

THE BONDELSWARTS REBELLION
OF 1922

T H E S I S

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by

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NOTE ON ABBREVIATIONS.

The following abbreviations have been used in this work :

- R.P. A.W. Roberts Papers. (Cory Library, Rhodes University).
T.A. Transvaal Archives.
C.A. Central Archives.
W.A. South West Africa Archives.
N.A.C. Native Affairs Commission.
N.A.M. Native Affairs Memorandum of 1916.
P.M.C. Permanent Mandates Commission.
N.R.C. Native Reserves Commission.
Adm. Administrator's Department.
P.M.O. Prime Minister's Office.
A.R.B. Report of the Administrator on the Bondelzwarts rising. U.G. 30'-22.
N.A.C.
Report Report of the Commission appointed to enquire into the Rebellion of the Bondelzwarts. UG 16-'23.
Gorges
Report Report on the Natives of South West Africa and their treatment by Germany C.D. 9146-1918.

1.

SECTION 1.

CHAPTER 1.

FROM PRE-HISTORY TO GERMAN RULE

The Bondelswarts tribe inhabited the extreme south of South West Africa, in an area centering on the town of Warmbad¹ which Freislich describes as being :

"a harsh, arid land of stony plains, sand-dunes, naked outcrops of white limestone and barren rocky mountains. The vegetation is sparse and xerophytic, the typical product of a land of prolonged droughts alternating with torrential downpours which drain away rapidly along the many stormwater channels into the perennially flowing Orange River"².

The mean annual rainfall for the area is 5.13 inches (approximately 258 millimetres) per annum³.

The Bondelswarts are of the Nama or Hottentot people. The Nama called themselves the "khoikhoi" meaning "men of men". There were several Khoi clusters, the Cape Khoi, the Namaqua, the Koranna, the Einiqua, and, in the nineteenth century, the half-caste Griquas.

R.H. Elphick postulates that the "San" or Bushmen and the "Khoi" or Hottentots were not two distinct races. He says that the Khoi diverged from the San by becoming herders of cattle, and with improved and more reliable sources of nutrition, they became physically different from the San.

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1. Warmbad was so named because of the warm springs there.
 2. Freislich, R. The Last Tribal War. (Cape Town, 1964.) p.1.
 3. Wellington, J.H. South West Africa and its Human Issues. (London, 1967.) p.34.

2.

Elphick suggests that the Lake Ngami area in present-day Botswana was the origin of the migrations of the Khoisan peoples southwards. They moved down the Orange River until they reached the sea, where they again split, some going north into what is present-day South West Africa, and others into the area today known as the "Little Namaqualand". The other Khoisan groups split into two, one group moving down the Fish River into the eastern-Cape, where they later encountered and intermingled with the Bantu-speaking tribes there, while the other group, the ancestors of the Cape Khoi, moved into the western Cape.⁴

Wellington states that in the sixteenth century the Nama probably ranged over the whole of South West Africa up to the Etosha pan.⁵ They had predominantly boskopoid features, with dainty limbs. Steatopygia or "the excessive development of fatty tissues in the buttocks", especially in the females, and hypertrophy, or the "excessive lengthening of the labia minora" the so-called "Hottentots' apron" in the female were also distinguishing physical characteristics of the Khoisan peoples. So too was the sparseness, or complete lack of facial and body hair.⁶

4. Elphick, R.H. "The Cape Khoi and the first phase of South African Race Relations". (Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, Yale University, 1972). pp. 42-45. Cory Library Microfilm.

Little is known for certain about the origins or direction of the Khoisan migrations, but Elphick's hypothesis does seem to be the most likely to date. Today the "pure" Khoi is seldom seen, thanks to extensive intermingling with other races, black and white, and, in the case of the Bondelswarts, with the later wave of "Orlams" from the Cape. See p.4.

5. Wellington, p.139.

6. *ibid.* pp 131-132.

3.

The Bondelswarts Nama were a nomadic, pastoral people practising transhumance⁷. To aid mobility⁸ they designed beehive-shaped huts, constructed of a framework of pliable wooden stakes, bent inwards and fastened at the top, and covered with rush mats which shrank in dry weather, allowing air to circulate and expanded in wet weather to form a waterproof covering⁹. The Bondelswarts' diet consisted of milk from their cows, supplemented largely by game and wild herbs, fruits, roots and vegetables.¹⁰

Vedder holds that the first Khoi to settle permanently in present-day South West Africa were the tribe known as the "Awa-Khoi" or "Red Nation"¹¹. They considered themselves overlords of the other Khoi tribes which arrived later, as well as over the indigenous San and Bergdamara peoples. The Red Nation tribe was followed by the "Veldschoen dragers" and "Fransman Hottentots". The last two Nama groups to arrive were the "Topnaars" and the Bondelswarts. The latter called themselves the "Kamigou" or "Gami-
†Nun"¹².

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7. "Report of the Commission appointed to enquire into the Rebellion of the Bondelzwarts". (U.G. 16 - 23) p.1. para 11. (Hereafter referred to as the N.A.C. Report).
 8. Vedder, H. "The Nama" in Hahn, C.H.L., Vedder, H., and Fourie, L., The Native Tribes of South West Africa. (London. 1966) p.111.
 9. This type of hut is still often used today, except that sacks and corrugated iron frequently replace rush mats.
 10. Wellington, p.138.
 11. Vedder, H. South West Africa in Early Times. Translated by C.G. Hall (London, 1938). p.126. The Red Nation were also known as the "Gei-
}}khaun" or "Great Defenders".
 12. Vedder, Early Times, p.25. "Gami" means "bundle", "mu" means black - hence the name "Bondelswarts".

4.

Neither of these last two Nama tribes acknowledged the Red Nations' suzerainty, and they maintained a strong tradition of fierce independence. The Topnaars settled near present-day Walvis Bay, while the Bondelswarts pursued a nomadic existence in the south along the Orange River, until they were settled at Warmbad by missionaries.

At the turn of the nineteenth century there occurred further incursions into the Nama peoples' area. These were the Hottentot tribes from the Cape Colony, mostly of mixed blood, who had adjusted to European technology, dress and manners to varying degrees. Some were Christians, and their language was Dutch. They moved north to get land, freedom and perhaps to escape from the law. These people are known as the "Orlams" Hottentots, distinguishing them from the older inhabitants of S.W.A., the Nama¹³.

The Bondelswarts lay in the path of these migrations, and each wave of Orlams left some members behind, leading to an intermingling of Nama tribal traditions with the elements of white culture picked up by the Orlams. The Nama, fiercely independent and hardy, with a tradition of blood feuds¹⁴, also learned from the Orlams a proficiency in the use of the horse and rifle in warfare¹⁵.

13. *ibid.* pp 128-171.

14. Freislich, pp 2-4.

15. "Report on the Natives of South West Africa and their treatment by Germany". (C.D. 9146 - 1918). p.70. (Hereafter referred to as the Gorges Report).

5.

As a result of their superior military technology the Orlams soon overthrew the overlords of the old Nama Red Nation tribe. But the Bondelswarts retained their independence. The total Khoi population of the S.W.A. area in 1890 has been estimated at between 20,000 and 25,000. The strongest and most influential Nama and Orlams chiefs at that time were Hendrik Witbooi, Willem Christian (Bondelswarts), Joseph Fredericks and Simon Kooper¹⁶.

The diary kept by Hendrik Witbooi reveals some friction towards the end of the nineteenth century between himself and an alliance of the old Nama tribes, namely the Veldschoendragers, Bethanie Hottentots, Red Nation and the Bondelswarts¹⁷. But, on the whole, the Bondelswarts remained aloof from internal Nama disputes, and their position in the extreme south made the bitter Herero-Nama conflict in the north only a distant threat¹⁸.

The Bondelswarts' system of government consisted of a council and a hereditary chieftainship. The chief, or Captain as he was later called, commanded great respect and influence, but was bound to act in terms of the advice and resolutions of his councillors. These councillors were chosen by the married men of the tribe¹⁹. In the council or "Raad" the chiefs' expressed opinion probably carried considerable weight, but it was the Raad's decision which prevailed, and only the Raad could authorise the Chief to make war, peace, treaties and laws and regulations²⁰.

16. *ibid.* p.71.

17. Die Dagboek van Hendrik Witbooi. (Van Riebeeck Society with S.W.A. Scientific Society. 1929). Vol.9. p.63.

18. Vedder, Early Times, p.334.

19. Gorges Report, p.72.

20. *ibid.* p.73.

6.

The chief had to rely on popular approval and the support of the Raad rather than on his royal prerogatives²¹. It was the Raad which exercised judicial and administrative functions²². In times of peace the powers of the chief were very limited²³, and with a weak chief, the Raad could dominate a situation. Thus, to conclude an agreement with the Bondelswarts it was necessary to convince both chief and Raad. The chief could not do anything to which his people, speaking through their Raad, were opposed.

The Bondelswarts' first contacts with whites were with the occasional hunters, traders, explorers, prospectors and fugitives. A notable fugitive was H.J. Wikar, a Swedish soldier of the Dutch East India Company who, after contracting debts, fled from the Cape to the Orange River in 1778, staying there for two years until his pardon by Governor, van Plettenberg (1771-1785). In his report to the Governor, Wikar mentioned coming into contact with a nomadic Nama group called the Gami-Nun living on the high ground near what was to be Warmbad²⁵.

Later, as the territory above the Orange River opened up, missionaries began their work. By 1805 the London Missionary Society had already started a station and settled some of the nomadic Bondelswarts at Warmbad²⁶.

21. Strauss, T. "The Korana and the Northern Border Wars of 1868-9 and 1878-9". (Unpublished B.A. Hons. Thesis, U.C.T. 1977). p.12.

22. N.A.C. Report, p.2, para. 9.

23. Vedder, The Nama, p.143.

24. A.W. Roberts Papers.. "Draftings for official Report" (N.A.C. Report). MS 14 787/A/iii. Draft A. p.2. (Hereafter referred to as R.P.N.A.C. Report Drafts).

25. The Journal of Wikar. ed. E.E. Mossop. (Van Riebeeck Society, Cape Town, 1935). Vol. 15. This provides interesting reading, and is accurate and factual in its descriptions of the lifestyle and culture of the Khoi and San peoples.

26. Vedder, The Nama, p.146.

7.

The L.M.S. station at Warmbad (formerly known as Nisbeth's bath), founded by the Rev. Schmelen, was taken over by the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society, and in 1833 Rev. Edward Cook arrived there. By 1842 he reported that he had "over a thousand" Bondelswarts converts. In 1865 the Rhenish Missionary Society took over the station²⁷. The Roman Catholic missionaries of the Congregation of the Oblate of St. Francis de Sales, who had been working in Little Namaqualand in the Cape Colony for some time, extended their field of operations into S.W.A. when they bought the farm Heirachabis in the Warmbad district in 1896²⁸, and established a mission station there in 1898²⁹, although it was only after 1907 that they made any substantial progress in converting the Bondelswarts to Catholicism³⁰.

Meanwhile, copper was found in Little Namaqualand in the Cape Colony, and a "copper-rush" ensued. In 1854 a trader, Fielding, leased a large part of the Bondelswarts territory for mineral concessions for a considerable sum³¹.

The boundaries of the Bondelswarts' territory were the Orange and Fish (S.W.A.) rivers. Their capital was at Warmbad. Their chief, Willem Christian, negotiated a treaty on 31 January 1870, with the approval of his Raad, with the Cape Government which was represented by the Acting Resident Magistrate

27. Wellington, pp.159-161.

28. Bishop Simon. Bishop for the Hottentots. Translated by A. Bouchard (New York, 1959). p.114.

29. *ibid.* p.118.

30. *ibid.* p.208. (See also below p.17.)

31. Vedder, Early Times, p.282.

8.

of Namaqualand, G.A. Reynolds. In return for an annual allowance Willem agreed to aid the Cape Government to preserve peace along the Orange River, as the mountains along the area were an ideal shelter for half-caste or Kora bandits³². These were plaguing the traders and miners³³, and on 16 November 1868 Willem had sent, albeit reluctantly, fifty-seven Bondelswarts to assist the colonists in Little Namaqualand to defeat some of these marauders³⁴. Strauss says that

"The situation was extremely volatile, and the eventual success of the colonial forces must be attributed in large part to Christian's support³⁵.

In 1876 the Bondelswarts accepted a magistrate from the Cape in Warmbad. Willem was paid £50.00 p.a. to keep the San and Kora under control³⁶. In 1877 Col. J.T. Eustace, the Civil Commissioner for Namaqualand, visited the Bondelswarts. He praised them highly for their loyalty to the Cape Government, and for their power in their area, and, in consequence, the Cape Government sent them a gift of 100 rifles³⁷.

32. Private and Semi-Official Documents of the Administrator of S.W.A. Windhoek Archives. (Hereafter referred to as "W.A. Private and Semi-Off. Docs".) Unnumbered File "Bondelzwarts". South Africa - Cape and Adjacent Territories. 1883-6. Vol. 39.p.99. No. 39. "Treaty with the Chief of the Bondelzwarts".

33. Esterhuyse, J.H. South West Africa 1880-1894. (Cape Town, 1968.) p.16.

34. Strauss, pp.43-44.

35. *ibid.* p.100.

36. Vedder, Early Times, p.434.

37. Esterhuyse, p.71

9.

In 1879 Eustace reported that Willem had helped defeat rebels on the northern border of the Cape Colony³⁸. Willem had sent 150 men under the command of the sub-captain, Timotheus Schneewe, in May 1879 to subdue the Afrikaner tribe, who were supposed to be under the Bondelswarts' suzerainty, but who had attacked the Colony from Bondelswarts territory, obliging Willem under the terms of his treaty with the Cape to take action³⁹.

Eustace was instructed to visit Willem Christian in November, 1883 by J. Rose-Innes, the Under-Secretary for Native Affairs in the Cape Colony⁴⁰.

Eustace was to get :

"a formal confirmation of such amicable arrangements as he (Willem) may be disposed to enter into with the Government, and to a complete ratification of the cession of his territory to the Colonial Government upon such terms as may be agreed upon".

An invitation was also to be extended to Willem and his sub-captain, T.Schneewe, to visit Cape Town⁴¹.

Willem requested £25 worth of gunpowder and £25 worth of various cartridges to protect his people against raids by bandits⁴². But the agreement was

38. W.A. Private and Semi-Off. Docs. Letter No. 138.

39. Strauss, p.102.

40. Cape of Good Hope - Papers, Minutes and Correspondence relating to the Territories of Great Namaqualand and Damaraland. (A5-'85).
Cape of Good Hope Annexures. 1885/4/.

41. A5-'85. p.6. Enclosure A in No. 3. Rose-Innes to Eustace, 11 Nov.1884. No. 1/962.

42. W.A. Private and Semi-Off. Docs. Letter No. 138.

10.

not to be, because Germany annexed S.W.A., and Rose-Innes wrote to Eustace cancelling the invitation to Willem to visit Cape Town⁴³. The letter arrived too late to prevent Eustace from sending W.F. Bergh to visit Willem. Willem's Raad agreed that he should visit Cape Town, and Willem wrote to the other Nama chiefs warning them not to make treaties with the Germans, and advocating an alliance with the Cape⁴⁴. Bergh seems to have been somewhat carried away by his enthusiasm for his mission, and instructed a local man in Warmbad, J.W. Herridge, to use his influence to persuade all Nama chiefs to ally with the Cape Government, and thus to forestall Germany's advances into the south of S.W.A. An agreement was to be made with the chiefs whereby they would make an alliance with the Cape and promise not to make treaties with a "foreign power" or to cede or sell any of their lands "without first consulting Her Majesty's Colonial Government"⁴⁵.

When he heard of this, the Governor and High Commissioner at the Cape, Sir Hercules Robinson, immediately instructed the Minister of Native Affairs to cancel all agreements Herridge might have made, and withdrew the invitation to Willem Christian to visit Cape Town⁴⁶. Rose-Innes in turn wrote to Eustace saying that Bergh had exceeded his instructions, that he and Herridge should be recalled, and that

"no further steps should be taken towards extending Colonial relations with the Namaqua chiefs"⁴⁷.

43. A5-'85 No.6. Letter D.p.8. 10 Dec. 1884. No. 1/1093.

44. A5-'85. pp16-18. Enclosure C in No. 9, Eustace to Bergh. 2 Jan. 1885.

45. A5-'85. p.19. Bergh to Herridge (copy). 16 Dec. 1884.

46. A5-'85. p.20. No. 11. Minute No. 4. Cape Town, 2 Jan. 1885.

47. A5-'85. p.21. No. 12. Rose-Innes to Eustace. No. 1/107. 30 Jan. 1885.

11.

Willem's alliance with the Cape Government had given him considerable prestige as well as valuable arms and ammunition⁴⁸. But it also engendered in the Bondelswarts a deep and lasting admiration and almost pathetic belief in the justness of the "English Government.. Their highly-valued independence had been left untampered with during their alliance with the Cape, and had indeed been reinforced with arms and ammunition. It was this sustaining desire for British rule which grew with the reality of the years of German rule that were to follow. Willem Christian was to repeatedly request that his territory be placed under a British protectorate, but to no avail⁴⁹.

On 1 May 1883 Heinrich Vogelsang, on behalf of Adolf Lüderitz, bought Angra Pequena⁵⁰ bay and its hinterland for five miles inland from the Bethanie Hottentots' Captain, Joseph Fredericks, and the German flag was hoisted there on 12 May 1884⁵¹. In August of the same year Fredericks sold to Lüderitz the whole coastline from the Orange River to the 26⁰ South latitude line, with a twenty mile hinterland⁵². On 19 August 1884 Lüderitz acquired, from the impoverished Topnaar tribe of Walvis Bay, the coastal belt from 26⁰S to Cape Frio except for Walvis Bay itself.

48. R.P. "Exhibits and Annexures to the Evidence", (for N.A.C. Report). MS 14 787/A/(i). (Hereafter referred to as R.P.N.A.C. Report Exhibits and Annexures). AN.1. p.1.

49. Gorges Report, p.78.

50. Today known as Lüderitz.

51. Esterhuyse, pp.39-47.

52. Wellington, p.167.

As Wellington points out :

"So far as the rights of the Topnaar captain to this area were concerned it has been justly remarked that he might with equal validity have sold Australia to Lüderitz".⁵³.

Meanwhile Lüderitz, an ardent colonialist had been to Berlin to ask for protection for his possessions in S.W.A., in the face of protests from the British and Cape merchants⁵⁴. As a result, Germany annexed "Lüderitzland" on 29 May 1884⁵⁵. This protection was formally extended over most of the rest of present day S.W.A. in June 1890⁵⁶, except for Walvis Bay, which had been annexed by Britain together with a fifteen mile hinterland on 6 March 1878⁵⁷.

In 1885 Dr Karl Gotthilf Büttner, a former Rhenish missionary, was asked to negotiate treaties for Germany with the South West African tribes⁵⁸. Willem Christian and his Raad refused to sign a treaty with Germany because they held that they were already treaty-bound to the Cape⁵⁹. But soon the Bondelswarts began to realize that the long hoped for British protectorate over their territory would not materialize, and so, on 21 August 1890, the

53. *ibid.* p. 168.

54. Esterhuyse, pp. 39-47.

55. Wellington, p.168.

56. *ibid.* p.172.

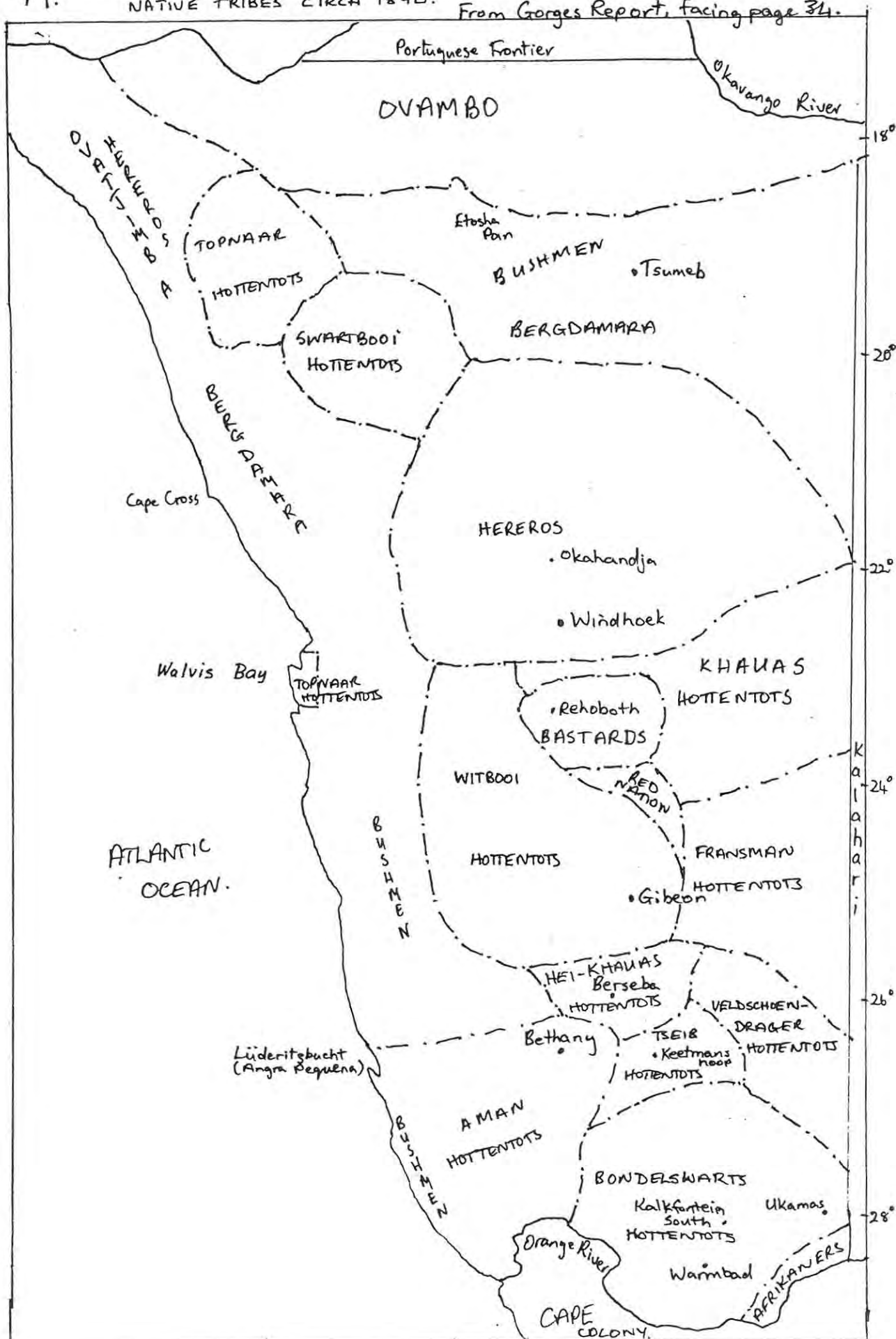
57. Vedder, Early Times, p.435.

58. Esterhuyse, p.100.

59. *ibid.* p.101.

A.

MAP OF SOUTH WEST AFRICA SHOWING TERRITORIES OCCUPIED BY NATIVE TRIBES CIRCA 1890. From Gorges Report, facing page 34.



13.

Bondelswarts chief and Raad signed a treaty with the German representative, Dr. Goering⁶⁰, and the German flag was raised at Warmbad. The Bondelswarts were the last tribe to sign a treaty with the Germans⁶¹.

Unfortunately, as it turned out the German authorities did not keep to all their undertakings in the treaty⁶².

Meanwhile in 1889 the British Karaskoma Syndicate⁶³ had acquired by purchase the whole of the Bondelswarts', Veldschoendragers' and Swartmodder Hottentots' lands⁶⁴. This concession was reduced to 12,8000 square kilometres by the German authorities however, and certain conditions were attached.

60. Father of the notorious Herman Goering. Levinson, O. The Ageless Land. (Cape Town, 1961). p.69.

61. Esterhuysen, p.160.

62. In terms of the treaty the Bondels' chief undertook to allow German subjects unrestricted trade in his territory, and to protect the lives and property of German subjects. The German Emperor's jurisdiction over Europeans and disputes between Europeans and blacks was acknowledged, and no land or mineral concessions were to be made with any other powers or subjects of other powers without the permission of the German Government. The Bondels chief had to preserve the peace, and had to use the German authorities as mediators in inter-tribal disputes. In return, the German Emperor via his representatives, undertook to protect the Bondels chief and his people, and to recognise and support the chief's jurisdiction and control over the Bondels people. The Emperor also undertook to ensure that Europeans respected the laws, customs and usages of the Bondels, and paid the usual taxes. Gorges Report, p.32.

63. See p.35.

64. See Map A.

14.

But, as Wellington points out :

"The Syndicate's selection of the best farm land and the acquisition of the best watering places was considered one of the deepest causes of the Bondelswarts (1904-6) rebellion".⁶⁵

It was not long before the Bondelswarts began to feel their loss of independence and pride. Abraham Kaffir, a senior member of their Raad, said later

"every German Officer, sargeant and soldier, every policeman and every German farmer seemed to be the 'Government'. By this we mean that every German seemed able to do towards us just what he pleased".⁶⁶

Shortly before the Bondelswarts revolted in 1904 the Governor of German South West Africa, Major Theodor Leutwein⁶⁷, found great difficulty in effecting concitiation between Europeans and blacks, and relations between the two remained strained⁶⁸. The Bondelswarts found themselves ousted from their central territories by a large number of European farmers and bywoners⁶⁹.

The breaking point came on 25 October 1903. The whole of the black population of G.S.W.A. was in a state of acute unrest at the time. It appears that the Bondelswarts chief, now Jan Abraham Christian, had taken a goat from a passing Herero to use for medicinal purposes. The Herero complained to the local German Divisional Commander, Lt. Jobst, who sent a message demanding redress from the chief. The chief sent 18s. as compensation for the goat in reply, but Lt. Jobst ordered him to come and see

65. Wellington, pp.214-215.

66. Gorges Report, p.90.

67. Major Leutwein was Landeshauptmann in G.S.W.A. from 1894-1898, and Governor from 1898-1905. Bley, H., "Social Discord in S.W.A. 1894-1904" in P. Gifford and W.M.R. Louis (eds.), Britain and Germany in Africa. (Newhaven, 1967). p.607.

68. Gorges Report, p.33.

69. Bley, H. South-West Africa under German Rule 1894-1914. Translated and ed. by H. Ridley. (London, 1971). p.133.

15.

him personally. Instead, Jan Abraham sent six councillors as his representatives, whom Lt. Jobst promptly imprisoned, a breach of faith which increased tensions. The chief sent to ask for their release⁷⁰, pointing out that he had given fair compensation and that under clause 4 of the 1890 treaty with Dr Goering he was entitled to govern in his own area.

But Lt. Jobst, determined to assert his authority, went with eight to ten soldiers to go and arrest the chief, a great indignity for the Bondelswarts. The chief when arrested tried to break loose, and what followed is not quite clear. The Germans held that the Bondelswarts opened fire first, while the Bondelswarts claimed that Lt. Jobst had fired first and shot and killed the chief when the latter tried to break loose⁷¹. The end result was that when the firing ceased, Jan Abraham Christian, Lt. Jobst and two other German soldiers lay dead, and the Bondelswarts rebellion had begun. The new chief was the "weak-minded" Johannes Christian, but the revolt was led by the very able and almost legendary Jacob Marengo⁷².

Marengo, assisted by the brothers Morris, skilfully pursued guerilla tactics. The Bondelswarts were later joined in the revolt by the Witbooi Orlams tribe⁷³. The German soldiers, inexperienced in guerrilla warfare and the unfamiliar terrain, and freshly brought in from Germany suffered heavy losses.

70. Gorges Report, p.92.

71. Gorges Report, p.92.
Bley, German Rule, p.144.

72. Gorges Report, pp.93-4.

73. N.A.C. Report, pp.2-3, para. 12.

16.

Col. Prinsloo⁷⁴ later said that :

"in those most inaccessible desert mountains there are places where there is one big grave, wherein there are buried whole German squadrons, annihilated after having been ambushed by the Bondels."⁷⁵.

However, in the end the superior weaponry, equipment and numbers of the German soldiers proved decisive. Johannes Christian wanted peace, and in January 1904 Leutwein offered it⁷⁶. Joahannes handed over 289 rifles at Kalkfontein-South⁷⁷. There were Bondelswarts diehards who did not want peace, amongst them Marengo and his adjutant, Abraham Morris, and they took refuge in the Orange river mountains to regroup⁷⁸.

In July 1904 Marengo and Morris came out of hiding and started the rebellion again. It dragged on for two more years⁷⁹.

In the gorges of the Fish and Orange rivers Johannes Christian held out until October 1906, when he made overtures for peace⁸⁰.

74. See p.94ff.

75. Central Archives. File No. A106. (Retro-active). "Mr Barlow, Anti-Slavery Society Comments by Col. Prinsloo." (Hereafter referred to as C.A. File A106(Retro-active)). Col. Prinsloo's obituary for Judge "Toon" van der Heever. p.2.

76. Gorges Report, p.94.

77. *ibid.* p.94

78. (Kalkfontein-South is today known as Karasberg).

78. Gorges Report, p.94.

79. *ibid.* p.96

80. Wellington, p.211.

17.

