957, if the amendments of 1971 and 1973 are eliminated.<sup>41</sup>

<sup>40</sup> Bratton, *Beyond Community Development*, 51. The suggestion that the number of councils should be reduced by nearly 80 per cent, from 260 to 54, one for each of the vast Districts of the country for purposes of administrative economy and convenience, overlooks the first requirement for the purposes of effective participation in local government, namely that it should be local.

<sup>41</sup> A Draft Local Government Bill was prepared in 1964, consolidating local government throughout the country. It eliminated the vulnerable warrant system and made other changes, but never reached the Legislative Assembly.

The concluding sentence of the pamphlet observes (p.62) that, 'just as the prospects for national liberation came to hinge on the participation of peasants, so, in all likelihood, will the prospects for national reconstruction'. Nationalists attacked the policy in the 1960s as unworkable except under a system of majority rule. Now that this has become a reality, will there be an initiative to revive Community Development and Local Government not merely as workable but also as offering scope for development in Zimbabwe in the 1980s?

*Wivenhoe*

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