Marengo, Morris and some other Bondelswarts, together with Simon Kooper and some of his followers, fled into the Union⁸¹. Among them was a member of the Bondelswarts royal family and a potential heir to the chieftainship, Jacobus Christian. They refused to return to G.S.W.A. even though the Germans offered them amnesty⁸². An informant, Isaak Witbooi, claims that they did not want to return because they refused to surrender and make peace with the Germans⁸³. In 1908 Marengo was shot by the Cape police while refusing to surrender to them⁸⁴. The Bondelswarts in exile, about 600 of them, were ill and weak after years of hardship in the field, and so they were sent to the Matjieskloof Roman Catholic Mission for medical attention, and here they were all converted to Catholicism, ending the supremacy of the Rhenish missionaries among the Bondelswarts⁸⁵. The exiles in the Union found work on the copper-mines and European farms in Little Namaqualand, and some found work at the fisheries in Port Nolloth. The Germans therefore outlawed their leader, Morris, and placed a price on his head⁸⁶.

81. Gorges Report, p.96.

82. N.A.C. Report, p.3, para. 12.

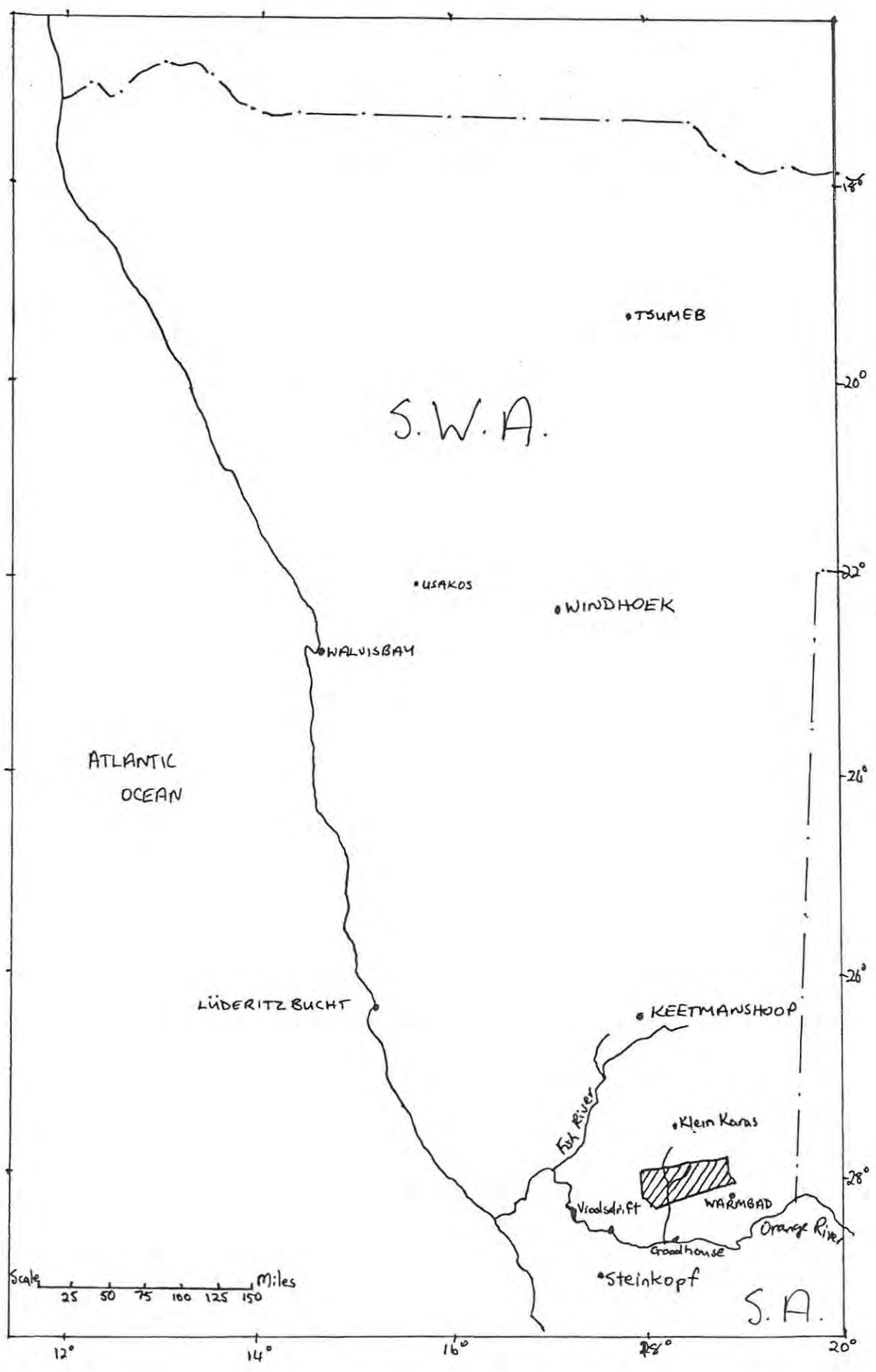
83. Interview with Izaak Witbooi at Warmbad, S.W.A., 20 July 1977.
(See appendix A.)

84. Gorges Report, p.96.

85. Bishop Simon, p.201.

86. N.A.C. Report, p.3, para. 12.

B. Map of S.W.A. showing relative position of Warmbad Reserve.



The peace treaty was signed on 21 December 1906⁸⁷. Fr. Malinowsky of the Roman Catholic mission at Heirachabis played a major role in conducting the peace negotiations⁸⁸. The treaty was signed at Ukamas with Johannes Christian representing the Bondelswarts. The terms of the treaty confined the Bondelswarts to a Reserve of 175,000 hectares⁸⁹, as compared with their former territory of 40,000sq. km.⁹⁰. The boundaries were fixed by a commission of three German officials and three Bondelswarts representatives, and were drawn upon a sketch map⁹¹. The Bondelswarts were prohibited from selling or leasing any part of their Reserve, and were placed under German law⁹². They promised to be faithful and obedient subjects of the German Government, and surrendered all their arms and ammunition, which, from henceforth they would not be allowed to possess. They now had to carry passes to leave their Reserve⁹³. They were also given 1,500 goats, ten for each head of a family, and while these could not be sold or slaughtered, their offspring would become Bondelswarts property. The under-captains' got 300 sheep, and Johannes Christian was given a span of oxen and an ox-wagon, which was to be

87. Wellington, p.211.

88. Bishop Simon, pp.171 ff.

89. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. MS 14 787/A/(i), p.240. Det. Sgt. Charles Christian Pietersen, S.W.A. C.I.D., gave a copy of the 1906 treaty to the N.A.C. He had also taken statements and formulated evidence to prosecute Bondelswarts rebels after the 1922 revolt, and made a synopsis of these for the N.A.C. See p.227.

90. Wellington, p.214.

91. N.A.C. Report, p.8., para. 28.

92. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence, p.240. Det. Sgt. C.C. Pietersen.

93. *ibid.* p.240.

19.

paid off gradually. Rations were supplied until the Bondelswarts were self-sufficient again⁹⁴.

These terms were, on the whole remarkably humane, and sensible in the safeguards against Bondelswarts profligacy. Leutwein came under much criticism from the German settlers for his enlightened handling of the 1906 Bondelswarts treaty. But he hoped to induce the Bondelswarts in exile to return, and he wished for a speedy end to hostilities in the south so that he could concentrate on the far more serious threat of the Herero rebellion in the north⁹⁵.

The boundaries of the Reserve were set out in a separate treaty on 27 March 1907. Beacons 1-9 were stone beacons, and 10-11 were recognizable trees. Non-Bondelswarts travelling through the Reserve would be subject to the laws within the Reserve⁹⁶. Another treaty of 2 May 1907 divided the town of Warmbad into white and Bondelswarts areas, with the river-bed as the dividing line⁹⁷, as is still the case today.

But the Bondelswarts' spirit was by no means broken. From 1906 onwards they were determined to regain their former tribal status⁹⁸, and many of them hid their rifles instead of handing them over⁹⁹, and kept in

94. *ibid*, p.240.

95. Goldblatt, I. History of SouthWest Africa from the beginning of the nineteenth century. (Cape Town, 1971). p.143.

96. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.243. Det. Sgt. Pietersen.

97. *ibid*. p.244.

98. N.A.C. Report, p.14, para.55a.

99. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.534. Lt. Edgar John Brinton, sub-inspector of S.A. Police in Little Namaqualand.

constant touch with their leaders¹⁰⁰.

German rule became increasingly oppressive. The economic independence of the black peoples was broken forever. Every black had to register himself at the nearest police station, whereupon the police would select an employer for them and fix their wages¹⁰¹. According to a local farmer who had been in the G.S.W.A. police for three years, all blacks with less than 125 goats and 10 cattle had to find employment¹⁰². The Bondelswarts were put under a Native Commissioner¹⁰³, but if an employer wanted his employee punished, he could send him to the nearest police station with a note. Since the police were legally empowered to administer floggings without recourse to a court of law, abuses were inevitable¹⁰⁴. Another local farmer was to tell the N.A.C. in 1922 that the Bondelswarts had "undoubtedly" suffered ill-treatment at the hands of the German police¹⁰⁵.

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100. Transvaal Archives. Department of Justice. Vol.106. File No.2/1221/11. "Unsettled conditions in southern portion of G.S.W.A." (Hereafter referred to as T.A. Dept. Justice. Vol.106.File2/1221/11.) Secretary for the Interior to Secretary for Justice, Cape Town. 4 Feb. 1913.
101. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.7. Major John Frederick Herbst, Secretary for the S.W.A. Protectorate from Dec. 1916.
102. *ibid.* p.342. Frederick van Reenen Coetzee, farmer on farm "Waterval" in Warmbad district since 1917.
103. *ibid.* p.502. Charles Weidner, farmer and trader at Goodhouse.
104. *ibid.* p.283. Major Herbst.
105. *ibid.* p.502. C. Weidner.

A law promulgated in 1907 forbade blacks in German S.W.A. to own either large stock or riding animals, for economic and strategic reasons, although this was later relaxed and then rescinded¹⁰⁶. On 23 February 1907 a dog tax of 30 marks or £1.10s was levied, in urban areas only, on each dog, plus a further 10s on each additional dog¹⁰⁷. Under a law of 15 February 1909, amended on 4 October 1910, the trapping of animals was prohibited, and blacks were only allowed to shoot game within their reserves and had to have a permit for shot-guns¹⁰⁸.

There were some mitigating factors for the German presence. There was little malnutrition amongst the Bondelswarts¹⁰⁹, because of the presence of large military garrisons, which provided alternative employment and which gave pauper rations on the same scale as those issued to German soldiers¹¹⁰. But, master - servant relations were generally poor, and there were cases of appalling abuses inflicting on blacks¹¹¹, which was inevitable in view

106. Gorges Report, p.111.

107. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Exhibits and Annexures. EX.1.p.10. "Memorandum on Native Affairs in the Protectorate of S.W.A.". 1916. (Serial No. 5099-14/18/16 -450) (Hereafter referred to as N.A.M.).

108. *ibid.* p.10.

109. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.316. Colonel Matthys Johan de Jager. He was on the Union Permanent Staff when the First World War broke out. Until 1919 he was the officer commanding the S.W.A. Police. He retired and became chairman of the S.W.A. Land Board. He was also chairman of the central executive of the "Zuid-West Afrika Vereeniging", a society which claimed to be non-party and which aimed to promote German-Afrikaner cooperation in S.W.A. after the First World War. See below p.184.

110. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Drafts. Draft C. (General Lemmer's Draft). p.5.

111. Gorges Report. *passim*.

22.

of the wide powers of both police and settlers, and an unsympathetic legal system.

Finally, although the whole system of administration lent itself towards abuses of power of the worst kind, resulting in a legacy of embittered race -relations, the accusations of atrocities levelled at the German Government after the First World War were often greatly exaggerated for propaganda purposes¹¹².

With the outbreak of the First World War and the invasion of German South West Africa by the Union, the Bondelswarts' hopes for a restoration of their tribal status and lands soared, as they remembered the "golden days" of their alliance with the Cape Government.

112. A good example of this is the Union's Gorges Report.

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CHAPTER 2.UNION RULE AND BONDELSWARTS DISILLUSIONMENT

The Bondelswarts held great hopes for the redress of their grievances and the end of German rule with the outbreak of the First World War and the Union invasion of German South West Africa on 14 September 1914. The long-awaited British rule seemed to be within sight, and some Bondelswarts in exile, notably Abraham Morris, took service with the Union forces as guides or scouts¹. Morris acquitted himself very well, and was mentioned in dispatches and admired for his shrewdness in matters military².

But for those Bondelswarts still living in G.S.W.A. the war was economically disastrous. As the Germans retreated northwards they took most of the Bondelswarts tribe and some other blacks with them, and when the Germans surrendered in the north³ about 2,000 Bondelswarts were found camped twenty-five miles outside Otavi⁴. Willem Christian, a grandson of the old Bondelswarts chief, said later that :

"When the war broke out in 1914 the Germans did not trust us. They thought we would rise and help the English. So they collected our tribe and sent us to Tsumeb in the extreme north of this country"⁵.

Thus the Union military administration was left with the problem of

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1. N.A.C. Report, p.3, para. 12.
 2. Trew, Lt. Col. H.F. Botha Treks. (Glasgow, 1936). pp.15-16
 3. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Exhibits and Annexures. Ex.1. p.5. N.A.M. See also R.P.N.A.C. Report Minutes of Evidence. p.90. Major Charles Nicholas Manning. (Major Manning was appointed Resident Commissioner of Ovamboland in October 1915, after being officer in charge of Native Affairs at Okahandja and Windhoek from 7 May 1915. In January 1921 he was appointed Commissioner for Native Affairs for the Protectorate of S.W.A., and was also a member of the Administrators' Advisory Board.)
 4. W.A. Administrators' Department. Vol. 50. "Correspondence 1915-1920". Files 592/7 - 599/-. File No. 599. Part 1 - Bondelswarts Settlements - Administration of. (Hereafter referred to as W.A. Adm. Vol.50. File 599). Extract from Minute from Dr Jorison at Omaruru.13 July 1925.
 5. Gorges Report, p.118.

resettling them⁶. This was eventually done in August 1915⁷, and a Native Affairs Officer was appointed at Kalkfontein-South to supervise the resettlement, issue rations and control the finances provided by the sale of Bondelswarts stock at Tsumeb by the Union military authorities⁸. Willem Christian echoed the Bondelswarts' feelings when he said :

"We lost all our small stock, and when the British troops released us at Tsumeb, we had again been reduced to poverty. The British government sent us back to our place at Warmbad and had to feed us to keep us alive. The British government collected some stock for us and distributed it, but we had not yet recovered half of what we originally possessed in 1914. We cannot say what the Germans did with our stock"⁹.

Willem's last remarks about compensation reveal the roots of the first disillusionment of the Bondelswarts after the First World War. What compensation there was was to be insufficient in their eyes, and bureaucratic tardiness in implementing it greatly increased their bitterness. Life under Union rule was not as rosy as had been expected.

Before they were sent back to Warmbad the Bondelswarts asked the military authorities to sell the 400 cattle which they had had in their possession at Tsumeb, and to transmit the proceeds to Warmbad¹⁰.

The cattle had been given to the Bondelswarts to provide milk for rations¹¹, as they had lost most of their stock in the enforced trek to the north¹².

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6. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.90. Major Manning.
 7. W.A. Adm. Vol. 50. File 599. The Bondelswarts were sent straight to Warmbad instead of via Usakos as other blacks were. Telegram from Capt. Liefeldt, Acting Native Commissioner to Windhoek. 24 August.1915.
 8. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.91. Major Manning.
 9. Gorges Report, p.118.
 10. W.A. Adm. Vol.50. File 599. Telegram from Maj. Leisk at Otavi to Maj. Pritchard at Windhoek. 21 July 1915.
 11. W.A. Adm. Vol. 50. File 599. Telegram Captain Leifeldt at Tsumeb. 24 July 1915.
 12. ibid. RT. 192/15. Report of Lt. Kendrick, O/C Native Affairs Department Keetmanshoop, after visit to Warmbad sent to Native Commissioner, Windhoek. 22 September 1915.

25.

The Bondelswarts requested that the proceeds of the sale of the stock be returned to them in cattle, not cash, at Warmbad¹³.

The Bondelswarts stock losses were estimated at about 15,227 head of small stock (sheep and goats), and about 123 cattle, the latter being few in number largely because of the German law prohibiting blacks from owning stock without a permit from the Governor¹⁴.

The sale of the Tsumeb stock realized £2,000¹⁵. From this sum £300 was deducted when it was found that some of the cattle had been requisitioned from a farmer, Roeder, and this money was paid to him as compensation. It was decided by the authorities that the remaining £1,700 was to be used to buy small stock, not cattle as the Bondelswarts had requested, to provide them with a livelihood¹⁶. In addition, the cost of rations issued to indigent Bondelswarts in Warmbad after the issuing of rations had been stopped was deducted from the £1,700.

Eventually, almost a year after the sale of the stock at Tsumeb, the military magistrate at Warmbad reported that, in accordance with instructions, on 16 August 1916, 2,960 goats had been divided amongst 333 Bondelswarts, each getting his share in the presence of two witnesses with a receipt signed by them¹⁷.

The effects of this were long-lasting¹⁸. The Native Commissioner for S.W.A.

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13. *ibid.* Telegram from Lt. Kendrick, Kalkfontein-South, to Native Commissioner, 18 Sept. 1915, Windhoek.
 14. *ibid.* Military magistrate, Warmbad, to Secretary for S.W.A. Protectorate, 24 June 1916. See also p.21.
 15. *ibid.* Military magistrate to Secretary for the Protectorate. 27 March 1916
 16. *ibid.* Deputy Secretary for Protectorate to Military magistrate, Warmbad. 19 July, 1916.
 17. *ibid.* Military magistrate, Warmbad, to Secretary for Protectorate. No. 2/35/16.
 18. For full account of the bureaucratic blunderings involved in this affair, see Section 2, pp.148-150.

Major Manning, after a visit to the Bondelswarts Reserve in 1921, found widespread poverty amongst them. He attributed part of the cause of this poverty as being due to the fact that the Bondelswarts had lost "most of their stock as a result of the war"¹⁹.

For a while the resettled Bondelswarts were given rations²⁰. But even in August 1915 the Native Commissioner there reported a shortage of and difficulty in distributing rations, and only indigent Bondelswarts received free rations²¹. In 1921, Father Isenring of the Roman Catholic Mission at Gabis informed Major Manning that some Bondelswarts were badly in need of pauper relief²².

During the period of German rule the Bondelswarts in exile in the Union had kept in close touch with their compatriots across the Orange River. In 1913, for instance, the German Consul-General visited the Union minister for the Interior and asked him to control the contacts and movements of the Union Nama people along the Orange River with those across the river²³.

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19. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Exhibits and Annexures. An.1. "Report of the Administrator on the Bondelzwarts Rising". (UG 30-'22). (Hereafter referred to as the A.R.B.) p.8. Report of Major Manning, 1921.
20. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.24. Det.-Sgt. Pietersen.
21. W.A. Adm. Vol. 50. File 599. Captain Manning, Acting Native Commissioner, to Keetmanshoop Native Commissioner, Lt. Kendrick.
22. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Exhibits and Annexures. AN.1. A.R.B.p.7. Major Manning's Report on Bondelswarts unrest, 1921.
In December 1915 rations were issued on the scale of seven pounds of mealie meal and one pound of meat per adult per week, half this for children. W.A. Adm. Vol. 50. File 599. Native Affairs Department, Keetmanshoop, to Native Commissioner, Windhoek. 14 December 1915. By 1917 this had been altered to three pounds of mealie-meal per adult per week but with no meat ration at all. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Exhibitions and Annexures. Ex. 2 p.3. Report from Magistrates office, Windhoek, to Secretary for Protectorate, dated 6 March 1917, re: reported Bondel-swartz unrest. (Hereafter referred to as the Eadie report).
23. T.A. Department Justice. Vol. 106. File 2/1221/11. Secretary for the Interior, Cape Town, to Secretary for Justice, Cape Town. 4 Feb. 1913.

27.

The magistrate at Springbok had, however, written to the Chief Commissioner of the South African Police in February 1913 pointing out that there were many Nama refugees from G.S.W.A. in his district who kept in touch across the river, and that interchange between the two groups was inevitable and unavoidable, "especially as the natives on both sides of the river (often) belong to the same families"²⁴.

The Bondelswarts wanted to reconstitute their old captaincy system once German rule had gone. In 1917 the Warmbad military magistrate reported that they were asking for the appointment of a Captain²⁵. He said that the Bondelswarts felt that if the Government did not do something about this it would imply a non-recognition of the Bondelswarts' tribal status and a lack of interest in their affairs²⁶. The strength of the Bondelswarts' desire for a Captain is reflected by the suggestion from the Warmbad military magistrate to the Secretary of the Protectorate that

"if the native know that they cannot have a Captain unless they remove to the reserve they will readily change their residence in spite of any sacrifice they may have to make"²⁷.

Many Bondelswarts had long wanted the member of the royal family in exile in the Union, Jacobus Christian, to be allowed to return to S.W.A. and to be officially recognised by the Government as the Bondelswarts' Captain. As soon as the Germans were defeated the Bondelswarts made representations on behalf of Jacobus Christian to this effect. These were refused, because,

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24. *ibid.* Springbok magistrate, Mr D.C. Giddy, to Chief Commissioner, South African Police, Cape Town. 28 February. 1913.
 25. W.A. Adm. Dept. Vol. 51. 1915-1920. Files 599/1-624/2. File 599/2. Administration of Bondelzwarts tribe. (Hereafter referred to as W.A. Adm. Vol. 51 File 599/2). Bondelswarts deputation to Major J.F. Herbst, Secretary for the S.W.A. Protectorate.
 26. *ibid.* Military magistrate, Warmbad, to Secretary for the Protectorate. 11 Jan. 1918.
 27. *ibid.* Military magistrate, Warmbad to Secretary for the Protectorate. 21 March 1918.

according to Major Herbst, (the Secretary for the Protectorate), of uncertainty over the future status of S.W.A.²⁸. As a result, in 1916 Adam Christian, (alias Pienaar), a Bondelswart led agitation for the instalment of Jacobus Christian as the Bondelswarts' captain²⁹.

The military magistrate of Warmbad, Capt. Wentzel, reported in February, 1919 that the Bondelswarts elders wanted Jacobus to be captain, because "Hij was met ons as een leider in die Hottentots Oorlog" (1904-6).³⁰

In 1918 the Bondelswarts were allowed to have a Captain, but the Government appointed Willem Christian. He was the son of Johannes Christian, who had been the captain from 1903 to 1910. But Willem died in December 1919³¹, leaving two adult claimants in the royal family for the Captaincy. One, Jacobus Christian, was still in exile, and the other claimant, Willem Christian, the son of the Captain whose death had sparked off the 1905-6 rebellion, Jan Abraham Christian, was old and decrepit.³² Jacobus Christian was the eldest son of the second wife of the famous Captain Willem Christian who had died in 1896³³. The appointment of Captain Willem Christian, who died in 1919, had not satisfied the Bondelswarts' aspirations, since, as the local military magistrate privately pointed out, Willem had been :

"a harmless idiot who was incapable of influencing his people in any way or even showing any interest in them"³⁴.

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28. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.12. Major Herbst.
 29. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Exhibits and Annexures. Ex. 2. Eadie Report. p.5. 6 March 1917.
 30. W.A. Adm. Vol. 51. File 599/2. Copy of Report from Lt. H. van der Made, O/C Det. 1st. M.C., Police district No. 18a from Keetmanshoop to Adjutant, Lt. Regt. M.C., Keetmanshoop. 23 Feb. 1919.
 31. N.A.C. Report, p.5, para 18.
 32. W.A. Adm. Vol. 51. File 599/2. Military magistrate, Warmbad, to Secretary for the Protectorate. 11 Jan. 1918.
 33. See appendix.C.
 34. W.A. Adm. Vol. 51. File 599/2. Military magistrate to Secretary for Protectorate. 3 Dec. 1918.

The situation became tenser with the arrival of Jacobus Christian and his followers in S.W.A. in 1919. Jacobus had made repeated applications to be allowed to return, but all were refused. Thus in July 1919 he left the Cape Province and entered S.W.A. with about 50 followers, saying that he was entitled to return now that peace had been signed³⁵. He also told the N.A.C. that they had returned because there was no work available in the Union, and that the Port Nolloth magistrate, Mr Taylor, had told him that he could cross into S.W.A.³⁶:

The copper mines in the Union in Little Namaqualand, where many Bondelswarts exiles had found work, were going through an economic recession at the time. The Namaqua Copper Company closed down in May 1918, followed by the Cape Copper Company in April 1919. The latter dismissed about 1,000 workers, although it reopened operations on a small scale in 1920³⁷.

Trooper A.A. Roux was stationed alone at Haib when the returning Bondelswarts arrived in August 1919. The thirsty cattle came to drink at the waterhole there first, and Roux noticed that the packs on their backs were tied on with fresh Gembok reins. Roux caught the cattle and held them, until two Bondelswarts came to claim them. Roux alleged that they told him that the police had no right to hold Bondelswarts cattle on Bondelswarts ground, and had no authority over the Bondelswarts people there, and so Roux arrested them and sent for their officers. When these did not appear he watered

35. N.A.C. Report, p.5, para. 19.

36. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.455. Jacobus Christian.

37. Smalberger, J.M. Aspects of the history of Copper mining in Namaqualand. 1846-1931. (Cape Town, 1975). p.112.

the cattle and released the men. Later more Bondelswarts arrived for water, and he again arrested them and sent for their leaders, to no avail.

The next day Trooper Roux and a Native Constable rode to where Jacobus and his men were camped and asked him to collect his men in order that their names might be taken and their numbers counted. According to Roux Jacobus refused, saying that the police had "nothing to do or say on his ground", and so Roux was only able to get the names of six of those who had crossed³⁸.

Roux reported the incident to Lt. Jordaan at Warmbad, saying that Jacobus Christian had crossed with 300 armed followers and that they had refused to hand over any permits they might have had. Lt. Jordaan informed his headquarters at Keetmanshoop and was instructed by Capt. Hofman to go to Haib with fourteen police and ask Jacobus if he had an entry permit.

In addition, Lt. Jordaan received a telegram from Mr Taylor to the effect that amongst Jacobus's followers were four Bondelswarts for whom he had warrants of arrest on charges of stock theft³⁹.

On receiving the news Lt. Jordaan posted pickets around Warmbad and on the Haib and Kamansdrift roads to forestall any attempted attack, and on Tuesday, 5 August he went with three N.C.O's. and eleven men to Haib. On the following day they reached Jacobus's camp. According to Lt. Jordaan, he had ordered his men not to excite the Bondelswarts, but on their arrival some armed Bondelswarts ran and took cover.

Lt. Jordaan went to meet Jacobus, and told him why he had come. The police were surrounded by armed Bondelswarts aiming rifles at them, and they refused

38. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Exhibits and Annexures. An 12. Correspondence re : entering Protectorate by Christian and others (hereafter referred to as An 13). Statement by Trooper A.A. Roux. The names he got were those of Jacobus Christian, Jacobus Christian junior (the Captain's nephew), Frederik Joseph, Jan Hendrik, Dirk Willems and David Christian.

39. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. pp.608-609. Lt. M.J. Jordaan.

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to come out of the bush even when Jacobus himself called them. After a while most came out, and they told Lt. Jordaan that they had returned from the Union, but had no permits for either themselves or their stock to enter S.W.A., since they were returning to their own land and the war was over. When Lt. Jordaan told Jacobus that they had broken the law by doing this, the Bondelswarts again took cover. Lt. Jordaan asked Jacobus to accompany him to Warmbad, but the latter refused, saying that he was ill, and offered to send some of his headmen instead.

Lt. Jordaan then left with his men and went to Haib and waited. Four headmen were sent to Warmbad by Jacobus, namely Jan Hendriks, David Frederick, Jan Christian and Dirk Willems. When they reached Haib Lt. Jordaan, in an inexcusable breach of faith, promptly arrested, imprisoned and charged them, and sent out a message for Jacobus to come to Haib. Not surprisingly, Jacobus refused either to come or to hand over the Bondelswarts' arms and ammunition, although he said he would go to Warmbad himself⁴⁰.

On hearing of the arrest of the four headmen the Administrator immediately ordered their release⁴¹. But the damage was done. Lt. Jordaan reported that Jacobus had crossed into S.W.A. with sixty men, seventy to eighty women and children, 1,400 sheep and goats, a hundred cattle, and eight donkeys and two horses.⁴²

In addition to the charges of illegally entering S.W.A. with stock and firearms, Mr C.J. Viljoen, a local farmer, charged the Bondelswarts with trespassing on his farm while on their way to the Reserve, and said that they had been shooting game.⁴³

40. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Exhibits and Annexures. An. 12. pp.7-9. Lt. Jordaan to Acting military magistrate, Warmbad. Report on "Native Unrest" 8 Aug. 1919.

41. N.A.C. Report, p.5, para. 20.

42. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Exhibits and Annexures. An.12.pp.7-9. Lt.Jordaan to Acting military magistrate, Warmbad. Report on "Native Unrest". 8 Aug. 1919.

43. *ibid.* An. 12. p.5. Evidence of J.J. Rocher.
See also p.50.

Special Commissioner Drew went to investigate the incident.

He met Jacobus and his followers, describing some of them later as being old and decrepit. Jacobus handed over nine firearms and some ammunition, and Drew informed them of the charges against them. Jacobus replied that that they did not want trouble and had merely wanted to return to their home and live peacefully. He said most of them had been working for the Cape Copper Company at O'okiep and NababEEP, or on the railway at Port Nolloth which carried the copper ore, and that when these had closed the Bondelswarts were left "destitute". He claimed that Mr Taylor, the magistrate, had given them the option of going by sea to Cape Town to get work or leaving Port Nolloth within twenty four hours to find work. Taylor had refused to give them permist to enter S.W.A. and had stopped their ration supply. The Bondelswarts had decided that as it was peacetime they could return to their own country.

As for trespassing on Mr Viljoen's farm, Jacobus said he had asked the farmer's permission to water stock there, and that while they were there Viljoen had made no complaints or demands for compensation to him. After four days without water the Bondelswarts cattle had stampeded to the Haib police-post waterhole, reaching it before Jacobus's two messengers could arrive to inform the police of the Bondelswarts' arrival. Jacobus denied that the messengers were insolent, and took "strong exception" to Trooper Roux denying the cattle access to water.

Three days later, said Jacobus, the Bondelswarts were "suddenly confronted" by a body of police with fixed bayonets. Some of his people took fright and fled, covering the police with their rifles since they thought they were going to be attacked. Jacobus said he had refused to surrender his firearms and go with Lt. Jordaan to Warmbad because he did not trust him. Instead, he had written a letter to the Warmbad magistrate, and had given it to the four

headmen who had been arrested and imprisoned⁴⁴.

In the letter, Jacobus stressed that the Bondelswarts came in peace and had made no secret of their arrival. He was angry that Roux had refused them water, breaking an unwritten law of that dry area⁴⁵.

Drew in his report said that he felt the Bondelswarts had come in peace and strongly condemned the action of the police, feeling that they had been "entirely misled" by Trooper Roux and Mr Viljoen's messenger, J.J. Rocher. The matter was not a police affair, Drew said, and the magistrate had not even been consulted. Lt. Jordaan's action in arresting the four headmen was an "unwarrantable breach of faith" and Taylor had shown "apparent apathy" in not communicating the Bondelswarts desire to return to the S.W.A. Administrator. He recommended that the Bondelswarts should not be prosecuted, or if they were they should only get a light penalty for bringing in firearms⁴⁶.

Christian's arrival in the Reserve caused much European panic in Warmbad, with exaggerated reports of an impending large-scale invasion of the town⁴⁷. Jacobus Christian surrendered himself to the Warmbad magistrate, and was given a suspended sentence of a fine of £100 and 12 months imprisonment for illegal entry into S.W.A., for possessing rifles without permits, and for bringing in stock without permits. The Bondelswarts who had crossed with Jacobus were allowed to stay because the Union refused to allow their stock to recross the Orange River, for fear of spreading stock diseases⁴⁸. In addition Jacobus had to promise not to interfere with the administration of the tribe or the Captaincy dispute,

44. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Exhibitions and Annexures. An 12. p. 17. Special Commissioner Drew at Warmbad to Secretary for Protectorate. 16 Aug. 1919.

45. *ibid.* Jacobus Christian to Warmbad magistrate from Haib. 8 Aug. 1919.

46. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Exhibits and Annexures. An 12. p. 17. Special Commissioner Drew, Warmbad, to Secretary for Protectorate. 16 Aug. 1919.

47. N.A.C. Report, p. 5., para 20. See also p. 192.

48. *ibid.* p. 6, para 21.

and all firearms had to be surrendered⁴⁹.

After Willem Christian's death in 1919, Hendrik Schneeuwe was appointed the Bondelswarts Captain⁵⁰. However, he was deposed by the tribe on 11 March 1920 for having "defalcated tribal moneys", and Timotheus Beukes was appointed in his place⁵¹. Beukes in turn resigned in April 1921, leaving the Bondelswarts without an officially recognised Captain⁵². But, as Major Manning pointed out in 1921 :

"Although we gave no recognition to Jacobus Christian as a chief and he did not assert this, there was no doubt that all the people, including a sprinkling of other nationalities amongst what was after a small gathering of people (scarcely 50 men) regard him as hereditary and actual foreman and spokesman"⁵³.

The Government remained inflexible despite continual Bondelswarts petitions for Jacobus to be made Captain from the moment he arrived in 1919⁵⁴. It was a bitter pill for the Bondelswarts tribe to swallow.

Jacobus Christian's return was followed by a constant trickle of Bondelswarts exiles returning to their traditional lands. Some came in legally, as when in October 1921 sixty eight men and eighty-four women with a large number of small stock were allowed in from Kakamas in the Union with permission from F.S. Malan, the acting Prime Minister at the time⁵⁵. Others came in illegally and in 1920 there were fifty cases of Namas crossing the

49. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.13. Major Herbst on A.R.B.

50. N.A.C. Report, p.5, para. 18.

51. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.227. Det. Sgt. Pietersen presents evidence of Sgt. Naude.

52. *ibid.* p.20. Major Herbst.

53. W.A. Adm. File A388/1. Bondelswarts rebellion, General Part. (Hereafter referred to as W.A. Adm. File A388/1), p.6. Report of Major Manning to Secretary for Protectorate re: Bondelswarts unrest due to dog tax. 29 May 1921.

54. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.227. Det. Sgt. Pietersen presents evidence of Sgt. Naude.

55. *ibid.* p.17. Major Herbst on A.R.B.

Orange River without permits⁵⁶, and others may have got through without being noticed⁵⁷. The Secretary for the Protectorate had no objection to their returning as long as their stock was disease-free and they accepted that they had to comply with the labour regulations⁵⁸. In 1921 a proclamation was made in S.W.A. to the effect that no black could enter the territory except to take up employment⁵⁹.

✓ One of the Bondelswarts' greatest hopes for British rule had been that their traditional tribal lands would be returned to them. There were sorely disappointed when their hopes failed to materialize⁶⁰.

Much of the Bondelswarts' land had been obtained under concession by the British Karaskoma Company⁶¹. The syndicate had been allowed 128 farms of 10,000 Cape morgen each by the German authorities, on condition they built a railway line to Angra Pequena. If this was done, after five years they would be given another 128 farms of the same size, and after fifteen years another 256 farms. In September 1895 the rights of the British Karaskoma Company were transferred to the S.A. Territories Company⁶². The new Company got the mineral rights on Bondelswarts land until 1917, and the right to pick out 150 farms against a payment of £50 p.a. to the Bondelswarts tribe. In 1910 the German Government laid claim to this money, but the German courts

56. *ibid.* p.819. Sgt. Johannes Wichardt Naude, S.W.A. Police, Warmbad.

57. An informant, Isaak Witbooi, said that many Bondelswarts exiles came across to S.W.A. following their Captain, Jacobus Christian. Interview with Isaak Witbooi at Warmbad on 20 July 1977. See Appendix A.

58. W.A. Adm. Vol. 51. File 599/2. Secretary for Protectorate to military magistrate, Warmbad. 13 July 1918. See p.40.

59. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.50. Major Herbst.

60. *ibid.* p.307. Col. de Jager.

61. See p.13.

62. Goldblatt, pp. 117-118.

decided in favour of the Bondelswarts⁶³. S.A. Territories Ltd. promptly stopped paying the Bondelswarts their yearly instalments. In addition, a Keetmanshoop farm, "Daheb", had been sold by the Bondelswarts to a Mr Smit, but the purchase price was confiscated by the Germans in 1906. In a petition to General Smuts in April 1920 the Bondelswarts asked, unsuccessfully, for payment for this farm⁶⁴.

Not only did the Bondelswarts not receive their lands back when the Union took over, but the Land Settlement Act of 1912, amended in 1917 and 1920 was extended to S.W.A. by a proclamation in 1920. This Act extended a system of government loans controlled by a land board which enabled white settlers to obtain farms with very little capital, encouraging white settlement in S.W.A.⁶⁵.

In 1920 a Land Board was set up in S.W.A. in accordance with the Act, with four members and a chairman. The southern areas of S.W.A. were surveyed and in 1920 "some 80 farms" in the Warmbad and Keetmanshoop districts were advertised.

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63. W.A. Adm. Vol. 106. "Correspondence 1915-1920". Files 3343/- to 3360/-. File 3353. Hottentots : Bondelzwarts. Reported Unrest. (hereafter referred to as W.A. Adm. Vol. 106. File 3353). Warmbad magistrate to Secretary for S.W.A. 13 Sept. 1920.
64. ibid. Warmbad magistrate to Secretary for S.W.A.. 14 April 1920.
65. Land Settlement Act, No. 12 of 1912 from Statutes of the Union of South Africa. 4/2. (Cape Town, 1915). pp. 150 ff.
Land Settlement Amendment Act of 1917. 4/7. 1920.
Proclamation No. 14 of 1920. 3/2. From Official Gazette of the Protectorate of S.W.A. No. 29. 5 March 1920.

Wellington says :

"With the almost immediate allotment of these farms a new period of land settlement was inaugurated. By the end of 1923 there had been a total of 730 allotments of land in S.W.A., covering a total area of 5 million hectares"⁶⁶.

The Bondelswarts watched their tribal lands irrevocably being divided up and settled by whites on an unprecedented scale. And as the pressure on the land grew, so did the pressure on the borders of the Bondelswarts Reserve.

The Bondelswarts were dissatisfied with the boundaries of their Reserve under Union rule. The 1906 German-Bondelswarts treaty demarcating the reserve was recognized and adopted by the Union Government when it took over⁶⁷.

Almost immediately Bondelswarts complaints of encroachment on the Reserve boundaries started, and in 1917 they complained about Government stock grazing on their Reserve⁶⁸. But the trouble really started when in 1918 the Secretary for the Protectorate instructed the military magistrate to "gently" move those Bondelswarts living on crown lands adjoining the Reserve into the Reserve, using the lure of a promise to appoint a Bondelswarts captain as an inducement⁶⁹.

The 1906 boundary cut off parts of some farms, notably Uitschot, Welgelegen, Plankieskop⁷⁰ and Aroab⁷¹. During Union rule these farms were allotted for European settlement, and so Bondelswarts squatting on them had to be moved into the Reserve. But the Bondelswarts complained that according to them

66. Wellington, p.215.

67. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.9. Major Herbst.

68. W.A. Adm. Vol. 51. File 599/2. Military magistrate, Warmbad, to Secretary for Protectorate. 28 Dec. 1917.

69. *ibid.* Military magistrate, Warmbad to Secretary for Protectorate. 21 March 1918.

70. N.A.C. Report, p.8, para.28.

71. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.384. George Frederick Fleck, magistrate for Warmbad district from 11 July 1920.

these areas were within the 1906 boundary lines, and they held their northern boundary line to be much further north than the Government said it was⁷². In October 1921 the Bondelswarts took their Reserve Superintendent, Mr Noothout and showed him what they held was the Reserve boundary line. They held that⁷³ Uitschot, Welgelegen and Plankieskop fell within their Reserve and pointed out a marked tree as being one of the beacons⁷⁴. The Surveyor-General of S.W.A., Mr A.G. Landsberg, investigated and found that his survey and co-ordinates compared with those set out in the German survey showed a negligible difference of, at most, 0,65 of a metre, and so the Bondelswarts claims were groundless⁷⁵. Noothout was instructed to inform the Bondelswarts that the question was closed and no further correspondence on the matter would be considered⁷⁶.

But the Bondelswarts remained convinced that their boundary was further north, and felt increasingly dissatisfied about it.

Gradually disillusionment among the Bondelswarts began to turn into frustration and anger, and this was aggravated by the imposition by the Union administration of new and stricter laws interfering with the last vestiges of Bondelswarts independence even within the boundaries of their Reserve. The Bondelswarts, already badly hit by the stock losses of World War I, found their economic independence being steadily eroded away, and their poverty increased their anger.

72. N.A.C. Report, p.8, para. 28. See mapD.

73. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.420. Johan Noothout to Native Commissioner for S.W.A. 7 Oct. 1921. Noothout had been officer in charge of Native Affairs in Keetmanshoop during the period of Union military rule. In 1920 he became the Bondelswarts' Reserve Superintendent.

74. *ibid.* pp. 420-421. See also p.168.

75. *ibid.* Surveyor-General to Native Commissioner for S.W.A. 3 Dec. 1921.

76. *ibid.* Fleck to Noothout. 27 Feb. 1922.

S.W.A. was hit by a drought which lasted three years, starting in 1917⁷⁷, and which forced the Bondels to sell or slaughter some of their stock at a time when the market was depressed⁷⁸. The Native Reserves Commission in 1921 attested to the detrimental effects of the drought on the southern areas of S.W.A.⁷⁹. At the same time there was a world-wide post-war economic depression⁸⁰. As already noted, the closing of the Little Namaqualand coppermines dried up a major source of employment for Bondelswarts in exile, and acted as a catalyst for their return to S.W.A., as in the case of Jacobus Christian in 1919⁸¹. In S.W.A. itself the end of military occupation in 1920 meant that less money was circulating and fewer jobs were available⁸², while inflation too left its mark⁸³.

The labour conditions of the Bondelswarts left much to be desired. The N.R.C. noted that while the Bondelswarts complied with labour regulations, they had a poor relationship with their European employers on the whole, alleging that they were ill-treated. The white employers on the other hand complained that the Bondelswarts were not worth their wages,⁸⁴

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77. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p. 865. Lt. Col. Jacobus Andries Diederik Kruger, D.S.O., a member of the Native Reserves Commission, (See p.55 and p.183) and a farmer at Uhabis.
78. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Exhibits and Annexures. An 1. p.7. A.R.B. Major Manning's Report on Bondelswarts unrest, 1921.
79. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.844. Lt.Col. Kruger on N.R.C.
80. N.A.C. Report, p.11, para. 44.
81. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Exhibits and Annexures. An 12. p.17. Special Commissioner Drew to Secretary for Protectorate re: arrival of Jacobus Christian. 16 Aug. 1917.
82. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.865. Lt. Col. Kruger.
83. *ibid.* p.949. Lt. Hendrik Frederik Prinsloo (sub-inspector in S.W.A. Police from 1915.)
84. N.A.C. Report, p.11, para. 42.

and the farmers suffered from a labour shortage⁸⁵.

The Bondelswarts' labour opportunities were restricted by insufficient education and a dearth of local industries⁸⁶. Major Manning pointed out that disease and want of proper food disabled many Bondelswarts from working and reduced their productivity when they did⁸⁷.

Some Bondelswarts complained of being beaten by their employers and of not being paid their wages⁸⁸. Major Herbst, the Secretary for S.W.A., said that if a complaint of ill-treatment by an employer was lodged action was taken by the Administration⁸⁹. The employer would be summonsed and "probably sentenced to £5 or a months' imprisonment", and such cases were reviewed by a judge⁹⁰.

The Bondelswarts were subject to a number of pass and work laws in S.W.A. under Union administration. The German Imperial Government's ordinance of 18 August 1907 had provided that all blacks over seven years old had to carry a pass, except the Rehoboth Basters⁹¹. In addition, every black had to be in employment unless he had visible means of support⁹². The Union Government retained this system but limited the carrying of passes to males over fourteen years old, and to females over fourteen years old living in urban areas. "Visible means of support" was re-defined as owning more than ten large or fifty small stock, and then only the head of the family and as many as were needed to maintain the property were allowed exemption, and

85. *ibid*, p.10, para. 40.

86. *ibid*, p.32, para. 23.

87. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Exhibits and Annexures. Anl.p.7. A.R.B. Major Manning's Report on Bondelswarts unrest. 1921.

88. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.754. John Brown. His father was an Englishman, his mother a Bondelswarts.

89. *ibid*. p.27. Major Herbst.

90. *ibid*. p.29. Major Herbst.

91. Gorges Report, p.111.

92. N.A.C. Report, p.4, para. 7.

they had to carry certificates of exemption. The old or infirm were excluded from labour requirements⁹³.

Passes had to be obtained for unemployed blacks to seek work⁹⁴, and these served as both passes and service contracts. When leaving his place of employment a black had to get a pass from his employer, or if travelling for his employer, a special travelling pass had to be obtained from the employer. If travelling for his own purposes a travelling pass had to be obtained from the police, with the recommendation of the employer⁹⁵. No fee was charged for these passes⁹⁶. Under the Native Administration Proclamation No. 11 of 1922, all non-Europeans, with certain exceptions, were prohibited from entering or leaving the territory without a permit, which had to be shown on demand to a police officer, failure to do so making the offender liable to legal prosecution⁹⁷.

The Curfew Regulations Proclamation No. 33 of 1922 empowered local authorities to place a curfew on blacks in all streets or public places in urban areas, except in locations, between 9p.m. and 4a.m., unless they had a permit from their employer or a "proper officer" to be there⁹⁸.

Under the Vagrancy Law of 1920 any black found wandering with no or insufficient visible means of support, or found trespassing or loitering, could be imprisoned or fined⁹⁹. The controversial provision was that a first offender under this law had to be sentenced by the magistrate to a term of service on public works or with a private person other than the complainant, at a wage deemed fair by the magistrate. Farmers in need of labour thus

93. N.A.C. Report, p.4, para. 7.

94. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Exhibits and Annexures. Ex. 1. p.6. N.A.M.

95. *ibid.* p.7.

96. *ibid.* p.7.

97. Wellington, p.283.

98. *ibid.* p.283.

99. *ibid.* p.283. (Proclamation No. 25 of 1920).

waited at court for such offenders. However, no black could be prosecuted as a vagrant if work was unobtainable in that area¹⁰⁰.

Master-servant relations were also regulated. Under Union law the old German powers of indiscriminate flogging were reduced, and only a magistrate was allowed to mete out punishment¹⁰¹. Servants' wages had to be paid in cash¹⁰², and all contracts were now only valid if drawn up in writing before and approved by an officer in charge of Native Affairs, or the police. The local magistrates were to draw up schedules of wages and check the fairness of contracts¹⁰³.

The German masters, and servants law was modified. Wages had to be paid and the master could no longer remove the servants' assets. Fines or imprisonment were substituted for flogging in cases where servants contravened their contracts, and police could no longer flog or chain blacks upon the lodging of a complaint by a master¹⁰⁴.

Under the Masters and Servants Proclamation No. 34 of 1920 a servant became liable to legal penalties if he caused his master a loss by neglect, breach of duty or drunkenness or, if he was a herdsman, by failure to report the death or loss of stock. Desertion from service incurred legal penalties as well, and smaller penalties were provided for being late for work, absenteeism, intoxication, impertinence, and failure to obey a lawful command. The master incurred legal penalties if he withheld wages or dismissed the servant without lawful cause. More serious penalties were provided for threats or acts of violence by masters to servants¹⁰⁵.

100. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Exhibits and Annexures. Ex. 1. p.6. N.A.M.

101. N.A.C. Report, p.3, para. 14.

102. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Exhibits and Annexures. Ex.1.p.3. Circular from Administrator to magistrates and officers in charge of Native Affairs. 23 Oct. 1916. 567/2.

103. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Exhibits and Annexures. p.7. N.A.M. Sect. 5 of Proclamation No. 2. of 1916.

104. *ibid.* p.9.

105. Wellington, p.283.

But, even so, for those Bondelswarts who did work there was often much dissatisfaction over their wages, which were low and often, illegally, paid in kind and not cash¹⁰⁶. As early as 1915 the local Native Commissioner at Keetmanshoop reported that he had found :

"several instances, which have come to my notice, where farmers engage boys at 15/- per month and when paying them off they give them the equivalent in stock. The equivalent of a goat usually being 15/-, and in most cases, the Native goes away satisfied. I need not point out that 15/- is much in excess of the value of an ordinary breeding goat, which is worth from 5/- to 10/- according to size"¹⁰⁷.

White farmers excused themselves by replying that drought and depression had made them too poor to pay higher or cash wages¹⁰⁸, and that the Bondelswarts were bad workers and did not deserve more pay anyway¹⁰⁹. The average wage was estimated at from 15/- to £1 per month, plus 100 lbs. of meat, four pounds of coffee, four pounds of sugar, half a pound of tea, a half-roll of tobacco, and cast-off clothing¹¹⁰. In 1921 the N.R.C. recommended a minimum wage of 15/- per month with food for adult male blacks, 10/- per month for adult female blacks, and 5/- per month for black males and females under sixteen years old, but no standard ration was recommended¹¹¹. By the time of the Bondelswarts revolt in 1922 these recommendations had not been implemented.

The effect of this, as Major Manning (Native Commissioner for S.W.A), pointed out, was to make the Bondelswarts even more disinclined to work for the farmers¹¹².

The Bondelswarts had great difficulty in raising ready cash for dog and other taxes. In June 1921 the Warmbad magistrate reported that the Bondelswarts

106. N.A.C. Report, p.11, para. 42.

107. W.A. Adm. Vol. 50. File 599. Officer in charge of Native Affairs, Keetmanshoop, to Native Commissioner, Windhoek. 25 Nov. 1915.

108. N.A.C. Report, p.11, para. 44.

109. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.343. F.van R. Coetzee.

110. *ibid.* p.85. Major Herbst.

111. *ibid.* p.862. Lt. Col. Kruger on N.R.C.

112. *ibid.* pp. 115-116. Major Manning.

could not pay their dog tax owing to the "unreasonable prices offered by shopkeepers who preferred bartering."¹¹³. But the Bondelswarts had to sell their stock in Warmbad because of the strict stock disease controls¹¹⁴. and transport problems. The traders' high prices for goods were also a source of Bondelswarts discontent¹¹⁵. Mr Humphreys, Reserves Superintendent in Little Namaqualand in the Union found traders there over-charging and keeping the Nama in perpetual debt by allowing almost unlimited credit at high interest rates, like those in S.W.A.¹¹⁶. The extreme poverty and low wages in the Richtersveld area of Little Namaqualand provided a fertile field for unrest¹¹⁷.

This lack of ready cash, aggravated by some farmers paying wages in kind and not cash, put the Bondelswarts in something of a quandary, for the Administration would only accept tax payments in cash, and would only allow barter in exceptional cases and then only for whites¹¹⁸. The Bondelswarts did manage to raise cash by other means, however, by making and selling lime, and cutting firewood, or bundles of grass, the latter selling at 2/-per 100 bundles delivered at Kalkfontein-South.¹¹⁹. But their anger at having to pay high taxes was aggravated by frustration in trying to raise ready cash.

113. *ibid.* p.34. Major Herbst on A.R.B. Telegram from Warmbad magistrate. 2nd June 1921.

114. *ibid.* p.102. Major Manning.

115. *ibid.* p. 843. Lt. Col. Kruger on N.R.C.

116. *ibid.* p. 624. Stephen Edkins Humphreys, Senior Superintendent of Communal Reserves and Inspector of Native Labourers for Namaqualand from May 1920.

117. *ibid.* pp. 611-612. See p.62.

118. *ibid.* p.35. Major Herbst.

119. W.A. Adm. Vol. 51. File 599/2. Deputation of Bondels meet Secretary for Protectorate. 30 June 1917.

Hit by high prices, their loss of stock during World War I, low wages, drought, depression and inflation, the Bondelswarts were poor. How poor is a matter of contention.

The Administrator, Gysbert Reitz Hofmeyr . pointed out that in the south of S.W.A. the climate was unsuitable for any extensive form of cultivation, and therefore, the Bondelswarts had to live on meat and milk¹²⁰.

Lt. Prinsloo summed up the Governments' view as to the causes of Bondelswarts poverty when he described them as "wastrels" and poor stock breeders, with no eye for the future¹²¹. The N.R.C. in 1921 found the Bondelswarts "fast becoming impoverished both in numbers and stock", but condemned them for being "idle and lazy"¹²².

Major Manning on his visit to the Bondels Reserve in 1921 was deeply struck by their poverty. He found them "living chiefly on gum (acacia), goats milk, etc."¹²³. He reported that :

"These people stated that in former years they had been able to earn by washing and other labour sufficient to live fairly comfortably but owing to the smallness of wages and rations now obtainable in the district, high prices charged by the traders for even the smallest clothing requirements and loss of most of their stock as a result of the war, they were in distress.

The majority were somewhat aged, physically unfit and apparently in poor circumstances compared with most native elsewhere"¹²⁴.

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120. R.P. "Memorandum by the Administrator of S.W.A. on the report of the Commission appointed to enquire into the Rebellion of the Bondelzwarts" p.2. 4 April 1923. (Hereafter referred to as Hofmeyr's Memorandum). MS 14 787/A/(iv).
121. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.849. Lt. Prinsloo's report on his part in the military operations against the Bondelswarts in the 1922 revolt.
122. *ibid.* p.848. Lt. Col. Kruger on N.R.C.
123. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Exhibits and Annexures. An.1. p.7. A.R.B. Major Manning's report on Bondelswarts unrest, 1921.
124. *ibid.* p.8.

However, the numbers of stock captured after the 1922 rebellion seemed to belie this poverty. In all, in 1922, 715 donkeys, 853 cattle, 12,693 goats and sheep and 15 horses were captured from the Bondels¹²⁵. Nonetheless, it seems clear that there was poverty, and that poverty bred discontent.

It appears that the Union's administration of S.W.A. disillusioned the Bondelswarts of any hopes they had cherished for British rule. In the course of evidence later given to the N.A.C. of inquiry into the 1922 rebellion there are reference from Bondels witnesses to the "unjust", "boeren" government, while there is a consistently expressed vague wish for the liberties which they believed an "English" government would have provided¹²⁶.

From this it can be deduced that the transfer from German to Union rule was not all the Bondelswarts had hoped it would be. By contrast, there were those whites who felt that the changeover had been too dramatic, from "slavery" to "licentiousness" in the words of General Lemmer, a member of the N.A.C.¹²⁷. Other whites felt that the sudden reduction in police powers had encouraged black disparagement of the S.W.A. police¹²⁸.

The pass and work laws restricted the Bondelswarts' freedom of action and impinged on their pride and independence. But it was the strict tax and other laws imposed by the Union Government which eroded their economic inde-

125. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.261. Det. Sgt. Pietersen. See p.160.

126. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.752. John Brown. *ibid.* p. 774. Johannes Matroos, a Bondelswarts living at Gabis. *ibid.* p. 879. James William Haite, living at Bethanie.

127. R.P.N.A.C. Report Drafts. Draft C. p.7. (General Lemmer's draft).

128. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.291. Col. de Jager.

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pendence and interfered with their traditional way of life, which greatly embittered them, and turned frustration into anger.

Thus the Warmbad magistrate reported that there had been great difficulty in enforcing the compulsory dipping of small stock to prevent scab disease. The Union law was much stricter than the German one, and the Bondelswarts resented it¹²⁹.

Bondelswarts opposition was also strong against the "Branding of Cattle Proclamation of 1921"¹³⁰. The N.R.C. in 1921 had recommended that the branding of large and small stock be made compulsory, with each reserve having its own brand.¹³¹ The Superintendent of the reserve was to retain the irons and supervise the branding¹³². The 1921 Proclamation put this into effect.

Branding of large stock was made compulsory for white and blacks. Branding irons cost of uniform 30s, but only whites were allowed to retain them. Blacks had to have their cattle branded by an official, and the irons were to be kept by the magistrate. The aim was to eliminate stocktheft¹³³ and to prevent unfounded accusations of blacks being stockthieves¹³⁴. When a black wanted his branding iron he had to bring proof of ownership

129. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.405. Fleck.

130. N.A.C. Report, p.9, para. 34.

131. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p. 852. Lt. Col. Kruger presents report of N.R.C. to Secretary for Protectorate. 8 June 1921.

132. *ibid.* p.856.

133. N.A.C. Report, p.9, para.34.

134. *ibid.* p.9, para. 36.

of his stock, and the Police or Superintendent would then brand the stock for him¹³⁵.

However, owing to the strength of the Bondelswarts' opposition, no prosecutions took place for contravention of the law¹³⁶. Nevertheless, it rankled, and was a major Bondelswarts grievance, contributing towards the build-up of dissatisfaction, frustration and tension.

Even more resented that the branding law was the dog tax, and in this case the tax was strictly enforced.

The Bondelswarts being primarily a pastoral people, extensively used dogs to protect their stock against vermin like jackals,¹³⁷ and used them to hunt game.¹³⁸ This helped to provide them with a livelihood without having to slaughter their stock¹³⁹.

When the Union government took over the administration of S.W.A. it imposed a dog tax. Under German rule a dog tax of 30 marks for the first dog and

135. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.39. Major Herbst.

136. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Exhibits and Annexures. An. 3. Proclamation No. 36 of 1921. "Cattle Brands Proclamation. "Official Gazette No. 68 of S.W.A., Windhoek. 6 September 1921. Clause 6. "Branding irons allotted hereunder to natives shall be kept in the control and custody of the magistrate or such other person as the Administrator may designate, and the branding of cattle whereof a native is the owner shall be conducted under the direction of the magistrate or such other person and be subject to such conditions as the Administrator may from time to time prescribe by regulation framed in pursuance of section twenty hereof". Defines "native" as "non-European", but exempts registered black landowners.

137. N.A.C. Report, p.9, para. 33.

138. *ibid.* p.8, para. 31.

139. *ibid.* p.8, para. 33. See also The Journal of Wikar. wherein Wikar describes the extensive use of dogs for hunting. p.46.

10 marks for each additional dog had been levied, but only in urban areas¹⁴⁰. In 1917 the Administrator, Gorges, imposed a tax of 20s on the first dog and a new tax of 5s per dog on dogs in rural areas. Whites were allowed one dog free of tax as a watchdog, and this exemption was extended to blacks in 1919¹⁴¹. The purpose of the tax was clear :

"Complaints have been made of natives roaming about rural areas with a number of dogs to supply them with food. When such cases are found the natives should be required immediately to destroy such dogs as the Magistrate shall find to be in excess of their actual needs, and may order the police to destroy them if the native fails to do so."¹⁴²

If the tax was not paid the police could capture the dog and inform the owner. If not claimed within a week the dog could be destroyed or sold by public auction¹⁴³.

When Hofmeyr became Administrator of S.W.A. in 1920 he toured the country and said he found "vast numbers of dogs" still in the possession of blacks and "a certain class of European squatter" which were used to hunt game instead of earning a living by what Hofmeyr called "honest labour"¹⁴⁴. Farmers, especially those in the South, pressurized Hofmeyr to increase the dog tax as an inducement for blacks to seek work¹⁴⁵.

In 1921, Hofmeyr therefore increased the dog tax by Proclamation No. 16. The new tax worked on a graduated scale, with £1 being levied for the first dog, £2.10 for two dogs, £4.10 for three dogs, £7 for four, £10 for 5 and so on¹⁴⁶.

140. N.A.C. Report, p.8, para. 29. Law d. 23 Feb. 1907.

141. *ibid.* p.8, para. 29.

142. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Exhibits and Annexures. Ex. 1. p.11. N.A.M.

143. *ibid.* p.11.

144. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. pp. 41-42. Major Herbst.

145. *ibid.* p.332. F. van R. Coetzee.

146. N.A.C. Report, p.8, para. 30.

Clause 12 of the proclamation stated that :

"Any dog found after expiration of 3 months from the due date without a badge issued under Sec. 9. hereof shall be liable to seizure by the police and unless proof of payment of the tax in respect thereof be forthwith produced it may be immediately destroyed"¹⁴⁷.

The tax was a heavy one, and was greatly resented by the Bondelswarts. Their resentment, combined with their frustration at the unavailability of cash¹⁴⁸, made their mood explosive.

Owing to consistent opposition the tax was reduced by 50% in 1922. But prosecution of the Bondelswarts who failed to comply with the tax deadline began on 19 September 1921, and in the period up to 23 January 1922 there were 140 cases of non-payment of the tax heard by the Warmbad magistrate. There were 100 convictions, with penalties averaging a £2 fine or 14 days imprisonment¹⁴⁹. Bondelswarts bitterness and disillusionment with the new regime increased correspondingly, and the dog tax can be seen as a contributory cause of the 1922 rebellion.

Hunting had traditionally formed a mainstay of the Bondelswarts' diet, since they were loath, like any pastoral society, to kill their precious domesticated stock. The Bondelswarts were also described as being unusual in their sporting instincts and love of hunting¹⁵⁰. Lt. Prinsloo said that for the Bondelswarts "in the absence of a rifle his dogs are his best friends"¹⁵¹.

147. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Exhibits and Annexures. An.2. p.2. Dog Tax Proclamation No. 16 of 1921.

148. See p.159.

149. C.A. Prime Minister's Office. L.N. 13/4. Vol. 6. "August - December 1923". League of Nations. Permanent Mandates Commission". (Hereafter referred to as C.A. P.M.O. Vol. 6.) Permanent Mandates Commission (P.M.C.) Report. p.9.

150. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.950. Lt. Prinsloo.

151. *ibid.* p.950.

Under a German law of 1909 and 1910 blacks were only allowed to hunt game within the confines of their Reserves. They were not allowed to use traps or fires to hunt, and had to have a permit to shoot with a shot-gun.¹⁵² To the Bondelswarts' disappointment, when the Union Government took over S.W.A. it continued these laws¹⁵³. In fact, it enforced them more strictly, and it was a serious crime to be found in possession of big game skins¹⁵⁴. The Bondelswarts resented this and saw it as depriving them of food¹⁵⁵.

In any case, the dog tax effectively limited the number of dogs available for hunting. Furthermore, the Bondelswarts were not allowed to own rifles. Under the terms of the 1906 treaty they had had to surrender all arms and ammunition. They could no longer possess rifles, but could borrow a rifle and a few rounds from a local official for a few days to hunt¹⁵⁶. Under Union administration even this stopped, and strict control was extended over the introduction of rifles into S.W.A. without a permit. Thus both the game and rifle laws often brought the Bondelswarts into conflict with the law¹⁵⁷. In addition, vermin could not be effectively checked, and the N.R.C. found that one of the chief complaints of both black and white in the South of S.W.A. was that, owing to the drought, pastorage was being destroyed by large numbers of springbuck and ostriches. Thus the N.R.C. recommended that the Bondelswarts be allowed to borrow rifles from the Reserve Superintendent for a few days to shoot vermin¹⁵⁸.

These laws served to increase the Bondelswarts' suspicion and hostility to the Government, and they felt increasingly aggrieved and exploited.

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152. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Exhibits and Annexures. Ex. 1. p.10. N.A.M. Law d. 15 Feb. 1909, amended 4 Oct. 1910.

153. *ibid.* p.10

154. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.824. Sgt. Naude.

155. *ibid.* p.457. Jacobus Christian.

156. *ibid.* p. 240. Det. Sgt. Pietersen presents copy of 1906 Treaty.

157. *ibid.* p.950. Lt. Prinsloo.

158. *ibid.* pp. 843-4 and p.873. Lt. Col. Kruger on N.R.C. Report.



CHAPTER 3.NATIVE POLICY AND BLACK-WHITE RELATIONS

After the military occupation of South West Africa by the Union in 1915 a system of martial law was set up. In October 1915 the military Governor, General Beves, was replaced by a civil Administrator, E.H.L. Gorges (later Sir E.H.L. Gorges)¹, the former Secretary for the Interior in the Union². The aims of the new Administrator were to open up avenues of appeal for blacks and to limit the wide local powers of white officials, putting an end to indiscriminate floggings of blacks. These aims were clearly set out in Gorges "Memorandum on Native Affairs" of 3 August 1916³. This provided for new masters and servants, pass and work laws⁴. In a circular sent to magistrates and Natives Affairs Officers on 23 October 1916 the Administrator exempted blacks over fourteen years old who were in educational institutions from the requirement to work if they had no or insufficient visible means of support⁵.

After reports of police assaults on blacks in 1916 Gorges called a conference of senior police officers and magistrates to impress on them the necessity of abiding by the 1916 Memorandum⁶. Under Proclamation No. 2 of 1916 the old German masters and servants law was ameliorated⁷. But, for the

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1. Swanson, M.W. "S.W.A. in Trust. 1915-1939" in Gifford, P. and Louis, W.M.R. (eds.). Britain and Germany in Africa (Connecticut, 1967). p.647.
 2. Department of the Interior. "Annual Report for the calendar year 1913". (U.G. 24-'14).
 3. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Exhibits and Annexures. Ex. 1. N.A.M.
 4. See p.40f.
 5. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Exhibits and Annexures. Ex. 1. p.2. Circular from Administrator to Magistrates and Officers in charge of Native Affairs. 23 Oct. 1916. 567/2.
 6. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. pp. 286-287. Col. de Jager.
 7. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Exhibits and Annexures. Ex. 1. p.11. N.A.M.

rest it was a matter of marking time until the future status of S.W.A. was settled.

In 1920 S.W.A. was placed under South Africa's control as a "c" class mandate by the League of Nations. The mandate was signed on 17 December 1920, and published in the South African Government Gazette on 17 June 1921, and martial law in S.W.A. ended on 1 January 1921⁸. Article 22 of the mandate stated that :

"The Mandatory shall have full powers of administration and legislation over the Territory, subject to the present mandate, as an integral portion of the Union of South Africa, and may apply the laws of the Union of South Africa to the Territory, subject to such local modifications and circumstances may require. The Mandate shall promote to the utmost the material and moral well-being of the inhabitants of the Territory subject to the present Mandate"⁹.

A new Administrator, G.R. Hofmeyr, was appointed. He was advised, but not checked by an Advisory Council of nine whites, and held complete powers of legislation and administration. In October 1920 a Commission was appointed to enquire into the future form of Government for S.W.A.¹⁰. It recommended that S.W.A. should move towards representative government as the fifth province of the Union, to avoid the emergence of a separate German state independent of South Africa¹¹. However, it concentrated exclusively on the German problem, and no mention was made of the question of native policy in S.W.A. The Commission recommended against full representation until "at least 10,000 adult British males of European descent" had moved into S.W.A., in order to balance out the predominantly German white population in S.W.A.¹².

8. Goldblatt, p.208.

9. *ibid*, pp.207-208.

10. "Interim and Final Reports of the Commission appointed to inquire into the question of the future form of Government in the South-West Africa Protectorate" (UG24-'21).

11. *ibid*. p.3.

12. *ibid*. p.4.

Hofmeyr felt that the "sacred trust" of the mandate referred to the prevention of blacks from obtaining arms and ammunition or liquor, but did not exclude the extension of the Union native policy of segregation to S.W.A., which he felt was in harmony with the terms of the mandate¹³. His arrival thus signalled a new stage of administration for S.W.A., with the extension of the Union's segregation policies there.

In 1923 Hofmeyr wrote to General J.C. Smuts, the Union Prime Minister, saying that he had encountered many difficulties in implementing his policies. Under martial law no fixed native administration system had been set up, to the confusion of both black and white, and no new reserves had been laid out other than those established by treaty in German times, increasing racial friction and uncertainty due to black hopes for the restoration of their old tribal lands and the influx of white settlers from the Union¹⁴. Another complication was that many Germans had been allowed to remain in S.W.A., and some would not co-operate with the Union administration. A completely new socio-economic and educational policy for the development of the territory had to be inaugurated, a difficult task indeed¹⁵.

With the increasing white settlement in S.W.A. Hofmeyr decided to set aside black reserves to prevent clashes with "white interests". This was complicated by white "vested interests", the need for large areas for grazing as the soils were so poor, and by the dependence on the availability of water supplies¹⁶. Hofmeyr wished to remove "surplus" blacks from urban

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13. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. pp. 1,127-1,128. G.R. Hofmeyer.
 14. C.A. P.M.O. Vol. 6. Hofmeyr, Windhoek, to Smuts. 30 Aug. 1923. p.3.
 15. *ibid.* p.10.
 16. R.P. Hofmeyr's Memorandum. p.2.

areas since he felt that they were an "immoral climate" for blacks, as well as causing friction with whites over the use of commonages and water. Thus he decided in 1920 to settle matters with two main aims in mind :

- "a) To secure contentment and welfare of the natives as far as possible and to establish certainty to the whites as to the permanent place of abode of the natives ;
- b) To tighten up Native Administration in order to prevent vagrancy and idleness"¹⁷.

The latter provision was to hold many an unpleasant surprise for the Bondelswarts. In accordance with his aims Hofmeyr appointed a Native Reserves Commission of Inquiry. It was this Commission which set the tone and method of native policy in S.W.A. under Hofmeyr's administration. It was appointed to enquire into and report on the administration, size and condition of native reserves and locations in S.W.A., the availability of native labour in S.W.A. for farm and domestic purposes, and the extent to which native labour was utilized and the methods employed in its distribution. The N.R.C. was to determine the extent to which female native labour was used for domestic and light farm work, and the reasons why the available labour was not fully utilized. It was to investigate the ownership and purposes served by the community cattle at the Orumbo Reserve, and it was to make recommendations on all these points¹⁸.

The N.R.C. presented its report on 8 June 1921, and its recommendations were discussed by a committee consisting of Major Manning, Native Commissioner for S.W.A., A.G. Landsberg, the Surveyor-General for S.W.A., and Mr Schneider, the Senior Officer of the Lands Branch.

17. *ibid.* p.2.

18. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.837. Lt. Col. Kruger. Secretary for S.W.A. to Mr H.W. Drew, Inspecting Officer of the Administration of S.W.A. No. D.231. 21 Dec. 1920.

The N.R.C. recommendations formed the basis of Hofmeyr's native policy. It advocated the extension of the policy of segregation¹⁹ to S.W.A., the removal of black settlements from white areas, and the desirability of establishing "small isolated native reserves within white areas." The leasing of land by whites to blacks, or, as the N.R.C. called it, "kaffir-farming", was to be stopped. Blacks' living conditions were to be improved and better official control over reserves was recommended. The N.R.C. recommended the creation of reserves for all blacks and the closure of temporary reserves. It felt that reserves held under treaty (like that of the Bondelswarts) should be more closely defined, and suggested the creation of a "native area" where blacks would be permitted to purchase or hire land for their own use away from white areas²⁰.

Hofmeyr agreed to these proposals but insisted that "the process should not be so hurried as to cause undue hardship to Europeans and natives"²¹, especially, one suspects, for "Europeans". He established a Native Affairs branch of the Administration, and appointed a Chief Native Commissioner²².

19. R.P. Hofmeyr's Memorandum. p.2.

20. The N.R.C. presented a table of proposals for black reserves :

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|---|---------------|
| 1. Proposed reserves - 794,938 |) 655,650 ha. |
| 2. Reserves to be closed - 139,288 | |
| 3. Land for expansion of reserves for when proposed reserves prove unsuitable - 636,881 ha. | |
| 4. Land held by blacks under German Treaty - 945,343 ha. | |
| 5. Total area of land occupied or to be occupied as reserves - 2,237,874 ha. | |
| 6. Scheduled native areas - 2,500,00 ha. | |

(In the absence of any other indications, it would seem that the scheduled native areas were intended to be the area where blacks could buy or hire land. If this is so, the N.R.C. closely parallels the Union's 1916 Beaumont Commission).

From R.P. Hofmeyr's Memorandum. p.3.

21. *ibid.* p.3.

22. C.A. P.M.O. Vol. 6. p.12. Hofmeyr to Smuts. 30 Aug. 1923. See p.23. Footnote 3

The Bondelswarts were given a Reserve Superintendent.²³ In 1922 Hofmeyer promulgated a new Masters and Servants law, Vagrancy law and pass law²⁴, as well as an Education law which put mission schools on an official basis and left the missionaries with direct control over them. The Administration paid the teachers and provided furniture, equipment and books free of charge²⁵. Stricter Government and municipal control of black locations was instituted, and the recruitment of blacks for the mines and railways was placed under Government control. State hospitals were set up, where low fees were charged for blacks, or, in the case of paupers, free medical service was provided. The supplying of liquor to blacks was prohibited²⁶.

In the Okavango area slavery was eradicated. Samuel Maherero, the Herero Paramount Chief, was allowed to return from exile, and, when he died later, to be buried at Okahandja with his forefathers. In the reserves headmen were paid salaries by the Government²⁷. The Administration also drilled boreholes and erected free dipping tanks, windmills and reservoirs²⁸. Blacks in reserves were only liable to pay customs duties, but no other government tax was levied apart from the dog tax²⁹.

23. *ibid.* p.13.

24. *ibid.* p.12

25. R.P. Hofmeyr's Memorandum. p.6. Table of Mission schools in S.W.A. in 1923.

	No. of schools	Enrolment	No. of teachers
Rhenish Mission Society	26	1,929	36
Roman Catholic Missions	16	459	10
Wesleyan Missions	1	42	1

26. C.A.P.M.O. Vol. 6. p.13. Hofmeyer to Smuts. 30 Aug. 1923.

27. *ibid.* p.14.

28. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.85. Major Herbst.

29. *ibid.* p.85.

Thus the general native policy in S.W.A. involved segregation and strict movement controls. The attitude of the Administration towards the Bondelswarts was that it was "their duty" to assist in the development of the territory by working for the whites. However, in some respects the Administration did not develop a consistent policy. In particular, the return of the Bondelswarts in exile to S.W.A. caused much misunderstanding³¹. Under Sect. 5 of the 1916 Memorandum on Native Affairs the magistrate in each district, with some exceptions, were replaced in control of all blacks in that district, subject to the authority of the Administrator. In rural areas the police acted as the magistrate's agents for native affairs, under his instruction³². Later, under the branding proclamation the magistrates were placed in control of black-owned branding irons, and supervised the branding through their agents³³. The merging of native affairs and magisterial duties was done for reasons of economy³⁴. Major Herbst said that Hofmeyr, on his visit to the Bondelswarts Reserve in 1920, had told them that :

"The magistrates and police were there for that purpose (to ensure good treatment and working conditions for the Bondelswarts) and if they failed in their duty, he himself could be approached and would see that justice was done"³⁵.

However, there was often a difference between theory and practice. As early as 1917, as a result of reports of police flogging blacks and taking the law into their own hands, the Administrator called a conference of magistrates and senior police officials³⁶. There it was pointed out that it was not just the police who were at fault, but that there were also some magistrates whose

30. *ibid.* p.25

31. N.A.C. Report, p.29, para. 4. See p.34.

32. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Exhibits and Annexures. Ex.1. p.7. N.A.M.

33. *ibid.* An.3. p.346. Proclamation No. 36 of 1921.

34. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.52. Major Herbst.

35. T.A.P.M.O. Vol. 6. Major Herbst's "Memorandum on the Bondelzwarts rising and its suppression, presented to the P.M.C." 28 July 1923. (Hereafter referred to as "Herbst's Memorandum"). p:48.

incompetence in native affairs encouraged black defiance of the police, which, in turn, encouraged some police to take the law into their own hands³⁷.

This foreshadowed a major problem for the Administration of S.W.A.³⁸.

The relationship between the police and the Bondelswarts was generally poor and strained. Authorities in the Administration held that this was because under German rule the police had had much wider powers to maintain law and order. They held that the transition from German to Union rule and the sudden reduction of police powers, like the withdrawal of their powers to flog, had made the police appear powerless and the blacks to become scornful and defiant³⁹.

The Bondelswarts were in constant conflict with the law, giving them a distorted concept of it⁴⁰. An extract from the books of the Warmbad charge office between 1 January 1920 and 1 August 1922 shows that there had been twenty-two people sentenced for stocktheft, fourteen for importing firearms without a permit, one hundred and seventy for failing to pay the dog tax, thirty-nine for entering S.W.A. without a permit, and eighteen for importing stock into S.W.A. without a permit⁴¹.

In addition, a major drawback of Native administration in S.W.A. was often the poor quality of officials. There was an acute shortage of suitably trained men available⁴², which prompted Gorges to write in 1917 that :

"The time has arrived when the obviously unsuitable or incompetent among the temporary officials in the service of the Protectorate administration should be replaced by trained officials from the Union public service"⁴³.

37. *ibid.* pp.289-290.

38. See p.189.

39. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.291. Col.de Jager.

40. *ibid.* p.950. Lt. Prinsloo - report on military operations during 1922 Bondelswarts rebellion.

41. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Exhibits and Annexures. Extracts of the Books of the Charge Office, Warmbad, as from 1 Jan. 1920 to 1 Aug. 1920. Signed by Sgt. Naude, Post Commander.

42. N.A.C. Report, p.29, para. 1.

43. W.A. Adm. Vol. 106. File 3353. Gorges to Secretary for Defence., Pretoria - Report of Col. Kruger on Bondelswarts unrest. 16 Jan. 1917. p.4.

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This sentiment was echoed by Col. de Jager in 1918 in his report to the Minister of Defence in the Union⁴⁴. All the factors covered so far led to a build-up of Bondelswarts dissatisfaction. They had a long and fairly consistent record of unrest which increased in intensity⁴⁵, and which led some Government authorities to see the unrest as part of a concerted plot intended to lead up to war⁴⁶.

The first sizeable incident of Bondelswarts unrest came in March 1917. Mr H.W. Eadie, the Inspecting magistrate for S.W.A., was instructed to go and investigate it⁴⁷. He found that trouble had been brewing amongst the Bondelswarts for some time, led by Adam Pienaar (alias Adam Christian), who had headed a group of Bondelswarts in agitation for the return of Jacobus Christian from the Union and his recognition by the government as hereditary Captain of the Bondelswarts tribe⁴⁸. Adam had been a notorious agitator under the German regime too. His rallying cry in 1916 was "payment for grass and water" by the Government and neighbouring farmers who used part of the Bondelswarts Reserve. However, he was not successful in arousing any widespread agitation⁴⁹.

In May 1921 there were reports of Bondelswarts unrest over the dog tax, and Major Manning was instructed to investigate⁵⁰. He found no defiance but

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44. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.289. Col. de Jager. Report to Minister of Defence, S.A., on Native question, from O/C Union forces occupying S.W.A. 1918.
 45. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.68. Major Herbst.
 46. *ibid.* p.823. Sgt. Naude.
 47. R.Y.N.A.C. Report. Exhibits and Annexures. Ex. 2. Eadie Report.
 48. W.A. Adm. Vol. 50. File 599. pp.2-6. Enquiry into Bondelswarts rebellion by Det. Christiansen 25 June 1917. See p.27.
 49. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Exhibits and Annexures. Ex.2. p.5. Eadie Report.
 50. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.31. Major Herbst.

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widespread poverty and a shortage of cash to pay the tax⁵¹. Later in the same month, there was further unrest when the Government took a census, as, at first the Bondelswarts were suspicious of the motives of the census-takers⁵². In June of that year, when the police started enforcing the dog tax regulations, there were further reports of Bondelswarts unrest and meetings of protest⁵³. On 10 August 1921 there were widespread rumours of Bondelswarts unrest and that Jacobus Christian had called in the tribe to meet at Haib⁵⁴.

Shortly before the 1922 rebellion itself a group of Bondelswarts, led by Jeremias Christian⁵⁵, forcibly released three prisoners who had been arrested on the Reserve by the police on 12 May 1922⁵⁶. Nicholas Christian had entered S.W.A. without a permit and had evaded arrest, but his wife and some followers were arrested. It was they who were freed by Jeremias⁵⁷, who was subsequently arrested and sentenced to four months imprisonment for his pains⁵⁸.

In the Little Namaqualand area of the Union there were also rumours of unrest, and the assistant magistrate of the area, R.H. Chenoweth, felt that the Richtersveld people were "undoubtedly" in sympathy with the Bondelswarts' grievances⁵⁹.

51. See p.159.

52. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.227. Det.-Sgt. Pietersen presents evidence of Sgt. Naude.

53. *ibid*, p.228.

54. *ibid*, p.349. Monsignor Stanislaw Krolikowski, Prefect Apostolic of Great Namaqualand from 1908.

55. I have been unable to ascertain his relationship, if any, to Jacobus Christian.

56. W.A. Adm. File A 388/1. Warmbad Magistrate to Secretary for Protectorate. 12 May 1922.

57. R.P.N.A.C. Report Drafts. Draft C. p.17. (General Lemmer's draft).

58. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.229. Det. Sgt. Pietersen presents evidence of Sgt. Naude.

59. *ibid*. p.710. Richard Henry Chenoweth, assistant magistrate for the Richtersveld from 1919.

The Richtersveld area was bounded by the Steinkopf-Port Nolloth railway, the Steinkopf reserve, the Orange River and the sea, about 700, 000 morgen of stoney, arid country inhabited by Basters and Namas, some of them related to the Bondelswarts⁶⁰. In the 1916 census of the Richtersveld there were about 3-400 Bondelswarts there, mostly exiles since the 1904-6 rebellion⁶¹. The Richtersvelders were mostly poor and backward, with no social welfare, no taxes and minimal contact with the Government. Fugitives from the police fled into the inaccessible interior, and no effort was made to disturb them⁶². The poverty-stricken Captain of the Richtersveld was Zwartbooi Links, who led the "New Law Party" in the area, which supported the Government, as opposed to the "Old Law Party" led by the aspirant-captain Jasper Cloete, one of the wealthiest men in the area, and an adherent of Le Fleur. Andries Stockenstroom Le Fleur was born in the eastern districts of the Cape, and was about fifty-four years old at the time of the 1922 Bondelswarts rebellion⁶⁴. He had been convicted and sentenced to fourteen years imprisonment for his part in the Griqua rebellion of 1898⁶⁵. On his release he proceeded to found the Griqua Land Bank, Industries and Development Company, of which he was managing director. He also founded the Griqua Independent Church, and his religious and commercial schemes were closely interrelated. He gained great influence in the Richtersveld⁶⁶, and his coloured agents travelled among the people there inviting them to take shares in the Company,

60. N.A.C. Report, p.29, para. 137.

61. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.534. Lt. Edgar John Brinton, sub-inspector for S.A. Police in Little Namaqualand.

62. N.A.C. Report, p.29, para. 138.

63. *ibid.* para. 139.

64. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.1,038. Lt. Col. Harry Freeman Trew, S.A. Police, Western Division.

65. Le Fleur's father, Abraham Le Fleur, had been one of Adam Kok's followers. The 1898 revolt was an abortive and limited one, confined mainly to attacks on isolated farms. Shephard, J. In the Shadow of the Drakensberg. (Durban, 1976). pp.44 and p.137.

66. N.A.C. Report, p.26, para. 124.

join the church and contribute stock and money to his schemes. Le Fleur and his followers used a strange style of speaking and writing. His aim was to return to the days before the Mission Stations and Communal Reserves Act of 1909 had been enacted (hence the "Old Law Party" under Jasper Cloete)⁶⁷, and he was regarded as the new Moses who would lead his people to a promised land with their own government⁶⁸. His prophecies had a millennial tone :

"Cape Town and Table Mountain made an insurrection against Le Fleur all were armed and he captured Cape Town and Table Mountain with five girls and five boys and a quince stick. The five girls and boys sang a hymn and then the commando handed over their weapons to Le Fleur and united under him. Cape Town and Table Mountain today belong to Le Fleur and he is king over the whole land and his flag will fly as England's flag has flown, but it will be a yellow flag. The few people who remain on the reserve will melt away as snow after we have left".⁶⁹

Le Fleur purchased, on the instalment plan, three farms of 2,100 morgen each on the Olifants River to which he called the people. By 1923 over 800 people had settled there with their stock in overcrowded conditions⁷⁰. Le Fleur himself was based at Maitland in Cape Town⁷¹.

However, Humphreys, the Senior Superintendent of Communal Reserves in Little Namaqualand, felt that Le Fleur's "sole aim" was to obtain money from the people.⁷² To become a follower the people had to pay 2/- registration fee, and some said that those who did not join would be ejected from the Reserves. Many contributed stock, and at Kommaggas the whole Reserve was

67. N.A.C. Report, p.26, para. 124. There is an interesting statement in the Minutes of Evidence by Paul Moos, a Union Nama, who said that Le Fleur's references to the "old law" referred to the Governor's law in Queen Victoria's time; remembered as the days of freedom for the Nama people. This has a similarity to the vaguely expressed wish of some Bondelzwarts witnesses to the N.A.C. for "British rule". R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.703. Moos. See p.46.

68. N.A.C. Report, p.26, para, 121.

69. T.A. Dept. Justice. Vol. 106. File 2/122/11. "Bondelzwarts Hottentots - S.W.A. - Unrest. Correspondence from 1/7/1922. "(Hereafter referred to as Dept. Justice. Vol. 106. File 2/122/11). Statement by Piet Fortuin.

70. N.A.C. Report, p.26, para. 124.

71. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p. 601. S.E. Humphreys.

72. ibid. p.603.

64.

registered as being Le Fleur adherents⁷³.

Jasper Cloete had been a Corporal in the Richtersveld, but was demoted because he was a Baster. His ambitions led him to support Le Fleur and to contest with Zwartbooi Links for leadership⁷⁴.

Some saw Le Fleur's influence behind the Bondelswarts rebellion across the Orange River. But there is little evidence of a direct link between the two movements⁷⁵. although Le Fleur's followers were probably sympathetic to the Bondelswarts' grievances⁷⁶. Jacobus wrote to Le Fleur to ask for help with the Bondelswarts agitation against their oppression⁷⁷, and Le Fleur invited the Bondelswarts leaders to attend a conference to be held for the coloured people in July 1922⁷⁸.

The Bondelswarts unrest was symptomatic of a general feeling of unrest among blacks throughout S.W.A.. Hofmeyr felt that in 1922 there was "considerable" unrest among blacks, especially those neighbours of the Bondelswarts, the Keetmanshoop and Gibeon Nama, as well as those at Beersheba and Vaalgras⁷⁹. He later said that he had received information that "convinced me of the possibility, if not the probability, of the whole country becoming ablaze"⁸⁰.

It was in this climate of mutual fear and suspicion that Abraham Morris returned from exile.

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73. *ibid.* p.608.

74. *ibid.* p.670. Zwartbooi Links (alias Paulus Links), hereditary Captain in Richtersveld, living at Kaboes.

75. N.A.C. Report, p.13, para. 55a.

76. *ibid.* p.27, para. 130.

77. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.246. Det.-Sgt. Pietersen presents copy of letter, Jacobus Christian to Le Fleur, signed by Jacobus and fifty other Bondelswarts.

78. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Exhibits and Annexures. Ex.6. Copy-Griqua Independent Church to Jacobus Christian. 31 Oct. 1921.

79. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.56. Major Herbst on A.R.B.

80. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Exhibits and Annexures. An. 1. p.5. A.R.B.

CHAPTER 4.THE BUILDUP TO REBELLION

Abraham Morris had a Bondelswarts mother and a white father¹. He had had a long and distinguished military career, beginning as a scout for the British in the Anglo-Boer War², and in the 1904-6 Bondelswarts rebellion against the Germans he had been a rebel leader³. He was the adjutant for the famed and able Bondelswarts rebel leader, Marengo⁴, and together, through the clever use of guerrilla tactics, they had prolonged the rebellion until 1906, when hardships forced them to flee to the Union. There Marengo was shot, but Abraham Morris, Jacobus Christian and others settled in the Steinkopf Reserve, keeping in close contact with their relatives and followers in G.S.W.A.⁵. While in the Union Morris and about 600 Bondelswarts refugees were converted to Catholicism⁶.

The Germans demanded the extradition of the exiles. The Cape Government, according to Major Herbst, refused to deport them because, they alleged, they had done this before and the Germans had merely shot the rebels. So the Bondelswarts in exile were left alone, and they found work on the copper mines of Little Namaqualand⁷.

Morris' military abilities had made a deep impression on the Germans, however, and in 1911 the German authorities asked the Union Government to bring Jacobus Christian, Morris and other Bondelswarts exiles into settlements under police control. By this time Morris was living at Narramap about twenty-

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1. Vedder, "The Nama", p.123.
 2. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p. 1,003. Sgt. Jan Albert van Niekerk.
 3. *ibid.* p.455. Jacobus Christian. See p.15.
 4. Gorges Report, p.94. See p.15.
 5. Freislich, p.5.
 6. Bishop Simon, p.201.
 7. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. pp. 10-11. Major Herbst on the A.R.B.

four miles from Steinkopf, under police supervision⁸.

When the First World War broke out and the Union invaded G.S.W.A., Morris joined the Union Defence Force as a scout, and earned much praise for his military ability in Major van Zyl's commando⁹.

On the whole, Morris was much admired by those who knew him. Mr Caplan, a merchant in Steinkopf for whom Morris had worked from November 1917 to April 1921, described Morris as "upright, loyal and a born leader of men".¹⁰ Mr Humphreys described him as being of "excellent character" and said he was "thought a great deal of by Europeans and Natives"¹¹, while a local farmer, Mr C. Weidner, described Morris as intelligent, reliable, cunning and plucky¹².

In 1922 Morris, now living as a shepherd, decided to cross the Orange River and rejoin his people. He was about fifty years old at the time¹³. It was a fateful decision indeed.

It is difficult to say exactly what Morris's motives were in returning. One of his ostensible reasons was that he had been given notice to leave the Steinkopf Reserve by the Corporal of the Steinkopf Raad for failing to pay his bywoner dues of £1 per annum. But the Corporal denied this, and Morris had in fact paid his dues¹⁴. Indeed, at a meeting of the Steinkopf Raad on 15 April 1921 Morris had applied for, and was granted, a piece of land on the Orange River for a garden, and his rifle permit was renewed. He was reported to be well-behaved, and was not ordered off the Reserve¹⁵.

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8. T.A. Dept. Justice. Vol. 106. File 2/1221/11. Union Department of Native Affairs to Secretary for Justice, Pretoria. 4 Sept. 1911.
 9. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.12, Major Herbst on the A.R.B.
 10. *ibid.* p.575. Mr Caplan.
 11. See p.44, footnote 11b.
 12. N.A.C. Report, p.13, para. 52.
 13. Freislich, p.11.
 14. N.A.C. Report, p.13, para. 53.
 15. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.605. Humphreys.

Morris's other reason for his return was that he was merely coming back to his old home and land¹⁶, because his wife had died on 24 May 1921, and he wished to live with his own people. He wrote a letter to Jacobus Christian saying that he was coming and, to try and avoid giving trouble, would seek approval for his return¹⁷. This he did not do. He wrote :

"Mijn hart is warlijk droog van die Bywonerskap. Naar my land of moeder's land (terug to komen) dat is mijn vast plan en ook mening. Maar om geen moelikheid te bringen zal ik goedkeuring zoeken Dat het den Here behaagd om zijn wil uit te voeren en heeft (Hij) de ziel van mijn dierbaren echtgenoot uit die leven weg geroepen (opde)24ste Mei: Zodat ik nu mijn leven op aarde alleen moet voortzetten"¹⁸.

However, it would seem likely that Jacobus Christian, Tim Beukes or some other Bondelswarts had invited him to join their agitation for better conditions¹⁹. But he made no secret of his arrival, crossing the Orange River above Haibmund in the middle of April with some other Bondelswarts and their wives, children, rifles and stock. When he met Jacobus Christian he had about 16 rifles and 18 men with him.

The fact that the returning Bondelswarts were armed led some authorities, like General Lemmer of the N.A.C. to allege that Morris, influenced by the memory of 1906, returned to lead the Bondelswarts in revolt²¹.

16. *ibid.* p.791. Jantje Prins.

17. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Exhibits and Annexures. Ex. 8.

18. W.A. Adm. Vol. 158. "Correspondence 1915-1920" Files W50-W65. File W60. Bondelzwarts Rising. (Hereafter referred to as W.A. Adm. Vol. 158. File W60). Abraham Morris to Jacobus Christian, n.d.)

19. N.A.C. Report, p.13, para. 54. See p.217.

20. *ibid.* p.13, para. 55.

R.P.N.A.C. Report of Evidence. p.374. Jacobus Christian to Fleck. 27 July 1922. The Administration was only informed that five, not sixteen, men had crossed with Morris. It is unclear whether or not Jacobus Christian deliberately misled the authorities by reporting that Morris had crossed with five men. Jacobus himself later claimed that he had been misled by Morris, who had said only five men had crossed with one rifle. Morris only handed over one rifle to Sgt. van Niekerk.

21. N.A.C. Report, p.14, para. 55a.

A local farmer, Visser, was told by his herdboyc that Morris had crossed into S.W.A., and informed the police at Ramansdrift of this on 24 April²². Morris sent a message to Jacobus informing him of his arrival and asking for transport to be sent for the women and children. Jacobus called a meeting of the Bondelswarts tribe and informed them of Morris's homecoming. The told Jacobus to send transport and to tell Morris to report to the magistrate and not to stay in the mountains²³. Thus Jacobus sent a councillor, Adam Pienaar, to go to the Orange River with a wagon and oxen and a donkey-cart to fetch Morris. They arrived at Haib on 28 May 1922²⁴.

On their arrival Jacobus sent a message to Mr Noothout, the Reserve Superintendent, informing him of Morris's arrival and intention to report to the Warmbad magistrate, Mr Fleck. Jacobus reported that Morris had crossed on 25 April, and promised to keep Noothout informed of further developments. Morris had said that he was coming home and had on 12 April been given seven days by the Steinkopf Raad to pay his bywoner dues, which he said he could not afford²⁵.

On 29 April Noothout telegraphed the news to Fleck²⁶, and on the same day wrote to Morris telling him to report to the magistrate²⁷. Fleck said he would not act until he had received Jacobus's letter²⁸. He received it, and on 5 May 1922 sent Sgt. J.A. van Niekerk and Native Constable Gert Kraai²⁹

22. *ibid.* para. 56.

23. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. pp.458-459. Jacobus Christian.

24. *ibid.* p.253. Det. Sgt. Pietersen presents evidence of Johannes Boyse.

25. *ibid.* pp. 480-431. Noothout. Jacobus Christian to Noothout. 28 April 1922.

26. N.A.C. Report, p.14, para. 58.

27. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.434. Noothout.

28. N.A.C. Report, p.14, para. 58.

29. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.1,000. Sgt. van Niekerk. (Kraai was a Herero).

to see if Morris and the others had the relevant permits. Meanwhile, Bondelswarts from all over the Reserve began trekking to Haib to see their almost legendary hero³⁰.

Sgt. van Niekerk was instructed to patrol the Bondelswarts' reserve and to see if Morris and his followers had arrived, and whether Morris had brought a rifle with him and had the necessary permit for it or not. On 6 May van Niekerk and Kraai left for Haib. Their orders from the post commandant (Sgt. Naude) were that if the Bondelswarts who had returned did not have a permit allowing them to return to S.W.A., they were to be arrested and brought back to Warmbad.

When Sgt. van Niekerk and Native Constable Kraai arrived at Haib Morris "reluctantly" handed over a rifle and two cartridges and a Union rifle permit³¹. van Niekerk and Kraai then went on to Us to examine and count the stock which the returning Bondelswarts had brought with them³². He found six male Bondelswarts who had crossed with Morris, and that they had brought 220 head of small stock, six dogs, five horses and thirty donkeys with them³³.

The next day Sgt. van Niekerk and Native Constable Kraai went to Guruchas. When they arrived the Bondelswarts were in church, and so they waited outside³⁴. When the Bondelswarts came out, Jacobus Christian asked van Niekerk if he had come to arrest Morris and the others who had crossed with him, and received a reply in the affirmative³⁵. Sgt. van Niekerk told Jacobus to inspan a wagon for the trip to Warmbad³⁶, but Jacobus offered to bring Morris

30. N.A.C. Report, p.14, para. 58.

31. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.998. Sgt. van Niekerk.

32. N.A.C. Report, p.14, para. 59.

33. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. pp.1,005-1,006. Sgt. van Niekerk Their names were Jan Balie; Jacob Balie; Hendrik Jonas; Koos Laberlot, Abraham Christian and Hendrik Joseph. Here again, Sgt. van Niekerk told the N.A.C. that six men had crossed with Morris, whereas in subsequent negotiations there are only references to five men.

34. *ibid.* p.379. Fleck. Jacobus Christian to Fleck. 27 July 1922.

35. *ibid.* p.999. Sgt. van Niekerk.

36. *ibid.* p.379. Fleck. Jacobus Christian to Fleck. 27 July 1922.

and the others to Warmbad himself. Morris agreed, and van Niekerk said that in that case it would not be necessary to arrest him, and told Jacobus that he would go ahead to Haib to spend the night, and that Jacobus should leave with Morris and the others early the next morning. He said he would wait on the road to Warmbad to see if they were coming, and if he saw them he would go ahead and tell the magistrate that they were coming voluntarily³⁷.

But at 8 a.m. on 8 May Sgt. van Niekerk received a message from Jacobus to the effect that although he was willing to bring Morris and the others in, the tribe would not allow him to do so. van Niekerk sent a reply saying that unless Morris was on his way to Warmbad within four hours, he would return to Guruchas and arrest him. The time limit elapsed, and so van Niekerk and Kraai returned to Guruchas. When they arrived Jacobus could not be found, and Morris denied being unwilling to go to Warmbad, and denied any knowledge of Jacobus's message³⁸. Sgt. van Niekerk then instructed Stephanus Christian to call all the foremen to Jacobus's hut. They had collected there when Jacobus arrived with Morris³⁹.

Sgt. van Niekerk then placed his hand on Morris's shoulder and arrested him in the name of the King. A Bondelswarts jumped between them and pushed them apart⁴⁰, and "threatening actions, gestures and words" followed. The tension mounted⁴¹, and van Niekerk was surrounded. He appealed to the headmen by name to help him execute his duty, and then appealed to all the Bondelswarts⁴², but to no avail.

37. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.999. Sgt. van Niekerk.

38. N.A.C. Report, p.14, para 59.

39. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.813. Native Constable Gert Kraai.

40. *ibid.* pp.813-814.

41. N.A.C. Report, p.14, para. 59.

42. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.1,001. Sgt. van Niekerk.

Sgt. van Niekerk then told Morris that he was still under arrest, and told the foremen that they had committed a serious crime. He said he would go to higher authorities and that they would come with a large force to arrest Morris and the others, because this was the second⁴³ time that the Bondelswarts had defied the police⁴⁴. Many Bondelswarts alleged later that van Niekerk has said that "Die lood van die Goevernement sal nou op julle smelt" but both Sgt. van Niekerk and Native Constable Kraai emphatically deny this⁴⁵. van Niekerk then left Guruchas with Kraai⁴⁶.

On the evening of Sgt. van Niekerk's departure on 8 May the Bondelswarts military appointments were made. Adam Pienaar was appointed war magistrate, Klaas Isaac (alias Babab), commandant and Johannes Laverlot, together with Hans Zwartbooi and Jacobus Christian (junior)⁴⁷ were appointed Wachtmeisters⁴⁸.

The Bondelswarts said that Sgt. van Niekerk had said war would be declared on them, and some regarded his words as coming from the Administrator. Jacobus Christian stated that he had collected his people together to die together, and all the Bondelswarts were called into Guruchas⁴⁹. Klaas Matthebus, a Bondelswart, was later to say "Wat die Sergt ze het onsgejaag",⁵⁰ and Jantje Prins said "Sergt van Niekerk nem die eerste stap naar oorlog"⁵¹.

43. The first time was the Jeremias Christian incident. See p.62.

44. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p. 1,002. Sgt. van Niekerk.

45. N.A.C. Report, p.15, para. 60. Unfortunately, Sgt. van Niekerk told the N.A.C., he had lost the record of events which had been written in his pocket-book.

46. *ibid.* p.1,002.

47. He was Captain Jacobus Christian's nephew.

48. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.383. Fleck. Jacobus Christian to Fleck. 27 July 1922.

49. *ibid.* p.350. Mgr. Krolikowski.

50. *ibid.* p.786. K. Matthebus.

51. *ibid.* p.789. J. Prins.

Some authorities felt that the Bondelswarts' decision to oppose the Government was only taken after Sgt. van Niekerk's visit, while others felt that Morris had intended to lead the tribe in open revolt all along⁵².

The effect of the attempted arrest of Morris on the Bondelswarts is shown by a letter from Jacobus to Abram Watt, a Le Fleur agent, on 16 May 1922. Jacobus gave a list of Bondelswarts grievances, and summed up their attitude to the attempted unrest by saying that they had decided to refuse to allow Morris to be arrested "since he has stolen nothing from anyone and he is not guilty". Jacobus also wrote that Sgt. van Niekerk had promised the Bondelswarts that they would be "exterminated"⁵³.

Jacobus found that his people were tired of his acquiescence to Government demands. On 4 May 1922 Det. Sgt. Pietersen at Warmbad wrote to his superior in Windhoek :

"I am informed that there is a movement afoot among the members of the Bondelzwarts tribe, to depose their present chief (Jacobus Christian) and to elect this Nicholas Christian in his stead, on the grounds that they consider him to be an "Old Woman" who is afraid to go against the Administration"⁵⁴.

Jacobus had given into the Government on issues like the dog tax and branding law, and now he found himself with the support of only three of the Raad members, namely Stephanus Christian, Johannes Adam and Nols Ortman⁵⁵. The Captain had to obey the decision of the Raad⁵⁶. The Bondelswarts were proud of Morris⁵⁷, regarding him as their "Champion and Hero"⁵⁸. Thus several witnesses to the N.A.C. said that with the attempted arrest of Morris the

52. N.A.C. Report, p.31, para's. 8 & 9a.

53. *ibid.* p.15, para. 62.

54. W.A. Adm. File A388/1. Det. Sgt. Pietersen to Officer Commanding, C.I.D., Windhoek.

55. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.385. Fleck. Jacobus Christian to Fleck. 27 July 1923.

56. R.P.N.A.C. Report Drafts. Draft A. p.2. See p.5.

57. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.493. Timotheus Beukes.

58. *ibid.* p.953. Lt. Prinsloo.

Bondelswarts resolved to fight rather than to surrender him⁵⁹.

There were three charges against Morris and those who had crossed with him. They fell under subsection 1 of Sect. 4. of Proclamation No. 11 of 1922, which prohibited the introduction of livestock into S.W.A. without a permit, Subsection 1 of Proclamation No. 10 of 1915, which prohibited the possession of unlicensed firearms, and subsection - of Sect. 4 of Proclamation No. 28 of 1920, which prohibited the introduction of firearms into S.W.A. without the prescribed permit⁶⁰.

Meanwhile, Sgt. van Niekerk reported his failure to arrest Morris to Fleck. On 10 May, therefore, Fleck sent a message to Jacobus Christian asking him to come and see him⁶¹. The messenger, Johannes Bezuidenhout, delivered the message, but remained with the Bondelswarts and warned Jacobus that he would be arrested if he went to Warmbad⁶², and said that "there was war on the other side"⁶³. As a result, Jacobus did not go to Warmbad⁶⁴.

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59. ibid. p.252. Det.-Sgt. Pietersen presents evidence of A. Matroos.
 ibid. p.253. Det.-Sgt. Pietersen presents evidence of J. Prins.
 ibid. p.254. Det.-Sgt. Pietersen presents evidence of J. Boyse.
 ibid. p.256. Det.-Sgt. Pietersen presents evidence of H. Schneeuwe.
60. N.A.C. Report, p.17, para. 71.
61. ibid. p.15., para. 63.
62. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.382. Fleck. Jacobus Christian to Fleck. 27 July 1922. Freislich, p.16.
63. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.475. Stephanus Christian.
64. ibid. p.462. Jacobus Christian.

On the same day (10 May) Fleck, warned by a local farmer that the Bondelswarts were trekking to Haib, telegraphed Hofmeyr and told him about the attempted arrest, and asked for a strong police force to be sent⁶⁵. On 11 May Hofmeyer called Major van Coller, head of the S.W.A. Police, and on 12 May Major Van Coller left for Kalkfontein-South⁶⁶. He was instructed, verbally, to ensure "that every possible care was exercised" and to explain the laws to the Bondelswarts⁶⁷. He was to arrest Morris and the others on the three charges, peacefully if possible, and was not to use force before first consulting with Hofmeyr⁶⁸. Major Van Coller was accompanied by three details of S.W.A. Police, and was joined at Keetmanshoop by an N.C.O. and three more police, arriving at Kalkfontein-South on 13 May 1922.⁶⁹

The next day Major Van Coller went into action. He sent a message via Noothout asking Jacobus Christian and his headmen to come to Driehoek to meet him to hear an important message from the Administrator. Jacobus replied the same day, refusing to attend, saying that his wife was ill and that he feared for his life, since Sgt. van Niekerk had said that the Bondelswarts would be destroyed. The Bondelswarts said Jacobus, wished to speak to Noothout and not the police.⁷⁰

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65. N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.382. Fleck. Jacobus Christian to Fleck. 27 July 1922. Freislich, p.16.
66. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.123. Major Charles Andries Brink Van Coller. Divisional Inspector of S.W.A. Police from Jan. 1920. Staff Officer in S.W.A. from 15 Nov. 1915. (Kalkfontein-South is today known as Karasberg).
67. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.53. Major Herbst.
68. *ibid.* pp.124-125. Major Van Coller.
69. *ibid.* p.127.
70. N.A.C. Report, p.17, para. 72.

This led Fleck to telegraph Hofmeyr on 15 May to ask: whether (in the light of Jacobus's reply) negotiations should continue⁷¹. He pointed out that Jacobus had given no reason why his headmen could not attend the Driehoek meeting, even if he could not. The Native Constable who had delivered the message had reported that the Bondelswarts were well-armed and hostile, and if force was to be used to arrest Morris, reinforcements were needed⁷². However, Hofmeyr replied that negotiations should continue.

Major Van Coller thus decided, as instructed by Hofmeyr, to send Noothout and another white to see the Bondelswarts. The other white was Monsignor Krolikowski, head of the Catholic mission in the Bondelswarts area. They went to visit the tribe on 17 May 1922⁷³.

Noothout as Superintendent had been appointed to work under and report to the Warmbad magistrate⁷⁴. He had no authority to make any promises other than those he was instructed to⁷⁵. He was told to inform the Bondelswarts that the Government did not wish to shoot any body, or :

"to interfere with any except persons who have broken laws of the country who must be brought before Magistrate for trial".

This instruction was contained in Hofmeyr's telegram of 15 May⁷⁶.

However, on their way to meet the Bondelswarts Mgr. Krolikowski said that he had asked Noothout what message the latter had for the Bondelswarts and said that Noothout told him that he :

71. *ibid.* p.17, para. 74.

72. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. oo.132-133. Major Van Coller. Telegram Fleck to Hofmeyr. 15 May 1922.

73. N.A.C. Report, p.17, para. 75.

74. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.93. Major Manning.

75. *ibid.* p.145. Major Van Coller.

76. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Exhibits and Annexures. An.1. p.11. A.R.B. Major Van Coller's report on the Bondelswarts rebellion of 1922 to the Secretary for S.W.A.

"had received a telegram from the Administrator to the effect that Morris, with 6 or 5 men, should report at once to the magistrate at Warmbad, and everything would be forgiven and forgotten that they would only be tried for being without a pass, and that there would be only an enquiry about the rifles".⁷⁷.

Noothout later denied telling Mgr. Krolikowski that he had received a telegram. He said that in fact he had told him that Major Van Coller had received a telegram from Hofmeyr, in which he, Noothout, had seen or construed the words "forgiven and forgotten"⁷⁸.

When they arrived at Guruchas they met Jacobus, Tim Beukes and about 400 Bondelswarts. On their arrival Jacobus called the headmen. Mgr. Krolikowski reported that Noothout was "very excited" and that "he began to weep", because the Bondelswarts were armed⁷⁹. Noothout delivered the message as he had told Mgr. Krolikowski, but the Bondelswarts headmen objected because it was only "a word in the air"⁸⁰. They asked Mgr. Krolikowski if he had seen the telegram containing Hofmeyer's message. Krolikowski said that he had not, but that he did believe there was such a telegram⁸¹.

Noothout told the N.A.C. later that he had told Jacobus that if Morris and the four men who had crossed with him reported to the magistrate "everything would be forgiven and forgotten", but that "they should first come to the magistrate to get punished". He had also told them that he and Mgr. Krolikowski would be present when Morris and the four men appeared before the magistrate, to see that justice was done.

But said Noothout, Jacobus told him that Morris and the four men would not

77. N.A.C. Report, p.18, para. 79.

78. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.448. Noothout.

79. ibid. p.351. Mgr. Krolikowski.

80. N.A.C. Report, p.18, para. 79.

81. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.354. Mgr. Krolikowski.

come "because van Niekerk had declared war on them." Noothout explained that they had misunderstood Sgt. van Niekerk, and that if Morris had a permit for his rifle and his people everything "would be in order", but, if not, they were to go to the magistrate for punishment. He denied making any promises of his own to them⁸², and said he had impressed on them the seriousness of their failure to assist the police, and had told them that if it happened again "drastic measures could be expected"⁸³. Beukes then asked Noothout where the letter from Hofmeyr containing the assurance was, whereupon Noothout replied that Major Van Coller was a trusted emissary of the Administrator and had been sent to deliver the message. But Beukes said he would only believe written evidence⁸⁴. Mgr. Krolikowski then took the Bondelswarts headmen aside into a hut, leaving Noothout outside. He told them to bring their complaints before Hofmeyr, and offered to pay for Jacobus to go the Windhoek for this purpose, pointing out the futility of war against the Government. Jacobus replied that he did not want war, but that Sgt. Van Niekerk had declared war on them. Krolikowski said that he explained to the Bondelswarts that Sgt. van Niekerk could not do this, to which Jacobus replied that the Bondelswarts "do not see the Administrator, only the police and the magistrate" whom they had to obey⁸⁵.

Mgr. Krolikowski then came out of the hut and rejoined Noothout. He told Noothout of the Bondelswarts' request for a letter from Hofmeyr, which they would promise to obey. However, Noothout said that he could not wire Hofmeyr for a letter, since he was only empowered to deliver a message. He

82. N.A.C. Report, p.18, para. 78.

83. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.139. Major Van Coller - his report ~~to~~ Hofmeyr on negotiations with the Bondelswarts.

84. *ibid.* p.462. Jacobus Christian.

85. *ibid.* p.355-356. Mgr. Krolikowski.

refused to allow Mgr. Krolikowski to wire, but instead offered to write out a telegram which Krolikowski could sign so that the Bondelswarts could believe it. Mgr. Krolikowski explained this to Jacobus but the latter was adamant and asked for a letter from Hofmeyr.

At this, Mgr. Krolikowski said, Noothout "put his papers together and said there was nothing further to be done"⁸⁶. Krolikowski asked Noothout in English to wire for a letter, as the Bondelswarts did not understand that a wire was the same as a letter, and that if Noothout broke off now it would "very likely come to hostilities". Noothout then agreed to write out a letter for Jacobus to sign instead⁸⁷.

Noothout wrote the letter and said he was prepared to take it to Major Van Coller, even though those were not his instructions⁸⁸. The letter read :

"I, Jacobus Christian, declare herewith that the 5 men will immediately report themselves to the magistrate at Warmbad when I have received an assurance, in writing, from the Administrator at Windhoek, that if these men surrender everything will be forgiven and forgotten and that no further steps will be taken against my people, as told us by the Commissioner (Noothout)." ⁸⁹

It was read out in Dutch and Nama "so that everyone would be able to understand it". Morris agreed to the terms of the letter and then Jacobus and Beukes signed it. Noothout asked Mgr. Krolikowski to sign it as witness to the signatures⁹⁰.

Noothout later said that he had expected Hofmeyr to accede to the Bondelswarts request for a letter⁹¹. Jacobus Christian said he understood the

86. *ibid*, p.357-8.

Or, in Noothout's own words, he said that he would "wash my hands of them". N.A.C. Report, p.18, para. 78.

87. N.A.C. Report, p.18, para. 81.

88. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.446. Noothout.

89. N.A.C. Report, p.18, para. 77.

90. N.A.C. Report, p.19, para. 81.

91. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.451. Noothout.

79.

terms of the letter as follows :

"Ik dacht dat indien die 5 men zich rapporteerden er geen verdere stappen zonden genomen worden tegen het volk".⁹²

Mgr. Krolikowski wrote a letter to Noothout the day after their visit, on 18 May, since he felt apprehensive of a breach of faith on the part of either Noothout or Hofmeyr. He wrote :

"it is most important that when these 5 men have reported themselves to the magistrate they be let off without any fine or punishment".

He asked Noothout to wire this letter to Hofmeyr and to ask him to give the Warmbad magistrate the necessary instructions. This was done, and as a result Hofmeyr wired back to Major Van Coller asking what promises had been made to the Bondelswarts⁹³. Major Van Coller replied that Noothout denied making any promises beyond that Hofmeyr was prepared to overlook the disobedience of the Bondelswarts in failing to assist the police when called upon to do so⁹⁴. But, said Major Van Coller, he doubted Noothout, since :

"subsequent information imparted to me significant but not relevant to point at issue discloses the fact that certain particulars which should have been conveyed to me by him have been withheld"⁹⁵.

On 19 May Major Van Coller asked Mgr. Krolikowski to accompany him to visit Jacobus Christian, but Krolikowski refused⁹⁶. He wrote to Noothout saying this, and expressed surprise that Hofmeyr did not communicate directly with him if he desired his help. Hofmeyr replied in a telegram on 19 May admonishing Krolikowski for expecting niceties considering the speed of events and made a special plea to him "to held me bring the Bondelzwarts to reason and save bloodshed". Morris and the others who had crossed with him would

92. *ibid.* p.463. Jacobus Christian.

93. N.A.C. Report, pp.19-20, para's. 84 & 85.

94. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.141. Major Van Coller.

95. *ibid.* p.142.

96. N.A.C. Report, p.20, para 89.

have to surrender and face trial, said Hofmeyr, but he would :

"give every consideration to further clemency should they be convicted and will undertake not to bring to trial any others".

He thus asked Mgr. Krolikowski to accompany Major Van Coller to deliver a message to the Bondelswarts⁹⁷.

But Krolikowski refused, since, he said, Major Van Coller was head of the police and he did not wish to be identified with them by the Bondelswarts. Instead, he offered to go alone and deliver the message⁹⁸. But when he read the message, Mgr. Krolikowski was astounded that Hofmeyr had not sent the letter of assurance asked for, but instead had sent a list of certain demands and conditions for a Bondelswarts surrender. Mgr. Krolikowski refused to prejudice either his church or himself by associating with the chief of police or the message. As a compromise, he was asked to go to Haib and tell the Bondelswarts that Hofmeyr had not sent the assurance asked for, but had sent Major Van Coller with authority to sign and settle things on his behalf. Krolikowski was also to try and persuade Jacobus to meet Major Van Coller at Driehoek, and a safe conduct was offered. If Jacobus refused, then Hofmeyr himself had offered to meet Jacobus at a place selected by the Administrator⁹⁹.

Mgr. Krolikowski visited the Bondelswarts on 20 May. They told him "Van Coller is een Oorlogsman en ons is bang", and thus Krolikowski sent a message to Major Van Coller the same day, conveying the Bondelswarts' request to see Hofmeyr. If Hofmeyr came, the Bondelswarts said, others could accompany him, implying that Major Van Coller could come too. They promised not to do anything if the Government refrained from action, citing their non-hindrance of whites with rifles passing through their Reserve as evidence of their peaceful intentions.

97. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. pp.147-148. Major Van Coller.

98. N.A.C. Report, p.20, para. 89.

99. ibid. p.20, para. 90.

Mgr. Krolikowski himself said that he did not think it advisable that either Major Van Coller or Fleck go to visit the Bondelswarts. After this visit Krolikowski went to Keetmanshoop and would have nothing more to do with the affair, and never did meet Hofmeyr¹⁰⁰.

On 21 May, despite Mgr. Krolikowski's warning, Major Van Coller, Fleck and Noothout all went to visit the Bondelswarts to convey the message Mgr. Krolikowski had refused to deliver. On their way there they were stopped by Bondelswarts sentries, who were armed and who mounted the running-boards of the car and escorted them in, an act interpreted by Hofmeyr as a gross insult. It also showed that the Bondelswarts were acting as if a state of war already existed.

On arrival, Major Van Coller announced that he had Hofmeyr's authority to sign and make conditions¹⁰¹. He had been instructed by Hofmeyr to listen to the Bondelswarts' reply to Hofmeyr's demands, and to ask them if they would like to meet the Administrator at a place chosen by him before giving a final answer. Major Van Coller was to leave his police behind and was to clear up any confusion over the last visits of Noothout and Krolikowski¹⁰².

In his message Hofmeyr laid down several conditions. These were that the five men had to be delivered for trial before the magistrate, and that if this was done they would only be tried for the offences for which they had been originally charged, and no others besides the five would be liable for punishment. If the five were found guilty, clemency would be at the sole discretion of the Administrator. All arms and ammunition were to be surrendered, and Hofmeyr urged Jacobus and Beukes to refrain from obstructing the police, for the sake of the tribe's future¹⁰³. Hofmeyr declared himself

100. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. pp.364-5. Mgr. Krolikowski.

101. N.A.C. Report, p.21, para. 91.

102. *ibid.* para. 95.

103. *ibid.* para. 92.

always ready to give "protection and relief" to the Bondelswarts, but said that wilful disobedience would be severely dealt with. He pointed out that Noothout had assured him earlier that year that the Bondelswarts were content, and said that any further resistance to the police would have serious consequences¹⁰⁴. He had received no petition of complaint from the Bondelswarts and thus found their attitude "inexplicable". He warned the Bondelswarts' leaders that unless his conditions were met he would "reluctantly be compelled to resort to extreme measures"¹⁰⁵.

Major Van Coller also told the Bondelswarts that Sgt. van Niekerk was not competent to declare war on behalf of the Government¹⁰⁶. He stressed that all were equal before the law, and that the magistrate was there to hear grievances¹⁰⁷. The Bondelswarts were given two days in which to reply to Hofmeyr's conditions¹⁰⁸. Fleck also offered Jacobus a free passage to Windhoek to speak to Hofmeyr; and assured him that he would be allowed to return¹⁰⁹.

But Major Van Coller privately reported to Hofmeyr that already by 19 May he was "satisfied" that the Bondelswarts intended to resist any attempt to arrest the five men¹¹⁰.

On 22 May the Bondelswarts Raad met to discuss Hofmeyr's conditions¹¹¹. They were divided over what to do, with Jacobus Christian, Nols Ortman Johannes Adam and Stephanus Christian favouring giving in to the conditions, while Beukes, Morris and Pienaar wanted to reject them. The latter group won

104. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.150. Major Van Coller.

105. N.A.C. Report, p.21, para. 92.

106. *ibid.* para. 93.

107. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.163. Major Van Coller.

108. N.A.C. Report, p.22, para. 95.

109. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.408. Fleck.

110. *ibid.* p.55. Major Herbst on the A.R.B.

111. *ibid.* p.234. Det.-Sgt. Pietersen presents evidence of J. Prins.

the day.¹¹² When Klaas Isaac, alias Babab, gave the letter containing the Bondelswarts' reply to Hofmeyr's demands to the messenger to deliver to Noothout, he told him "This is the letter that will start the war"¹¹³. The reply, signed by Jacobus and sent on 23 May, stated that the Bondelswarts would not surrender their arms and ammunition since the five men had not stolen anything, and Morris had already handed over his rifle to Sgt. van Niekerk, besides which the Bondelswarts had no rifles to hand over because the Government had failed to return the rifles handed over by Jacobus in 1919, which he now requested be returned¹¹⁴.

On receipt of the letter Hofmeyr sent another invitation to Jacobus to meet him at Kalkfontein-South, or some place chosen by Jacobus and approved of by the Administrator. But this invitation, though delivered, was ignored¹¹⁵.

Hofmeyr later said that he would have shown leniency if Morris had surrendered and might have given him a suspended sentence¹¹⁶. His instructions throughout the negotiations were to avoid conflict. However, he told Major Van Coller that if the situation demanded immediate action he could use force to effect the arrests, report on the results, and then wait for further instructions¹¹⁷. Hofmeyr said he wished for peace, and had tried hard for a peaceful settlement¹¹⁸.

112. *ibid.* p.465. Jacobus Christian.

113. *ibid.* p.254. Det.-Sgt. Pietersen presents evidence of J. Matroos.

114. *ibid.* pp.165-166. Major Van Coller.

115. N.A.C. Report, p.22, para. 95.

116. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.12. Major Herbst.

117. *ibid.* p.136. Major Van Coller.

118. N.A.C. Report, p.22, para. 97.

But already on 15 May Hofmeyr had begun to prepare for the worst. In a telegram of that day to Fleck he had instructed all magistrates in the south to call for mounted volunteers, swear them in as special Constables, and place them at Major Van Coller's disposal¹¹⁹.

On 18 May Major Herbst called Lt. Prinsloo and told him to go to Kalkfontein-South and to get twenty armed Native Constables ready. Lt. Prinsloo persuaded Hofmeyr that in case of war Native Constables would not be much good, and was thus instructed to get ten white police and ten Native Constables ready and fully equipped. They left Windhoek by train on 20 May, arriving at Kalkfontein-South the next day¹²⁰.

On 19 May Hofmeyr received Major Van Coller's report that he was satisfied that the Bondelswarts intended to resist any attempt to arrest the five men. Major Van Coller also reported that insufficient volunteers were coming forward and advocated martial law. Major Herbst later said that he felt volunteers were reluctant to come forward at first because they wanted an experienced man to be appointed as the leader of the campaign¹²¹.

Hofmeyr said he had received reports of unrest amongst blacks in the Keetmanshoop and Gibeon districts, and had heard that some tribes, like those at Beersheba and Vaalgras, were ready to co-operate with the Bondelswarts in the event of war. In the Warmbad district small parties of Bondelswarts were reportedly forcibly collecting arms from isolated white farmers, and a general white panic was approaching. Thus he called for volunteers in Windhoek and telegraphed magistrates in the south of S.W.A. to recruit volunteers. When

119. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Exhibits and Annexures, An 1. p.11. A.R.B. Major Van Coller's report on the Bondelswarts rebellion of 1922 to the Secretary for S.W.A.

120. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. pp.955-956. Lt. Prinsloo.

121. *ibid.* pp.55-56. Major Herbst on the A.R.B.

he arrived at Kalkfontein-South on 23 May he had over 100 mounted men, with others from neighbouring districts coming in rapidly. Hofmeyr felt that delay would be fatal, and so took personal command¹²². With him at Kalkfontein-South were sixty volunteers who were civil servants from Windhoek, and his private secretary and Major Herbst, the Secretary for the Protectorate¹²³.

Hofmeyr had decided to collect troops at Kalkfontein-South during negotiations because he felt that it was obvious that Jacobus and the Bondelswarts tribe did not want to give up Morris unless he was allowed to go free¹²⁴. Major Herbst said that the Administration had had no alternative but to convince Jacobus that he had to abide by the law¹²⁵, and Hofmeyr said that the disarming of Noothout by the Bondelswarts at Driehoek on 26 May was the last straw as far as the Government was concerned¹²⁶. He felt that swift action was imperative to prevent the development of a long, drawn-out guerrilla war¹²⁷.

By Thursday 25 May nearly 400 troops were ready, and the Bondelswarts were still collected at Guruchas¹²⁸.

The collecting of troops at Kalkfontein-South did influence the Bondelswarts. It did not help matters, and only increased the Bondelswarts' distrust of the Government. This distrust was shown by their insistence to Noothout and Mgr. Krolikowski for a letter from Hofmeyr with his seal and signature¹²⁹.

122. *ibid.* pp.56-58.

123. *ibid.* p.53.

124. *ibid.* p.60.

125. *ibid.* p.61.

126. *ibid.* p.63.

127. R.P. Hofmeyr's Memorandum. p.9.

128. N.A.C. Report, p.23, para. 98.

129. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.352. Mgr. Krolikowski.

Their suspicion was increased by Bezuidenhout's defection. The seeds of distrust, sown over a long period of Bondelswarts-white relations had now borne fruit.

Meanwhile, the Bondelswarts began to prepare themselves for the coming conflict. On 22 May they stole six horses from a local farmer, Mr Becker¹³⁰. On 23 May some Bondelswarts arrived at the farm of Mr Basson. Armed, but polite, they demanded tobacco, meat, bread and guns and asked Basson's wife to make them some coffee. They left taking three rifles¹³¹. On 24 May they stole provisions from the trader, Mr A. Viljoen, at Guruchas. Then, on 25 May, they disarmed Noothout, and looted his house the next day¹³². But none of these people were harmed.

However, there was a case of overt violence with the murder of Mrs Lydia Sarah Coleman on the farm "Kubub" in the Lüderitz district. Three armed Nama arrived at her house and asked for arms and ammunition. She refused and was shot and fatally wounded by them. The house was looted, but she survived until the police came. The Nama were tracked down, one of them being shot in the process, and the other two stood trial for murder¹³³. Some blamed the murder on the Bondelswarts and felt that the same would have happened to other whites if they had put up resistance¹³⁴. Whatever the case, it whipped up stronger anti-Bondelswarts feelings amongst local whites¹³⁵.

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130. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.234. Det.-Sgt. Pietersen presents evidence of J. Prins.

131. *ibid.* p.833. Jasper Nicholas Basson, farmer on farm "Grootplaats".

132. *ibid.* pp.235-236. Det.-Sgt. Pietersen presents evidence of A. Viljoen, Noothout, and J. Prins.

133. *ibid.* pp.953-954. Lt. Prinsloo.

134. *ibid.* pp.954-955.

135. Freislich, p.32.

CHAPTER 5.THE REBELLION AND ITS SUPPRESSION.

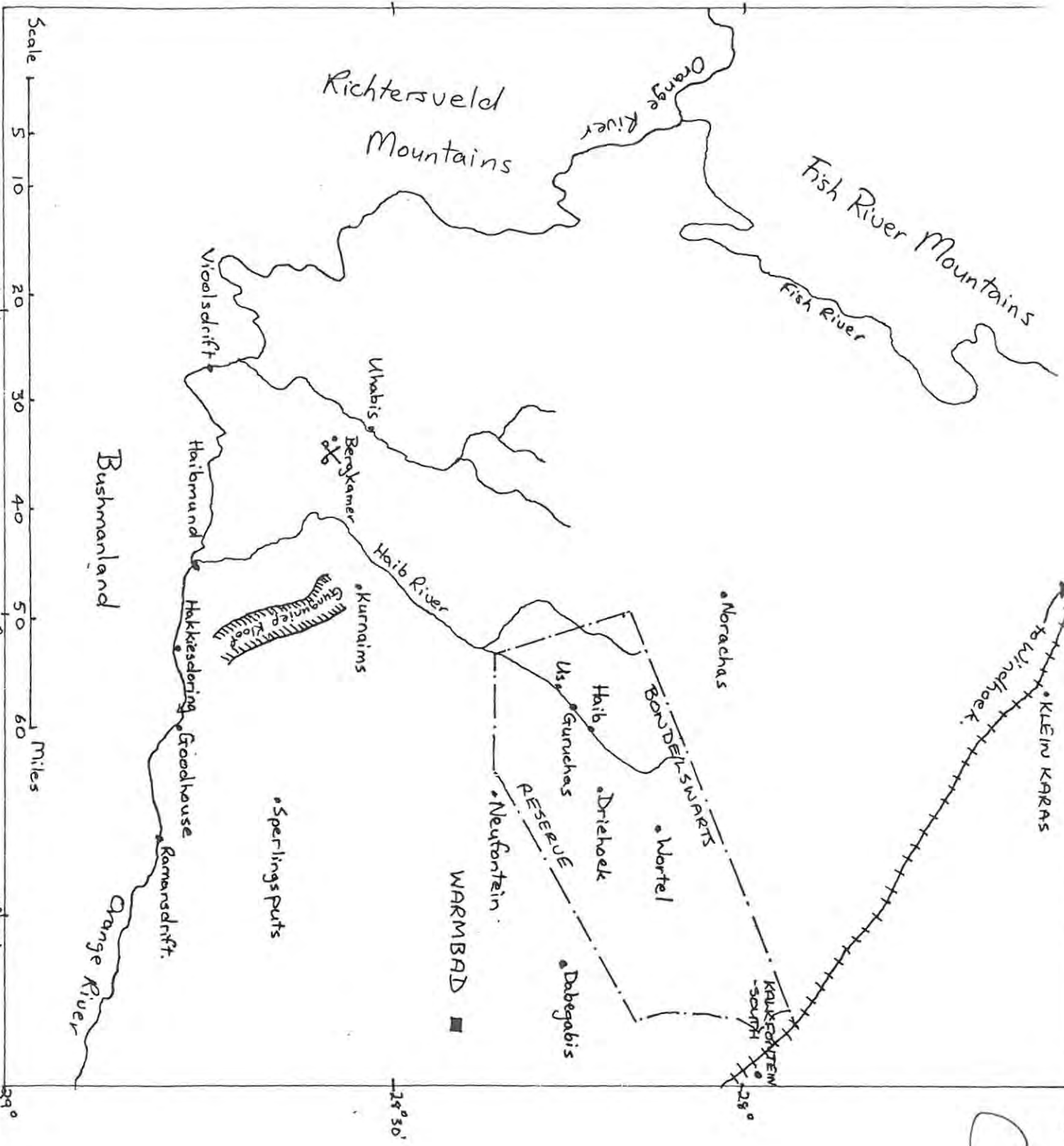
Hofmeyr decided to try and put down the rebellion without Union aid. Major Herbst told the N.A.C. that Hofmeyr did not want to ask Smuts for Union forces because he felt that the police and burghers had had enough after putting down the 1922 Witwatersrand rebellion. However, when he realized how small his forces were, he "reluctantly" called for some Union aid. He also felt that the settlers of S.W.A. should prove themselves worthy of the privileges they enjoyed by helping to suppress the revolt¹. Freislich points out that Hofmeyr was probably also reluctant to involve the Union because S.W.A. was a mandated territory, and as such was in a delicate international position².

On 26 May 1922 two aeroplanes arrived from the Union at Kalkfontein-South. The Union Government also provided two mountain guns and four Vickers machine-guns³.

Hofmeyr's plan was to strike quickly before the Bondelswarts revolt spread to the rest of S.W.A. and set the whole country ablaze⁴. A decisive blow had to be struck to cut off the Bondelswarts' retreat to the Fish or Orange River mountains, and hence a strong force was needed⁵. Some people, like Bishop Simon in Little Namaqualand in the Union, felt that it was only the rapidity with which the Bondelswarts rebellion was crushed that prevented it from spreading to the Union Namas⁶.

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1. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.72. Major Herbst on the A.R.B.
 2. Freislich, p.18.
 3. *ibid.* p.36
 4. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.72. Major Herbst on the A.R.B.
 5. *ibid.* Major Van Coller. p.168. His report on military operations from 26 May to 8 June 1922 for Hofmeyr.
 6. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Exhibits and Annexures. An.7. p.2. Statement by Bishop Simon to Commissioner of Native Affairs, Upington. 1 Sept. 1922.

MAP SHOWING AREA OF 1922 RONDELSDWARTS REBELLION. From Frisick, p68.



Hofmeyr's strategy was to deprive Abraham Morris of food and water, and he was nearly successful in this. He said he regretted having to use force, but once he realized that he had no alternative, he "was determined to inflict a severe and lasting lesson"⁷. The entire Bondelswarts reserve was to be surrounded and the tribesmen driven into Guruchas and forced to surrender. In this arid country whoever controlled the waterholes controlled the surrounding countryside. Thus it was decided to occupy the waterholes at Wortel, Driehoek, Dabigabis, Neufontein, Aputus and Norachas in order to deprive the Bondelswarts of water and to cut off their retreat. "C" Squadron with one machinegun was sent by train under Capt. J.C. Balt from Klein Karas to occupy Norachas⁸. Lt. Jordaan led "D" Squadron also with a machinegun, and they went by lorry to occupy Wortel and Driehoek⁹. The crux of the plan was swift action. In Hofmeyr's own words :

"if force is needed to effect the arrest the force used must be so overwhelming and so disposed that the retreat to the Orange River mountains is cut off".¹⁰

In accordance with this aim, Hofmeyr decided to take personal command of military operations, since he felt that delay would be fatal. As the highest-ranking officer in S.W.A. was Lt. Col. Kruger, Hofmeyr "temporarily" assumed the rank of Colonel¹¹. Major Van Coller felt that more volunteers came in to help when they heard that Hofmeyr was taking personal command because "they were pleased that he was willing to take the responsibility."¹² By 25 May it was decided that enough troops were ready. There were twenty-two officers and 348 other ranks. ¹³

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7. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.73. Major Herbst on the A.R.B.
 8. See Map C.
 9. ibid. pp.171-172. Major Van Coller - his report on military operations.
 10. ibid. p.135. Telegram Hofmeyr to Fleck. 15 May 1922.
 11. ibid. p.58. Major Herbst on the A.R.B.
 12. ibid. p.170. Major Van Coller - his report on military operations.
 13. ibid. p.201.

Meanwhile the Bondelswarts were organizing their own campaign. Jacobus Christian was hereditary chief, Morris fighting chief, and Timotheus Beukes under-captain and Administration Secretary. Each under-captain controlled a commando, and each commando was divided into sections under a sergeant-major¹⁴. Those that wanted to fight stayed, and one of them, David Klaas, said later that his group had had ten rifles and eighteen muzzle loaders, and had to make their own cartridges since they were short of these¹⁵. One of those who did not fight, Christian Marcus, told the N.A.C. that there were three Bondelswarts to every firearm¹⁶.

It seems that the Bondelswarts intended to conduct their campaign on the same general lines that they had used so successfully in the 1904-1906 revolt¹⁷. Stephanus Christian later said that he had "thought that this was going to be the same business as the war with the German government"¹⁸.

14. *ibid.* p.994. Prinsloo.

Timotheus Beukes, under oath, made a statement on 22 June 1922, saying that the Bondels' leaders, besides Jacobus Christian, were Adam Pienaar, Morris, Gert Zwartbooi, Jacobus Christian (junior), Jacobus Christian (nephew), Klaas Isaac (alias Babab), Abraham Matroos, Hermanus Stephenus, Adam Witbooi, John Christian, Jan Christian, Gert Christian, Klaas Mattheius, Karl Josop, Lucas Witbooi, Hendrik Schneewe and Jantje Prens. p.4. W.A. Adm. File A388/1.p.4.

15. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.634. Det. Gilliers.

16. *ibid.* p.770. Christian Marcus.

17. *ibid.* p.467. Stephanus Christian.

18. *ibid.* p.477. Christian Marcus.

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The Bondelswarts intended to build up their poor stock of arms and ammunition by ambushing Government soldiers¹⁹. As a draft N.A.C. Report put it :

"Whatever may have been the intention of the people with regard to armed resistance it is clear ... that at the time of van Niekerk's visit they were unprepared. They had one rifle for four men. No doubt when they did determine to rise they trusted to obtain enough guns to go round all the men by ambushing their enemies"²⁰.

The Bondelswarts under Morris worked out a military strategy, and if Hofmeyr had moved a little slower they might have had initial successes.

Morris divided the eastern Bondelswarts commando into two sections. One under Babab and Adam Pienaar moved north to Driehoek and Wortel with seventy-five men²¹, commanding the most direct approach to the Reserve, and the second group, under Morris and Beukes moved south-east to Warmbad.

The N.A.C. Report stated that Morris's intention was to attack and occupy the town²². But Beukes later said that he and Morris had gone to Warmbad with fifty men to try and join up with the Warmbad Bondelswarts for the revolt²³. Jacobus Christian and the remaining Bondelswarts occupied the western portion of the reserve, the hilly country around Guruchas and Us²⁴.

There was activity in the Union too. On 20 May Hofmeyr wired Smuts saying that, if necessary, the South African Police might have to co-operate with the S.W.A. forces. Lt. Col. Trew, head of the S.A.P in the western districts, instructed the District Commander in Calvinia to send as many men as possible to Steinkopf to patrol the border, and the Pella police station was reinforced. Lt. Col. Trew kept in touch with Hofmeyr, but his instructions from Smuts were that the S.A.P. were not to cross the Orange River to participate in suppressing the revolt²⁵.

19. *ibid.* p.772. Christian Marcus.

20. R.P.N.A.C. Report drafts. Draft B. pp.7-8.

21. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.484. T. Beukes.

22. N.A.C. Report, p.23, paras. 99-101.

23. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.484. T. Beukes.

24. N.A.C. Report, p.23, para. 101.

25. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. pp.1,031-1,033. Lt. Col.H.F. Trew.

Lt. Brinton, sub-inspector of police in Little Namaqualand, sent out patrols along the Orange River from Springbok. His instructions were to ascertain the movements of Nama in the Warmbad district, warn all the white farmers along the Orange River, and collect information about the revolt. He engaged six Nama for intelligence work, and sent out mounted patrols through the Richtersveld²⁶.

After the collapse of the Bondelswarts revolt, Lt. Col Trew organized an armed patrol through the Richtersveld as a show of force and to show the inhabitants that the area was not as impregnable as it was commonly regarded²⁷.

The first battle came at Driehoek on 26 May, Capt. du Preez and Lt. Jordaan's "D" Squadron narrowly avoided a Bondelswarts ambush and drove them off. One Government soldier, de Klerk, was killed, but nine Bondelswarts were killed, three were wounded and nine prisoners were taken²⁸. Babab was wounded in the battle and surrendered at Gabis²⁹. The Bondelswarts retreated, and pursuit was made impossible owing to nightfall³⁰. The Government forces had narrowly avoided an ambush by taking a higher road to get around some soft sand³¹.

Morris, on his way to Warmbad, heard of the Driehoek defeat and turned back. The failure of the ambush was a serious blow to his plans, since the Bondelswarts were very short of arms and ammunition. Instead of fighting along an extended front, they were being forced back into the confines of Guruchas, where, mixed up with women, children and stock, they were an easy prey for bombs and machine-guns³².

26. *ibid.* pp.531-4. Lt. E.J. Brinton.

27. *ibid.* p.1,053. Lt.Col. Trew.

28. *ibid.* p.172. Major Van Coller.

29. *ibid.* p.173.

30. *ibid.* p.172.

31. *ibid.* p.205. Major H.C. De Preez, Acting-Inspector of S.W.A. Police.

32. N.A.C. Report, p.23, paras. 103-104.

On 24 May "A" Squadron, with two mountain guns and two machine-guns, accompanied by Colonel Hofmeyr and the H.Q.'s staff, moved from Kalkfontein-South to Neufontein. Later Capt. Prinsloo was sent to occupy the Auputus waterhole, and on the way encountered the Bondelswarts near Us. The Bondelswarts under Pienaar had laid an ambush, but had opened fire too soon and had to retreat³³. The Government forces lost one man, Oelofse, in the ambush, and three Government soldiers were wounded. But Pienaar was shot and killed in the skirmish and the Bondelswarts were now in a predicament since all the waterholes around Guruchas were occupied by Government forces³⁴.

The troops began to close in on Guruchas. On 29 May at 3p.m. Guruchas was bombed by the two aeroplanes and shelled by mountain guns³⁵. The Bondelswarts responded with heavy rifle fire, and the battle raged until dusk. With nightfall the Government forces attempted to form a cordon around Guruchas, but most of the Bondelswarts fighting men escaped unseen through gaps in the cordon in the darkness. At dawn on 30 May bombing was resumed, and the area fell silent. White rags were seen and the Bondelswarts surrendered. Ninety males and 700 women and children were taken prisoners³⁶.

When the white flags were sighted Col. Hofmeyr sent a note to Jacobus Christian saying that if the white flags meant surrender, Jacobus should report to Hofmeyr personally and alone³⁷. Major Van Coller reported that :

"At dawn (30 May) the aeroplanes entered to the attack, but after dropping a few shells the enemies' fire was completely silenced. At 9a.m. reports were received that white flags were discernible in the enemies' position, whereupon the order to cease fire was immediately issued".³⁸.

33. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.173. Major Van Coller.

34. *ibid.* pp.966-970. Lt. Prinsloo.

35. *ibid.* p.179. Major Van Coller.

36. *ibid.* p.180.

37. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Exhibits and Annexures. Ex.2. Hofmeyr to Jacobus Christian. 30 May 1922.

38. *ibid.* An 1. p.17. A.R.B.

Sir Pierre van Ryneveld, commanding officer of the South African Air Force, said later that when the aeroplanes bombed Guruchas on 30 May he did not know if the Bondelswarts women and children had surrendered. Visibility was poor, and the bombs were aimed at stock and horses. Sixteen bombs were dropped during the course of the revolt³⁹, and the prisoners at Guruchas reported that the bombing had terrified and demoralized them.

The Bondelswarts' livestock was collected, amounting to 12,470 sheep and goats, 800 cattle and 700 donkeys. Col. Hofmeyr decided that :

"From information imparted by prisoners it was manifest that the rebellion had been completely crushed and that the fugitives, which included the redoubtable Abraham Morris, were merely fleeing to take refuge in the hills"⁴⁰.

But Major Prins, the liason officer between the Union and S.W.A. forces during the revolt, reported that on 30 May a Bondelswarts prisoner had told Col. Hofmeyr that all the Bondelswarts fighting men had escaped. Col. Hofmeyr decided that this was not true, and ordered the aeroplanes to bomb Guruchas⁴¹.

In fact, on the night of 29 May Jacobus Christian had instructed the Bondelswarts fighting men to break out for Haibmund or the Fish River. He told his wife to put up a white flag when dawn broke⁴².

Col. Hofmeyr estimated that only about 150 Bondelswarts had escaped through the cordon. But Capt. Prinsloo reported that the figure was more like 500, and that the rebellion was "by no means" over⁴³. Col. Hofmeyr sent Capt. Prinsloo with only forty-five mounted men to pursue the Bondelswarts escapers. Meanwhile Guruchas was razed and the prisoners and stock taken away⁴⁴.

39. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. pp.1,117-1,118. Col. Sir Pierre van Ryneveld's statement on military operations.

40. *ibid.* p.181. Major Van Coller.

41. *ibid.* p.1,120. Major Anton Joseph Friedrich Prins.

42. *ibid.* pp.770-771. Christian Marcus.

43. *ibid.* p.1,017. Lt. Prinsloo's report on the A.R.B.

44. Freislich, p.41.

Confident that the worst was over, Col. Hofmeyr and his H.Q. moved back to Kalkfontein-South ⁴⁵.

With the collapse of their military strategy, the Bondelswarts fighting men escaped through the cordon in two companies, leaving behind the women, children, old men and about twenty fighting men⁴⁶. One^c clear of Guruchas they rejoined to decide a plan of action. Abraham Matroos, a Bondelswarts corporal, said that after the flight from Guruchas, Morris and Jacobus quarrelled. Jacobus Christian wanted to return and surrender, but Morris refused. Jacobus pointed out the Bondelswarts' lack of arms and ammunition, but Morris felt that they should go to the Fish River and try and get rifles from Nicholas Christian, who was living in exile there, or perhaps from the Richtersveld⁴⁷. Morris won the day, but on the whole the Bondelswarts' military strategy had been knocked away by the devastating effects of the bombing. As Jacobus Christian later said :

"Wy hadden geen plannen omdat die vliegtuigmasjines ons bedondered geschoten hadden."⁴⁸

But things were not to work out for the Bondelswarts as well as they had in the 1904-6 rebellion. The aeroplanes were a new and highly effective means of reconnaissance and communication for the Government forces, and the subsequent cutting off of the Bondelswarts' western retreat by a Government force moving down the Uhabis River⁴⁹ to Vioolsdrift on the Orange River, hemmed the Bondelswarts in and made the end only a matter of time⁵⁰.

45. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.181. Major Van Coller.

46. N.A.C. Report, p.23, para. 105.

47. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.252. Abraham Matroos.

48. *ibid.* pp.466-467. Jacobus Christian.

49. See Map C.

50. N.A.C. Report, p.23, para. 108.

Capt. Prinsloo picked up the Bondelswarts' spoor and reported to Col. Hofmeyr on 30 May that about 500 Bondelswarts' had escaped in three lots, one of seventy going to Sperlingsputs, one of 130 to Kurnaims, and one of sixty mounted and about 160 footmen which seemed to be making for Haibmund. Prinsloo decided to follow the last group, and asked for water and reinforcements, suggesting that all waterholes be occupied and troops stationed at Uhabis and Haibmund to prevent the Bondelswarts' escape⁵¹. Later, Prinsloo described the scene somewhat caustically to the N.A.C. :

"Judging from the spoor it was clear that at least 500 of the rebels had escaped, and it was generally realized that this rebellion could now develop into a long and disastrous guerrilla war, because all the leaders with all their fighting men had escaped through an unpardonable lack of proper organization and supervision, and because nothing now could prevent the rebels from reaching the impregnable Orange River mountains, which afforded easy access to the Fish River and also to the Karas mountains".⁵²

In reply to Capt. Prinsloo's report, Col. Hofmeyr sent Lt. Jordaan with seventy-five mounted men as re-inforcements, although they only met up with Lt. Prinsloo on 2 June 1922. Lt. Eksteen with mounted troops and a machine-gun was sent rapidly from Driehoek to Vioolsdrift by lorry, where he linked up with Capt. Balt who was based on Uhabis, and a Bondelswarts attempt to break through the Vioolsdrift-Uhabis line on 5 June failed⁵³.

Meanwhile, on 31 May Capt. Prinsloo followed the spoor to Kurnaim, and from there into the Gunguniep kloof. Here in the mountain fastnesses luck once again eluded the Bondelswarts, for Prinsloo, familiar with their strategy in the 1904-6 rebellion, was on the alert and narrowly avoided an ambush they had set up. That night Prinsloo led his men out of the kloof and around the Bondelswarts, so that his force was now between them and the

51. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. pp.939-940. Lt. Prinsloo.

52. *ibid.* p.973. This was the strategy the Bondelswarts had successfully followed during the 1904-6 rebellion.

53. See *Map.C.*

vital waters of the Orange River. Capt. Prinsloo went to Goodhouse to replenish his food and water supplies, leaving five men to guard the exit of the Gunguniep kloof. Lt. Jordaan arrived with re-inforcements, although Prinsloo had had to wait another day at Goodhouse for them, since Col. Hofmeyr had neglected to leave anyone at Neufontein to pass on Prinsloo's messages. However, the aeroplanes had moved their base to Goodhouse, and provided invaluable aid in ferrying supplies and providing Capt. Prinsloo with rapid communications and reconnaissance. Nonetheless, the delay in the arrival of the re-inforcements meant that, as Prinsloo pointed out, "the very hard subsequent chase could have been avoided".

On 3 June 1922 Capt. Prinsloo resumed operations and followed the Bondelswarts up the Haib River gorges. He came across a waterhole unknown to the Government forces at a place called Bergkamer. Once again, Prinsloo saw the Bondelswarts lying in ambush just in time, and a fierce battle ensued. But the Government forces' casualties were, as usual, slight. Lt. Jordaan was slightly wounded while storming a kopje, as were two other Government soldiers. Capt. Prinsloo and Lt. Jordaan managed to get above the Bondelswarts and they inflicted heavy losses⁵⁴.

Forty-nine Bondelswarts were killed, including two of their leaders, Willem Ortman and Gert Gertzen, and fifteen rifles and all the Bondelswarts' remaining cattle and donkeys were captured. Later it was learned that Morris had been fatally wounded in the battle, and he died early the next morning⁵⁵.

But a Bondelswarts prisoner, one of three captured, delivered a message from Morris to Capt. Prinsloo and Lt. Jordaan. Morris stated that the aeroplanes did not frighten him, that he would never be captured alive, and that not a single Bondelswarts would surrender as long as he lived. The Bondelswarts still

54. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. pp.942-978. Lt. Prinsloo.

55. *ibid.* p.189. Major Van Coller.

had twenty-nine rifles and twenty-four muzzle-loaders.

On 4 June Prinsloo and Jordaan returned to Goodhouse with their troops and to replenish supplies, and asked for a doctor and more ammunition to be sent. On the night of 5 June the Bondelswarts made a final desperate attempt to break out between Uhabis and Vioolsdrift, but this was foiled by Capt. Balt and his men.

Capt. Prinsloo resumed the chase on 6 June and caught up with the Bondelswarts on 7 June⁵⁶. The exhausted, starving Bondelswarts surrendered, among them Jacobus Christian, Beukes and Hendrik Schneeuwe, with 148 others and fifty rifles⁵⁷.

The able and skillful campaign conducted by Capt. Prinsloo had helped to prevent the development of a long and drawn out guerrilla war like that of 1904-6 which had exacted such a terrible toll of German lives⁵⁸. The aeroplanes, however, had played a vital role in his success, especially with reconnaissance, in which they had been helped by the fact that the Bondelswarts, who had never seen an aeroplane before in their lives, made no attempt to conceal the smoke from their campfires⁵⁹.

Prinsloo claimed to have shot Morris during the Bergkamer battle. He said that Morris "owing to his bravery", had been conspicuous because he had constantly exposed himself to fire while directing the battle, and in the process was shot by Lt. Prinsloo in his arms and legs. Three Bondelswarts died in the hail of fire trying to pull Morris to safety before they were successful⁶⁰.

56. *ibid.* pp.983-993. Lt. Prinsloo - his report on military operations.

57. *ibid.* p.194. Major Van Coller.

Much of this account of the campaign is drawn from Lt. Prinsloo's report, but it is corroborated in a separate report by Lt. Jordaan on his part in the Bondelswarts' rebellion; 23 June 1922. R.P. "Papers connected with the Bondelzwarts rebellion". M.S. 14 787/A/(ii).

58. N.A.C. Report, p.31, para. 14.

59. Freislich, p.61.

60. N.A.C. Report, p.24, para. 110.

98.

At dawn on 4 June 1922, Abraham Morris died of loss of blood from his wounds⁶¹.

Prinsloo estimated that about 160 Bondelswarts had fled into the Richtersveld. About eighty rifles were recovered, mostly German in make. 400 Bondelswarts men surrendered, and fifty-three were wounded⁶². 110 Bondelswarts were killed in the revolt⁶³. Lt. Prinsloo said that the Bondelswarts were, on the whole, good shots⁶⁴, and Major Prins agreed⁶⁵. Lt. Brinton said that they seldom wasted a bullet⁶⁶.

Prinsloo also admired the bravery of the Bondelswarts, reporting that at the Bergkamer battle as one shot another would take his place and his rifle⁶⁷.

A draft N.A.C. report later stated that :

"Without food and water their (the Bondelswarts) plight must have been very miserable. It speaks well of both their courage and their doggedness that even in such hopeless circumstances they were still prepared to fight wherever they came into contact with the (S.W.A.) Protectorate forces".⁶⁸

There was one further incident on 16 June 1922, known as the Tatasberg incident, in which some Union Nama on the Union side of the Orange River were shot at by S.W.A. Government forces under Captain Drummond. Mistaking the Nama for Bondelswarts, the troops killed one of them and seriously wounded two others, and confiscated their stock. But the witnesses on both sides gave conflicting evidence, and the key witness, Capt. Drummond, had sailed

61. Freislich, p.79.

62. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.991. Lt. Prinsloo.

63. ibid. p.198. Major Van Coller.
ibid. p.260. Det.-Sgt. Pietersen.

64. ibid. p.995. Lt. Prinsloo.

65. ibid. p.1,123. Major Prins.

66. ibid. p.678. Lt. Brinton.

67. ibid. p.983. Lt. Prinsloo.

68. R.P.N.A.C. Report drafts. Draft B. p.60.

for Australia after the Bondelswarts' revolt. Thus the N.A.C. Report recommended the appointment of a formal investigation by the courts and that compensation be paid to the Union Nama involved for stock losses incurred, and to the widow of Joseph de Wet, the Nama who was killed in the incident⁶⁹. Lt. Brinton had been ordered to investigate the incident at the time, and found that the wounded men had received no medical attention⁷⁰. Dr. Cowan of Port Nolloth reported that three Union Nama had been wounded in the incident. Joseph Cloete had been shot through the back, Joseph Goliath the buttocks, and Piet Matthys, a Bushman, or San, in the arm⁷¹. Lt. Brinton found that the men had been there for nine days, and that the body of the deceased, Joseph de Wet, was lying behind a stone, facing the river in a defensive position. He also found that the group were Le Fleur adherents, and that Jasper Cloete had some stock amongst that which was captured in the incident⁷².

Major Van Coller explained the comparatively low number of Bondelswarts wounded as being due to the fact that four or five Bondelswarts shared each rifle, and as one was shot another took his place. In addition, he said, the Union forces had had plentiful ammunition and had machine-guns⁷³. Lt. Col. Kruger felt that the ratio of Bondelswarts killed to wounded was not unusually high for a "kaffir war"⁷⁴.

Col. Hofmeyr had instructed his officers to respect the white flag and not to illtreat prisoners. The Bondelswarts were given medical treatment and fed, and the women and children were looked after. After the rebellion was

69. N.A.C. Report, pp.25-26., paras. 117-123.

70. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. pp.534-5. Lt. Brinton.

71. *ibid.* p.673. Dr. Michael Weston Cowan of Port Nolloth.

72. *ibid.* pp.677-678. Lt. Brinton.

For further discussion of the ramifications of the Tatasberg incident see p.127.

73. *ibid.* p.191. Major Van Coller.

74. *ibid.* p.872. Lt. Col Kruger. See p.225.

over, "as far as possible" the rank and file rebels were liberated⁷⁵. Both Major Van Coller⁷⁶ and Major Prins⁷⁷ denied reports of ill treatment of prisoners, and Major Herbst told the Permanent Mandates Commission that the more seriously wounded Bondelswarts were taken to the Keetmanshoop and Windhoek hospitals, and that the Bondelswarts women were not imprisoned, but were kept at Driehoek, while the male Bondelswarts prisoners were kept for about two weeks until they had been "sorted out"⁷⁸. Indeed, one of the Government soldiers, Coetzee, told the N.A.C. that the troops had been dissatisfied because they had had to walk while the Bondelswarts wounded and aged travelled in the trucks⁷⁹.

Lt. Col. Trew said that the Bondelswarts fugitives in the Union were allowed to go home after the rebellion. Those who lived in S.W.A. had to get a pass from the Springbok magistrate if they wanted to return⁸⁰.

Charles Valentine, a clerk from Windhoek who had volunteered for the campaign, presented a report on the medical treatment of prisoners to Hofmeyr on 11 August 1922. Valentine had run temporary hospitals at Guruchas and Kalkfontein-South, and later at Warmbad, where he had treated Bondelswarts wounded (One of whom, Jan Laberlot had walked seventy-five miles from Haibmund to Warmbad with seven bullet and shrapnel wounds). Valentine reported that he had treated thirty in-patients and 100 out-patients, and that the hospital was regularly inspected and found to be satisfactory by both Dr G.H. MacRobert⁸¹, the Keetmanshoop district surgeon, and Dr L.H. Bowkett⁸², district surgeon for Windhoek. The medical staff during

75. *ibid.* pp. 74-75. Major Herbst on the A.R.B.

76. *ibid.* p.200. Major Van Coller.

77. *ibid.* p.1,121. Major Prins.

78. C.A. P.M.O. Vol. 6. League of Nations. "Report by the Permanent Mandates Commission on the Bondelzwarts rebellion." (Hereafter referred to as the P.M.C. Report.) p.16.

79. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.337. F. van R. Coetzee.

80. *ibid.* p.1,046. Lt. Col. Trew.

81. *ibid.* p.1,012. Dr. L.H. Bowkett.

82. *ibid.* p.759. Dr. G.H. MacRobert.

the campaign had consisted of two doctors, two orderlies and a matron. Jacobus Christian had been treated in the hospital for wounds caused by a bomb on 2 June, and he reported that he had received good treatment and had been well looked after by Valentine⁸³.

There were, however, some unfortunate aspects of the treatment of Bondelswarts prisoners.

Many of the Bondelswarts who had surrendered on 30 May at Guruchas reported that although they had put up white flags they had been fired upon by the Government soldiers, until an officer gave the order to cease fire⁸⁴. Major Herbst said that this incident was an accident, and that some children had been shot on the backs of their mothers who were trying to escape from Guruchas on the night of 29 May⁸⁵. Christian Marcus, one of those who surrendered at Guruchas, held that the troops had in fact been firing on those rebels still hiding in the hills⁸⁶.

There were also reports of the beating or flogging of Bondelswarts' prisoners.

A Bondelswarts prisoner, Johannes Boois said :

"Wij werden geslagen van af onze gevangeneming tot aan die dag toen wij op Warmbad aankwamen"⁸⁷.

83. *ibid.* p.269-278. Charles Valentine's report on medical treatment during the Bondelswarts rebellion.

84. *ibid.* p.771. Christian Marcus.
ibid. p.775. Johannes Matroos.
ibid. p.784. Annie Christian.
ibid. p.528. Sara Ortman.
ibid. p.765. Johannes Boois.
ibid. p.786. Maria Boois.

85. *ibid.* p.76. Major Herbst on the A.R.B.

86. *ibid.* pp.771-772. Christian Marcus.

87. *ibid.* p.765. Johannes Boois.

Others supported him in this accusation⁸⁸. The N.A.C. report noted that prisoners had been flogged, and that proceedings were taken against those responsible⁸⁹. One of them, a twenty-four year old policeman, P.J. Struweg, was subsequently found guilty of assault and fined £2.10s or fourteen days hard labour. He was also dismissed from the police force⁹⁰.

The stragglers in the mountains were rounded up by the police. Only the ringleaders were detained for trial, among them Jacobus Christian, Klaas Isaac (alias Babab) and Man Stephanus, and their legal defence was organized for them. Nicholas Christian was made to return to the Reserve. It was found that he had had no part in the revolt, but had quarrelled with Jacobus Christian in 1919 and had left the Reserve with his wives and children and a few followers and gone to the Fish River mountains. On his return he faced charges of failing to pay the dog tax and of shooting big game⁹¹.

T. Beukes, one of the Bondelswarts ringleaders turned King's evidence and was pardoned⁹². Jacobus Christian was defended 'pro-deo' by Advocate I. Goldblatt⁹³. He was sentenced to five years hard labour on a charge of having engaged in active hostilities against His Majesty's forces, but the court paid tribute to his character and conduct⁹⁴.

Hofmeyer felt that the Bondelswarts were not ready for self-government by their Raad, and decided to return all their stock captured by the Government forces, and to give them a new magistrate and police. He also wanted to create a belt of white settlers between the Bondelswarts' Reserve and the Union border to prevent access to the Orange and Fish river mountains

88. *ibid.* p.765. Johannes Boois.

89. *ibid.* p.495. T. Beukes.

ibid. p.529. S. Ortman.

ibid. p.773. C. Marcus.

90. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.742. Pieter Jacobus Struweg.

91. *ibid.* pp.77-79. Major Herbst on the A.R.B.

92. *ibid.* p.1,129. G.R. Hofmeyer.

93. C.A. File. A106. (Retroactive) I. Goldblatt to A. Davey. 5 July 1961.

94. Wellington, p.286.

and the Richtersveld⁹⁵, but this was not implemented. Jacobus Christian and the other ringleaders did not serve their full term of sentence. They were released from the Windhoek goal on 19 May 1924⁹⁶, on the Administrator Hofmeyr's orders to commemorate the visit of H.R.H. the Prince of Wales⁹⁷. On 21 May 1924, the Administrator appointed Jacobus Christian official Captain of the Bondelswarts tribe at a salary of £4 per month, in return for his promising to "loyally co-operate" with the Administration⁹⁸. He had to agree to carry out all laws and to persuade the able-bodied young Bondelswarts men to go and seek employment⁹⁹. By July 1924 Hofmeyr could report to the P.M.C. that the entire Bondelswarts Reserve had been restored to them, together with all the captured stock. Work was offered to the Bondelswarts, and rations and free medical assistance were provided for paupers. Mission stations and schools were being encouraged in the Reserve, and a new white Reserve Superintendent had been appointed¹⁰⁰.

However, the Bondelswarts were in fact left impoverished because much of their stock had stampeded into the desert and died of thirst during the rebellion¹⁰¹. The crushing of the rebellion had broken the independence and cohesion of the Bondelswarts nation forever. But the repercussions had only just started.

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95. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. pp.1,125-1,128. G.R. Hofmeyr.
 96. W.A. Adm. File No. A 383/44. "Bondelzwarts campaign - release of prisoners". (Hereafter referred to as W.A. Adm. File A388/44). Secretary for the Protectorate of S.W.A. to magistrate, Windhoek. 12 May 1924.
 97. *ibid.* Hofmeyr to magistrate, Warmbad. 12 May 1924.
 98. *ibid.* Hofmeyr to Jacobus Christian. 21 May 1924.
 99. Goldblatt, p.217.
 100. Wellington, p.289.
 101. Goldblatt, p.217.

S E C T I O N 2.CHAPTER 6.THE DEBATE.

The Bondelswarts rebellion and the manner in which it was suppressed led to a rising tide of criticism in the Union, which soon found an echo overseas and, ultimately, in the League of Nations. As a result of this the Bondelswarts revolt is unusual in that it prompted three reports and two memoranda. These varied in their conclusions from an ardent defence of Hofmeyr's handling of the rebellion to mild criticism of it, and the debate covered the spectrum of opinion from that of Hofmeyr himself, to that of the Permanent Mandates Commission.

Hofmeyr's Report on the rebellion was tabled in the Union Parliament by Smuts on 19 July 1922¹. Although it had been hastily drawn up in order to get it to Parliament before prorogation, Hofmeyr said that it "substantially" presented the facts of the case as he saw them².

He began by tracing the history of the Bondelswarts tribe and the build-up to the rebellion. Basically, he saw the revolt as only part of a widespread plot among blacks in S.W.A. and the Little Namaqualand to revolt. Although he said that "nearly every responsible person believed that a general rising was pending", he himself did not at first believe this. But he felt that he could not "allow matters to drift", and so he took action.

Hofmeyer, felt that Jacobus Christian had deliberately "evaded all possibility of a peaceful settlement" unless Morris and the other were pardoned³,

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1. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Exhibits and Annexures. An.1. A.R.B. (U.G. 30-'22).
 2. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.1,125. Hofmeyr.
Lt. Prinsloo pointed out several inaccuracies and inconsistencies in Hofmeyr's report, especially on military operations. pp.1,016-1,020.
Lt. Prinsloo.
 3. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Exhibits and Annexures. An. 1. p.4. A.R.B.

and was ready to resist by force any attempt to enforce the law, an intention which Hofmeyr read into the "gross indignity" of the armed escort on the occasion of the visit to the Bondelswarts, by Major Van Coller, Fleck and Noothout, as well as the later disarmament of Noothout. Hofmeyr felt :

"that the administration had exercised great patience and, short of going on its knees to the Hottentots, had done everything it was possible to do, in order to avoid bloodshed".

But after the disarming of Noothout by the Bondelswarts Hofmeyr decided that any further delay on his part "would have merited censure"⁴. He resolved to move swiftly, and to this end took personal command of military operations and asked for Union aeroplanes. Hofmeyr said that he was determined, once the use of force had been decided upon, to "inflict a severe and lasting lesson" on the Bondelswarts⁵.

He felt that the Bondelswarts' grievances like the dog tax, branding law and boundary dispute were unjustified, and were merely excuses to incite the people and to hide the prevalence of stocktheft. Jacobus Christian, Hofmeyr said, had been organizing his people since his arrival in 1919, and had invited Morris to join him in the agitation. At the same time Hofmeyr believed that Le Fleur was doing the same amongst the Union Nama and that the two movements were interconnected. The Bondelswarts were itching for confrontation, said Hofmeyr, and neither he, Major Herbst, Fleck, Major Van Coller nor Noothout had any doubt that :

"nothing the Administration could do in this matter, short of complete surrender to the Hottentots, would have averted the present conflict, and we are of the opinion that had we agreed to their demands, which is inconceivable, the evil-day - a much blacker one - would only have been indefinitely postponed"⁶.

4. ibid. p.5.

5. ibid. p.6.

6. ibid. p.6.

Included in Hofmeyr's report were a series of annexures⁷, such as the report of Major Manning on his visit in 1921 to investigate the Bondelswarts' unrest over the dog tax⁸. There was also a report by Major Van Coller on the negotiations with the Bondelswarts and the military operations⁹.

Both Hofmeyr and Van Coller denied press reports of illtreatment of the Bondelswarts prisoners. Van Coller in his report said somewhat naïvely :

"I am not, however, aware of any (incidents of illtreatment), but, in such instances the circumstances must have been beyond control for the moment, for, as previously stated evidence is not wanting to show that our men were imbued with a sense of chivalry, and it is inconceivable that hardships were inflicted where such conditions possibly could be avoided"¹⁰.

However, Hofmeyr concluded his report by saying that :

"In view of the statements and criticisms in the press, I welcome a full enquiry into the campaign and every phase connected with the rising"¹¹.

Indeed, there was a clamour in the Union for an investigation. In private Smuts tried to restrain Hofmeyr, while publicly defending him¹². This is well illustrated by the alterations to Hofmeyr's report made by Smuts in correspondence with Hofmeyr before its publication.

In a section of the Report entitled "The future of the Bondelswarts", Hofmeyr had proposed that only half the stock of those Bondelswarts who had not taken part in the rebellion should be restored to them. In addition, the tribe as a whole would receive 200 donkeys, twelve horses and six vehicles

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7. *ibid.* pp.7-21. Annexures A to E.
 8. *ibid.* p.7. Annexure A. Major Manning's report on Bondelswarts' unrest and resistance to dog tax. See p 45.
 9. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Exhibits and Annexures. An. 1. p.21. A.R.B. Annexure E. Report on military operations by Major Van Coller, Divisional Inspector of the S.W.A. Police. 19 June 1922.
 10. *ibid.* p.21. See p.225.
 11. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Exhibits and Annexures An.1. p.6. A.R.B.
 12. Hancock. pp.109-110.

complete with "trekgoed". The rest of the property would be forfeited to the Crown. Smuts suggested that the proposal to confiscate Bondelswarts' stock be rephrased to read that this would be done since :

"to restore all their captured property to them would only serve to make them think they can go into rebellion".¹³

Hofmeyr also proposed that a line be drawn from a point east of Haibskoppe via Sorg and Jakopsplaats to a point opposite Armvlei to the northern boundary of the Bondelswarts' Reserve¹⁴. The land west of this line would be at the disposal of the Government. East of the line, together with additional grazing land to the north and north-west would belong to the Bondelswarts.¹⁵ In this way the Bondelswarts would be cut off from the Fish River mountains by a belt of white farmers.

But Smuts felt that this proposal would cause an outcry in the League of Nations. He suggested that Hofmeyr adopt a subtler approach, and that he should say that :

"It will be necessary to take some precautions with a view to the maintainance of peace and good order in the reserve...."

and that, in accordance with this aim, "such impregnable positions" as Guruchas and Haib, with their proximity to the Fish and Orange river mountains should be taken away from the Bondelswarts leaving them the eastern portion of the Reserve "where there is sufficient grazing and stock".

However, both these proposals were dropped¹⁶ and all reference to them in the A.R.B. was excised.

Smuts was in an awkward position, since he had appointed Hofmeyr as Administrator of S.W.A., and now had to defend him¹⁷. Hancock points out that

13. W.A. Adm. Vol. 158. File W.60. Telegram Smuts to Hofmeyr. 4 July 1922. Telegram Hofmeyr to Smuts.n.d. Telegram Smuts to Hofmeyr. 29 June 1922.

R.P.N.A.C. Report. Exhibits and Annexures. Ex. 10.

14. See Map D.

15. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Exhibits and Annexures. Exhibit 10.

16. See p. 137.

17. C.A. File. 106. (Retroactive) I. Goldblatt to A. Davey. 5 July 1962.

Hofmeyr :

"had come to Smuts originally on the strongest recommendations of John X. Merriman and had always proved himself trustworthy and intelligent".

Smuts had been supported in the appointment by Major Herbst and Major Manning¹⁸. Smuts had made an urgent appeal to Hofmeyr just before the outbreak of the Bondelswarts revolt "to use every effort towards a reasonable settlement"¹⁹. Hancock views the revolt as only attracting abnormal attention because S.W.A. was a mandated territory²⁰.

On 8 June 1922 Smuts made a short statement on the rebellion in the House of Assembly, and was pressed by John X. Merriman for more information. Merriman was supported in this by a deputation from the Native Welfare Society under Sir Walter Stanford and Mr J.W. Mushet, who asked for an enquiry into the rebellion's causes and pleaded that no land should be confiscated as punishment²¹. The press, notably the Star and the Cape Times added pressure for an enquiry. On 19 July Smuts tabled Hofmeyr's report, and announced that a Commission of Inquiry would be set up and that its members would consist of the Union's Native Affairs Commission²².

As early as 5 July 1922 Smuts had telegraphed Hofmeyr warning him that there was "considerable" pressure for a commission of inquiry into the Bondelswarts revolt. Hofmeyr had wanted a Parliamentary Commission, but Smuts proposed to ask the N.A.C. to do it. On 12 May he telegraphed Hof-

18. Hancock, p.103.

19. *ibid.* p.109.

20. *ibid.* p.108.

21. The confiscation of black's lands if they rebelled had several precedents in South African history. This is evidenced by Davenport, T.R.H., and Hunt, K.S., (eds.) The Right to the Land (Cape Town, 1974). See conditions of Sir George Grey's grant of perpetual quitrent title to payers of hut tax in the Mfengu Crown Reserve in 1856 (p.36, No.57), the Glen-Grey title deed under the Glen Grey Act of 1884 (p.37, No.58) and the 1903-1905 South African Native Affairs Commission's proposals for a new black land policy. (p.41, No. 66.)

22. Davey, A.M. The Bondelswarts Affair - a study of the repercussions. (Pretoria, 1961). p.9.

meyr saying that he did not think that a Parliamentary commission would be a wise idea because some might view it as an attempt by the Government to "whitewash" its role in the rebellion²³.

As Davey points out, in general overseas opinion on the Bondelswarts rebellion was fairly moderate and restrained in the 1920's.²⁴ The official attitude in Britain was illustrated when on 25 July 1922, Col. Josiah Wedgewood raised the Bondelswarts affair in the House of Commons. He wanted to know what steps Britain was taking and questioned the use of aeroplanes to suppress the rebellion. Winston Churchill, Secretary of State for the Colonies at the time, replied :

"I hope we shall find something better to do ... than attack our dominions²⁵."

But there was overseas reaction nonetheless, and not all of it was easily shrugged off. The British press, especially the Manchester Guardian and the New Statesman, critically publicised the Bondelswarts revolt.

Sir Edgar Walton, High Commissioner for South Africa, informed Smuts from Geneva on 16 September 1922 that :

"the general impression here is, first, that the treatment of this tribe was far from humane; second, that the attack on them was not justified; and third, that the operations were conducted in a brutal manner. I have assured everybody that Hofmeyr is one of the most humane men I know, and that anyhow you had ordered a thorough investigation and would certainly see that the enquiry was ample and searching".²⁶

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23. W.A. Adm. "Correspondence 1915-1920." Vol. 145. File No. C 300. Bondelzwarts rising; Commission of Enquiry. (Hereafter referred to as W.A. Adm. Vol. 145. File C. 300). Telegram Smuts to Hofmeyr. 5 July 1922.
24. Davey, p.20.
25. *ibid.* p.15.
26. C.A. Smuts Correspondence. Private Papers. Vol. 25. "Letters". 1922. File No. 198. (Hereafter referred to as C.A. Smuts Corr. Vol. 25 File 198). Walton, Geneva, to Smuts. 16 Sept. 1922. No. 337.

More serious was Walton's next letter to Smuts from London on 25 October 1922, in which he said :

"The Colonial Office sent us word that they have reports, through the Foreign Office, that the Bondelswarts rising has been seized upon in the United States by parties opposed to the League of Nations and unfriendly to Great Britain as an excuse for a violent attack on both. The Foreign Office feels that it would be well if we were to take steps to have the history of the matter properly presented in the United States" 27

South Africa formally brought the Bondelswarts affair to the notice of the League of Nations on 5 September 1922, accepting the inevitable²⁸.

On 8 September M. Bellegarde, the representative for Haiti, gave notice of a resolution asking the Council of the League to make a full enquiry into the Bondelswarts revolt. Bellegarde felt that the revolt had been caused by the prohibitive dog tax and "intimated that it (the revolt) was a brutal business"²⁹.

However, by 11 September Bellegarde had toned down his attack somewhat. In the meantime, Walton had received a deputation from Mr Harris of the Aborigines Protection Society, who wanted to know if a commission of enquiry into the rebellion was being instituted, and what was being done for the Bondelswarts prisoners³⁰.

On 21 September a foretaste of trouble to come for South Africa was given when the Indiandelelegate in the League Assembly attacked the Union over the rebellion. But, said Walton, it "did not seem to excite much interest in the Assembly"³¹.

Meanwhile, on 20 July 1922 the terms of reference of the Commission appointed to enquire into the Bondelswarts rebellion were tabled. The Commissioners

27. *ibid.* Walton, London, to Smuts. 25 Oct. 1922. No. 342.

28. Davey, p.17.

29. C.A. Smuts. Corr. Vol. 25. File 198. Walton to Smuts. 8 Sept. 1922. No. 336.

30. *ibid.* Walton to Smuts. 11 Sept. 1922. No. 337.

31. *ibid.* Walton to Smuts. 21 Sept. No. 338.

to investigate and give their views on :

- "(1) The causes of the Bondelzwarts rebellion and any features in respect to the manner of its suppression to which the Commission wishes to draw the attention of the Government.
- (2) Whether and to what extent the rebellion was influenced from Union side of the Orange River.
- (3) Suggestions for any remedial action in respect of (1) and (2)."³²

The Commission began its investigations in August 1922, visiting the towns and villages in S.W.A. and the Little Namaqualand area of the Union as well as Windhoek and Pretoria. The Commissioners examined the area where the rebellion had taken place, and 124 witnesses, ranging from the Administrator to members of the Bondelzwarts tribe gave evidence. Before arriving in a centre the N.A.C. would advertise through the local press and officials for witnesses who felt they could help. The S.W.A. Administration suggested witnesses it felt might be helpful, and the N.A.C. itself frequently requested specific witnesses to give evidence as the facts of the case became evident.

The evidence was not taken under oath, and was heard in private in order to allow witnesses to talk freely, without fear of public and press reaction, and to allow officials to talk without fear of endangering their jobs, and also to avoid prejudicing the cases pending against alleged Bondelzwarts' ringleaders in the High Court. However, when Union or S.W.A. police gave evidence a senior police officer was always present, by request of the respective Administrations³³.

The N.A.C. consisted of Dr. A.W. Roberts, the chairman, Dr. C.T. Loram and General LAS. Lemmer.³⁴ The Native Affairs Commission itself had originally been

32. N.A.C. Report, p.1, para.1. (UG 16-'23).

33. N.A.C. Report, p.2, para's.1-6.

34. See Appendix B.

set up under the 1920 Native Affairs Act to look after all aspects of black affairs. It was empowered to submit its recommendations to the Minister of Native Affairs, or, if it failed to obtain satisfaction, to the Governor-General, and ultimately to both Houses of Parliament. It was to be advised by local African councils in black and rural areas³⁵. The N.A.C. had also investigated the Bulhoek rising of 1922³⁶.

The N.A.C. only issued its report on 19 March 1923. This delay is explained by the strong disagreement between the liberal views of Roberts and Loram as against the unbending, conservative views of General Lemmer. The rift is illustrated in the six unpublished draft reports to be found in the Roberts papers³⁷. The drafts were longer than the final report, and, except General Lemmer's draft³⁸, tended to be far more critical of Hofmeyr's role in the rebellion and of his Native administration generally. The drafts ironed out some factual inaccuracies and gaps before the final report was drawn up. Loram and Roberts seem, from the draft reports, to have been almost of one mind in their attitude to the rebellion, but General Lemmer acted as an

35. Smurthwaite, A.G. "The Policy of the Smuts Government towards Africans 1919-1924". M.A. Thesis, Unisa. 1975. p.59.

36. Hancock, p.93.

37. R.P.N.A.C. Report Drafts. (MS 14787/a/(iii)).

38. One of the six drafts is labelled "General Lemmer's draft (Draft C)" whereas the others are untitled. However, by studying the comments written in the margin of the others one can deduce that they were by either Roberts or Loram (although it is certain that Roberts, as chairman, did most of the editing), since the comments often refer to General Lemmer's objections to certain paragraphs or statements. The combined length of all the drafts prohibits a detailed account of each one, but in the body of this work whenever reference is made to an excerpt from a draft, it is to a contentious or pertinent point in the draft which has been left out of the final report. I have marked the drafts A-F in ascending order towards the final draft, Draft F.

effective brake. His draft report was far more complimentary to Hofmeyr, denying allegations of incompetence, or ill-treatment of Bondelswarts prisoners. General Lemmer also attributed a great deal of the causes of the rebellion to the "sinister" influences of Le Fleur and American negro movements³⁹, although he had to agree to tone this aspect down a lot in the drafting of the final report.

It was at General Lemmer's insistence that all references to the alleged ill-treatment⁴⁰ or shooting of prisoners⁴¹, bungling of certain aspects of the military operations by Hofmeyr⁴², and, in general, any severe criticism of the S.W.A. Administration was deleted. The final report was a combination of the view points of the three. Loram's and Robert's views predominated, albeit in a watered-down form, and General Lemmer consistently contested every contentious point in the final report, section by section⁴³.

Major Herbst was later to tell the Permanent Mandates Commission of the League of Nations that Smuts had described the N.A.C. Report on the rebellion as epitomizing the "soul of South Africa", since it reflected the deep divisions between Dutch and English-speaking South Africans' views on native policy⁴⁴.

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39. R.P.N.A.C. Report Drafts. Draft C. p.9. (General Lemmer's Draft). Heaton-Nicholl's book, Bayete! Hail the King (London, 1923), is interesting reading in this respect for its fictional depiction of the "revolutionary" influences of the American negro movements on Blacks in southern Africa via the Ethiopian church movements. It was published in 1923, and may thus perhaps have had some influence on General Lemmer's thinking.
40. See R.P.N.A.C. Reports Drafts. Drafts A-F. See also p.225.
41. See p.22b.
42. See Ch. II.
43. N.A.C. Report. passim.
44. C.A.P.M.O. Vol. 6. C.P.M. 3rd Session. Provisional Minutes. Permanent Mandates Commission. p.11. Major Herbst's re-examination by the P.M.C. 7 Aug. 1923.

The final report shows that Loram and Roberts were unable to reach a consensus of opinion with General Lemmer. Smuts privately ascribed the tussle to a overhasty judgement on Hofmeyr by Roberts and Loram, saying that :

"they were going to condemn Hofmeyr's administration root and branch. However, when they came to examine the report more carefully and weigh up the evidence which they had taken, they found that a great deal of the evidence could not bear out the interpretation which they had put on it in the first place"⁴⁵.

Although the last comment does not fully tally with the evidence given to the Commission, there remains the possibility that the final report was affected by the knowledge that it was to appear before the P.M.C. for judgement on South Africa's role as the mandatory power in S.W.A., and hence it could not be too damning⁴⁶.

The report was condensed to twenty-three pages of print. The minutes of evidence alone had come to 1,130 pages of typescript. Hence the condensation was drastic, and generalizations and omissions were bound to occur.

The N.A.C. Report⁴⁷ described the history and characteristics of the Bondelswarts until the takeover by the Union as first an occupying and then a mandatory power⁴⁸. It found that the changeover from the harsh German rule to the comparative leniency of the Union administration had been too sudden⁴⁹. The Bondelswarts were disappointed when they found that they were not going to get their lands back under the new dispensation, and even more so when the Government was reluctant to allow their leaders to return from exile⁵⁰.

45. C.A. Smuts Correspondence. Vol. 27. "Letters" 1923 (L15). (Hereafter referred to as C.A. Smuts Corr. Vol. 27). Smuts to Walton. 16 March 1923. No. 198.

46. I have not, however, been able to find substantiating evidence for this supposition.

47. Since most of the reports' findings appear in the body of this work I am giving a very basic outline here.

48. N.A.C. Report, p.2. para's. 9-13.

49. *ibid.* p.29, para.3. See p46.

50. N.A.C. Report, p.29, para. 2. See p27.

The Commission felt that while the new Administration had had good intentions, "no adequate effort" had been made "to build up the people under the new conditions of life"⁵¹. It found that there was no real fixed native policy, and said that :

"If efforts to equal to those which were made to facilitate the settlement of Europeans in the land had been made in the case of the indigenous Natives, the latter would have had less cause for complaints".

This caustic remark was followed by a comment by General Lemmer disagreeing with the above statement. He felt that native policy did not fall within the scope of the N.A.C.'s. inquiry, and that the Administration had had too short a period since the granting of the mandate in 1920 to achieve any far-reaching changes.

In commenting upon the return of Jacobus Christian in 1919 the Commission criticized the European panic which had resulted, saying, that it had increased inter-racial hostility and highlighted⁵² the strained relations between the Bondelswarts and the police⁵³. It felt that matters had been aggravated by the breach of faith when Jacobus's emissaries were locked up by the police, and that the fact that Jacobus was allowed to stay might have encouraged Morris to return later⁵⁴.

The N.A.C. felt that the poor Bondelswarts relations with the police were worsened during the period of martial law⁵⁵, when the police sometimes took matters into their own hands⁵⁶, and that this mistrust of the police was borne out by black witnesses to the Commission.

51. N.A.C. Report, pp.4-5, para. 16. See Ch. 9.

52. N.A.C. Report, p.5, para. 20. See p.192.

53. See p.187.

54. N.A.C. Report, p.6, para. 20. See p.32.

55. N.A.C. Report, p.6, para. 22.

56. *ibid.* p.6, para. 25. See p.52.

Lemmer added that the Administrator had always acted swiftly if it was found that the police had acted in an "injudicious manner"⁵⁷. He felt that the Bondelswarts' reluctance to meet Major Van Coller⁵⁸ was not so much due to mistrust as to simple defiance, and cited the evidence of T. Beukes⁵⁹ who had said that while he and Jacobus Christian had been willing to meet Hofmeyr the Bondelswarts' tribe under Morris had refused to allow this⁶⁰. In general, Lemmer stated, from the evidence he was convinced that the police were regarded with fear and suspicion only by those Bondelswarts who had broken the law.

The N.A.C. found that the branding law⁶¹ had been a strong Bondelswarts grievance, as was the dog tax⁶². They pointed out that the Bondelswarts needed dogs for protection and to kill vermin, and that many witnesses had testified to the Bondelswarts' great attachment to their dogs. Hofmeyr's ostensible reason for the dog tax, to prevent hunting and to encourage "honest labour", was condemned by the N.A.C., which stated that this "unwonted reason for imposing a dog tax does not commend itself to the Commission". General Lemmer disagreed, saying that he did not think that the dog tax was designed to make the Bondelswarts work, and pointed out that the Transvaal dog tax had been imposed solely to protect the game.

The Commission also found that administrative vacillations over the amount of the dog tax might have led the Bondelswarts to think that they could bring about change by agitation.

The N.A.C. said that the branding law was a grievance because blacks could not keep the branding irons they had paid for, and suggested that the Admini-

57. N.A.C. Report, p.7, para. 27. See p.187.

58. See p.80.

59. N.A.C. Report, pp.7-8, para. 27a). See p.217.

60. See p.72.

61. N.A.C. Report, p.9, para. 34. See p.47.

62. N.A.C. Report, p.9, para. 33. See p.48.

stration should have provided them free of charge. It felt that blacks resented the discriminatory treatment between whites and blacks under the law, and that it implied that the blacks were stock-thieves.

General Lemmer stated that the law was enacted to protect Blacks from false accusations of stock-theft by whites and thus to help control it. He did not see why the Bondelswarts should be treated differently from other blacks in S.W.A., and said that Major Manning had told the N.A.C. that he felt that the Bondelswarts did not feel discriminated against by the law or insulted by the implication that they were stock-thieves⁶³.

The Commission cited the evidence of Col de Jager that the changeover from German to Union rule had been rapid and had disorientated the blacks of S.W.A.⁶⁴. However, it admitted that it failed to see what could have been done to bridge the gap, and General Lemmer added that Gorges's 1916 Memorandum⁶⁵ and Lord Buxton's⁶⁶ Speeches after World War I had been misunderstood by blacks and that this had led to their lack of respect for the police⁶⁷.

The N.A.C. stated its opposition to any direct or indirect coercion to make blacks seek work, pointing out that the black attitude to work generally differed from that of the whites. It recommended the repeal of the old German law requiring blacks to work unless they had a certain amount of visible means of support⁶⁸, and of any tax that directly or indirectly forced blacks to seek work.

General Lemmer, however, insisted that non-workers were parasites on the state, and said that one of the duties of the whites as the "civilizing"

63. N.A.C. Report, p.9, para's. 34 & 36a). See p.47.

64. N.A.C. Report, p.10, para. 38.

65. See p.52.

66. See p.151.

67. N.A.C. Report, p.10, para's. 39 & 39a).

68. ibid. p.11, para. 41. See p.20.

race was to teach blacks the dignity of labour⁶⁹.

Reference was made by the Commission to the findings of the Native Reserves Commission⁷⁰ on the low wages⁷¹ of blacks and their allegations of ill-treatment⁷², as well as to white employer complaints of Bondelswarts laziness⁷³.

The N.A.C. found that this had aggravated poor master-servant relations and poverty⁷⁴ among the Bondelswarts, as evidenced by Major Manning in his 1921 report.

The N.A.C. also felt that the general attitude of the Bondelswarts towards the whites was antagonistic and suspicious⁷⁵, and stemmed from their resentment of the police. Therefore it felt that the civil and not the police authorities⁷⁶ should have been used in the negotiations with the Bondelswarts before the revolt. General Lemmer, however, felt that it would have made no difference.

The N.A.C. found that the Bondelswarts still resented their loss of lands in German times⁷⁷, and that this resentment was aggravated under Union administration by increased white settlement in the south⁷⁸.

The Commission was uncertain as to the real reasons for Abraham Morris's return to S.W.A.⁷⁹. It felt that Morris had been invited by Jacobus Christian and T. Beukes to join the Bondelswarts "in their agitation for improved conditions", and that Morris's arrival was used by some Bondelswarts extremists⁸⁰ to urge the tribe to revolt.

69. N.A.C. Report, p.11, para. 41a).

70. *ibid.* p.11, para. 42. See p.55. and p.183.

71. See p.43.

72. See p.40.

73. See p.191.

74. See p.45.

75. N.A.C. Report, p.12, para's. 47 and 48. See p.190.

76. N.A.C. Report, p.16, para. 66. See p.212.

77. N.A.C. Report, p.12, para. 49. See p.35.

78. N.A.C. Report, p.12, para. 50. See p.36.

79. N.A.C. Report, p.13, para. 53. See p.196.

80. N.A.C. Report, p.13, para. 55.

But General Lemmer said that it was clear to him that Morris was invited by Jacobus Christian to return, that Morris was a Le Fleur adherent⁸¹, and that Beukes, also under Le Fleur's influence, had been inciting the Bondelswarts to revolt. General Lemmer felt that Morris, being, "a man of common-sense" knew that he was breaking the law by returning, and those who came with him were armed. He therefore concluded that Morris had come to do everything in his power, including using force, to try and restore the Bondelswarts' tribal status to what it had been before the Germans had arrived⁸².

The N.A.C. found that after Sgt. van Niekerk's attempted arrest of Morris⁸³ the Bondelswarts were sure that the Government intended to declare war on them⁸⁴. From this time on, the Commission said, matters passed from Jacobus Christian's hands to Morris's⁸⁵.

As for the sending of Major Van Coller to conduct negotiations, the Commission felt that it would have been better to have sent a competent civil official familiar with the Bondelswarts' ways⁸⁶. They felt that even though the affair was, strictly speaking, a police matter "the larger view should have prevailed". They pointed out that the Bondelswarts knew that an appeal for volunteers had gone out when Major Van Coller arrived, and that this had made them doubly suspicious of the Government's intentions⁸⁷. After Sgt. van Niekerk's visit, the Commission said, the Bondelswarts were prepared to resist by force any armed entry into their Reserve.

General Lemmer, however, agreed that Hofmeyr had done the "proper thing" in sending the Chief of Police, and pointed out that Major Van Coller had used

81. *ibid.* p.13, para. 55a). See p.62.

82. See p.219.

83. See p.69.

84. N.A.C. Report, p.15, para. 61.

85. *ibid.* p.15, para. 63. See p.215.

86. N.A.C. Report, p.15, para. 64. See p.213.

87. N.A.C. Report, p.16, para. 67. See p.210.

great discretion and had worked through authorities like Mgr. Krolikowski and Noothout⁸⁸. As for the collecting of volunteers, General Lemmer said that Hofmeyr had had to do this to protect the white population in the event of a rebellion. He felt that a show of force had lent more weight to Major Van Coller's bargaining, and he felt that the Bondelswarts were intent on revolt once Morris had arrived anyway.

The N.A.C. found that the Bondelswarts had hoped to improve conditions by rebelling, and had expected to do as well as they had done against the Germans in the 1904-6 rebellion⁸⁹.

General Lemmer felt that Jacobus Christian was a "weak man" under Morris's control, and had feared the consequences of his part in not aiding the arrest of Morris, and hence did not want to meet the police during negotiations. Jacobus, said Lemmer, was merely using delaying tactics until the Bondelswarts were ready and fully organized for resistance⁹⁰.

In discussing the alleged promise made to the Bondelswarts by Noothout⁹¹ the N.A.C. found that Noothout was :

"an exceptionally sensitive man, and it is possible in his desire to bring the people with whom he worked to a state of reason he went further than the commission given him entitled him to do".⁹²

General Lemmer felt that it was Mgr. Krolikowski⁹³ who had been anxious to settle matters and had misunderstood Noothout. Lemmer did not think that Noothout would have disobeyed his orders, and saw the letter simply as a statement by the Bondelswarts of the conditions upon which they would treat with Hofmeyr. Noothout interpreted the letter one way, Mgr. Krolikowski the other⁹⁴.

88. N.A.C. Report, p.16, para. 68. See p. 203.

89. N.A.C. Report, p.16, para. 69. See p. 89.

90. N.A.C. Report, p.17, para. 73a).

91. See p. 78.

92. N.A.C. Report, p.19, para. 82.

93. See p. 78.

94. N.A.C. Report, p.19, para. 82a).

Whatever the case, the N.A.C. said, if the Bondelswarts had understood Noothout's promise to mean what Mgr. Krolikowski said it did, they would have felt threatened and deceived by its non-materialization⁹⁵.

While the N.A.C. agreed with Hofmeyr that the Bondelswarts' armed escort of Major Van Coller, Fleck and Noothout on their⁹⁶ visit to the Reserve was a "gross indignity"⁹⁷, the Commission regretted that the meeting between Hofmeyr and the Bondelswarts⁹⁸ had never taken place, and felt that such a meeting might have settled matters. But it commended Hofmeyr for his peaceful intentions and patience during the negotiations, and General Lemmer pointed out that Hofmeyr had done his best to bring about a meeting with the Bondelswarts⁹⁹.

The N.A.C. then gave a summary of the military operations against the Bondelswarts¹⁰⁰. They felt that to avoid a worsening of black-white relations the volunteers for the Government forces should have been drawn from districts as remote as possible from Warmbad¹⁰¹. But General Lemmer pointed out that the need for swift action had made this impossible. As for the use of aeroplanes, the Commission felt that while they had proved efficient and effective¹⁰², the Bondelswarts should have been warned by a demonstration of the aeroplane's capabilities¹⁰³. But General Lemmer felt that the aeroplanes had been essential, and pointed out that the Government pilots were unaware that women and children were mixed up with the stock and fighting men. He said that the Bondelswarts could have surrendered after the first bombardment, but had instead broken out that night, to continue the war¹⁰⁴, showing that a demonstration would not have led them to surrender.

95. *ibid.* p.20, para. 88.

96. See p. 81.

97. N.A.C. Report, p.21, para. 91.

98. See p. 132.

99. N.A.C. Report, p.22, para's. 96 & 97.

100. N.A.C. Report, pp.23-24, para's. 112-123. See p. 87.

101. N.A.C. Report, p.24, para. 114. See p. 85.

102. N.A.C. Report, p.211, para. 115a).

103. *ibid.* p.25, para. 116.

104. *ibid.* p.25, para. 116a). See p. 92.

As for the Tatasberg incident¹⁰⁵, the N.A.C. felt that a formal investigation by a court of law was required¹⁰⁶.

The Commission found that although Le Fleur was a "sinister" influence on the Richtersveld Nama¹⁰⁷, and that the Bondelswarts admired him, there was no direct or organized connection between the Bondelswarts rebellion and Le Fleur¹⁰⁸, even if the Union Nama were restive¹⁰⁹.

In respect of remedial measures in S.W.A. the N.A.C. recommended the extension of the Cape Vagrancy law to the territory, and the improvement of labour conditions by the setting up of a minimum wage and a standard ration. It felt that although native policy was not strictly within its scope of inquiry, it nevertheless felt that it could make recommendations. It recommended that Native Commissioners with limited magisterial powers be appointed. It found that black education was backward, with no Government grants -in-aid to mission schools, and said that this could be improved¹¹⁰. It also recommended the implementation of the N.R.C. suggestions like the provision of reserves and industrial and agricultural development, and proposed the principle of consultation with blacks before legislation affecting them was promulgated. In all, the Commission felt that :

"The whole native problem, not only as it affects the Bondelzwarts, but as it exists throughout the territory required the most careful and exhaustive examination, in order to bring it into harmony with the idea that the Native is a sacred trust of the Mandatory state".

General Lemmer, however, felt that as the Commission had not fully investigated the native situation it could not pass judgement, and said that Hofmeyr had done well in fulfilling the obligations of the Mandate¹¹¹.

105. See p.98.

106. N.A.C. Report, p.25, para.122.

107. N.A.C. Report, p.26, para.124.

108. See p.63.

109. See p.62.

110. N.A.C. Report, p.27, para. 131.

111. N.A.C. Report, p.33, para 25a).

123.

The N.A.C. Report was thus a muted but condemnatory criticism of Hofmeyr. His reaction was immediate.

On 4 April 1923, Hofmeyr submitted a Memorandum on the Report, which was presented to both Houses of Parliament¹¹². He agreed with General Lemmer's comments, and felt that they had "effectually disposed of the arguments or rather statements advanced" by Roberts and Loram. Hofmeyr disagreed with the view that no attempt had been made to build up the blacks, and pointed to his appointment of Noothout as Superintendent of the Bondelswarts Reserve and the existence of and Government support for mission schools. Hofmeyr said that he could not reconstruct the Bondelswarts' Raad under its hereditary chief as the N.A.C. had suggested because if he had allowed Jacobus Christian to return as Captain it would have precipitated a scare amongst the whites¹¹³.

He felt that the N.A.C. Reports' criticism of his native policy was ill-informed, since, as General Lemmer had pointed out, it was beyond the scope of their investigation, and they had not given him a chance to defend his policies. He had been "condemned without trial", and he quoted from his 1921 annual report to show how he had set about establishing a firm native policy¹¹⁴ promoting black education and medical care¹¹⁵.

Hofmeyr pointed out that the Cape Vagrancy law recommended by the N.A.C. was already in force in S.W.A. and said that the numbers of stock captured during the rebellion had shown that the Bondelswarts were not as poor as was generally supposed¹¹⁶. The N.A.C. Report had failed to state that the Bondelswarts' property had not been confiscated, and that the rank and file had been allowed to go home.

112. R.P. Hofmeyr's Memorandum. (MS 14 787/A/(iv)).

113. R.P. Hofmeyr's Memorandum. p.1. See p.184.

114. See p.55.

115. R.P. Hofmeyr's Memorandum. pp.2-7.

116. See p.160.

As for the use of police officials in negotiations, Hofmeyr said that it had been entirely a police matter¹¹⁷. He denied that the dog tax had been imposed to force blacks to work¹¹⁸, and agreed with General Lemmer's comments on the branding law¹¹⁹.

Hofmeyr also felt that the Commission had been wrong in saying that there was too big a jump from German rule to Union administration, and pointed out that most of the old German laws had been retained, albeit in a moderated form¹²⁰. He denied that there were any laws in S.W.A. either directly or indirectly forcing blacks to work¹²¹.

He went on to point out that the N.A.C. Report had praised him for his "patience and forbearance" in the negotiations. He felt that the revolt had been inevitable, because it was

"perfectly clear that Morris was invited by Christian and the people to come over to take command of the fighting men and conduct military operations".

He felt that this was logical because Morris was the best Bondelswarts military leader.

Hofmeyer said that the use of police in negotiations had made no difference, and that both Mgr. Krolikowski and Noothout had failed¹²². Jacobus had ignored Hofmeyr's invitations to meet him, and after the armed escort of Major Van Coller, Fleck and Noothout¹²³, Hofmeyr said that he would not have gone to the Bondelswarts and suffered similar humiliation :

"In the face of this action the Commission has the temerity of suggest that I personally should have gone to Haib to see Christian".

He said that the collecting of volunteers during negotiations was an essential precaution¹²⁴ and that the use of aeroplanes was unavoidable and efficient.

Hofmeyr felt that a demonstration of the aeroplanes' capabilities would have

117. See p. 212.

118. See p. 175.

119. N.A.C. Report, pp. 9-10, para. 369.

120. See p. 40.

121. R.P. Hofmeyr's Memorandum. p. 8.

122. See p. 212.

123. See p. 81.

124. See p. 85.

had no effect, and in fact might have precipitated the escape of the Bondelswarts from Guruchas¹²⁵.

He also felt that if the Tatasberg incident had been such a misdeed it seemed strange that a formal police investigation had not ensued. He ended by saying that any short-comings on his part would be attributed to the fact that his job kept him very busy rather than to a lack of effort¹²⁶.

If Hofmeyr was annoyed in public, in private the N.A.C. Report seems to have stung him into a state of irrational anger. In a private letter to Smuts,¹²⁷ written after the P.M.C. report on the Bondelswarts rebellion, Hofmeyr wrote that he felt Roberts and Loram had :

"become so obsessed with one aim that whatever means might be necessary to that end, their great opportunity had come for proving their faith that a Dutch South African must for ever be banned from exercising authority in Native administration in South Africa. To such a pitch of racial delirium had they brought themselves".

He went on to say that he felt the N.A.C. had "led" the evidence, and that the evidence heard by the Commission from black witnesses was "most unreliable, if not totally worthless." He felt that Roberts and Loram were under the influence of :

"European political wirepullers, office seekers, newspaper influences, ulterior-motive informers and street tittle-tattling".

He also said that :

"Dr Roberts and Dr Loram had approached their task armed with all the press misrepresentation and perchance the sinister blessings of a few politicians whose ready tools they were".

Hofmeyr felt that Roberts and Loram were a "positive danger to both races" in S.W.A. The barb had obviously struck home. One wonders what Hofmeyr's reaction would have been if he could have seen the draft reports.

125. R.P. Hofmeyr's Memorandum, p.9.

126. R.P. Hofmeyr's Memorandum, p.10.

127. W.A. Adm. Vol. 145. File C 300. Hofmeyr to Smuts. 30 Aug. 1923.

The reaction to the N.A.C. report in S.W.A. itself was vociferous. Die Suidwes Nuus condemned the report :

"in die sin dat die kommisarnisse eniggens uit hulle pad gaan om te Hottentots te beskerm en so min alle molik indie ongelyk te stel".

And it supported General Lemmer's minority viewpoints in the N.A.C. Report¹²⁸. The same newspaper in July 1923 reported a meeting in Windhoek attended by about 150 people and addressed by Col. de Jager¹²⁹ protesting against the comments of some members of Parliament on the N.A.C. Report. They protested that these M.P.'s were unsettling S.W.A. and did not know what was really going on in that country¹³⁰.

Overseas the N.A.C. Report came under a different line of attack. An anonymous contributor to the New Statesman in May 1923, writing on "The Bondel Massacre"¹³¹, strongly criticized the N.A.C. Report, saying that it was "one of the most unsatisfactory documents ever published on a punitive expedition", and pointing out that Roberts and Loram were completely "at loggerheads" with General Lemmer, and hence no agreement had been reached on any of the major points of the Report.

The correspondent felt that the Commission had ignored all the principal allegations against those who carried out the "punitive expedition". In addition, it stated that the Report had not proved that the Bondelswarts had actually rebelled, pointing out that until the Government military operations began there had been

"neither the pillage, arson nor murder; the Bondels did not touch a single hair of the head of a single white man".

128. Die Suidwes Nuus. Oct. 1919-Jan. 1925. State Archives, Windhoek. Microfilm. 20 April 1923. No. 16. p.2.

129. See p.21.

130. Supplement to Die Suidwes Nuus. 20 July 1923. No. 29. p.5.

131. C.A. P.M.O. LN 13/4. Vol. 4. The New Statesmen, pp. 136-712. 12 May 1923.

The N.A.C. Report was also criticized for not giving any casualty figures or an answer to the allegations that Bondelswarts wounded had been shot and killed. But, the article went on to say that :

"Happily there is one point made abundantly clear, General Smuts was not consulted before the Administrator began his attack on the Bondels".

In fact, Smuts had been told by Hofmeyr before the attack began¹³². The article recommended that the P.M.C. should propose to the League of Nations council that a Judicial Commission be appointed in view of the Tatasberg¹³³ incident in which British subjects were shot in the Union. Also, the League should ask for a casualty list, and for a list of able-bodied survivors of the revolt, and ask what was done with or for the wounded. Finally, the correspondent held that the League should insist that in future :

"no punitive expedition should be fitted out and dispatched without prior reference to, and the sanction obtained of, the Mandatory Government - in this case the Union of South Africa".

In fact, the article had been written by Mr Harris of the Aborigines Protection Society¹³⁴.

The N.A.C. Report was presented on 10 April 1923, and in the Union Parliament the Labour party launched the attack on Smuts. Arthur Barlow, Labour member for Bloemfontein North, proposed that Smuts's salary be reduced by £2,600, an amount equal to Hofmeyr's salary as Administrator. Barlow blamed the tactlessness of the police for the revolt, and the Government for its maladministration of the Bondelswarts and its neglect of the "sacred trust" of

132. See p. 90.

133. See p. 98.

134. C.A.P.M.O.L.N.13/4. Vol. 4. Comment by Smuts.

the mandate¹³⁵. Barlow was later to say that :

"General Smuts made a mistake in regard to the Bondelzwarts. He should have dismissed Gys Hofmeyr on the spot. The latter lost his head".¹³⁶

Barlow predicted that the outside world, particularly the blacks, liberals and the Labour Party in Britain would attack the Union's race policies in the League of Nations, saying "Our name is going to stink in the nostrils of the outside world"¹³⁷. Another Labour member, Mr Madeley, referred to the rebellion as a "blot on the escutcheon" of South Africa. The Rev. J. Mullineux, a Labour M.P., said South Africa was guilty of a breach of faith in its handling of the affair, and Col. Creswell felt that it was his "painful duty" to demand the recall of Hofmeyr for his "deplorable maladministration" of S.W.A.¹³⁸. The debate later turned into a heated argument between Smuts and Creswell, with the latter comparing the high ratio of Bondelzwarts killed to wounded with the shooting of strikers during the 1922 Witwatersrand rebellion¹³⁹. The National party, however, remained silent, letting its Labour allies attack Smuts without actually supporting them, leaving its conservative white-supremacist image untarnished¹⁴⁰.

Where the Labour party M.P's. left off, the English press, spearheaded by the Star took over the condemnation of Hofmeyr, and criticised the appointment of General Lemmer as a member of the N.A.C. of enquiry¹⁴¹.

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135. "Debates to the House of Assembly of the Union of South Africa, as reported in the Cape Times". 20 Nov. 1915-25 June 1923. Vol. 8. (State Library, Pretoria, 1969). (Hereafter referred to as House of Assembly Debates. Vol. 8). pp.324-325. "Bondelzwart Affair." 22 May 1923.
136. C.A. File A 106. (Retroactive). A.G. Barlow to A.M. Davey. 24 Feb. 1961.
137. Davey, p.10.
138. House of Assembly Debates. Vol. 8. p.327. "A blot on the Escutcheon". 22 May 1923.
139. *ibid.* p.332. "A scene". 23 May 1923.
140. Davey, p.11.
141. *ibid.* pp.12-14.

Smuts defended Hofmeyr vigorously in Parliament, saying :

"whatever their (the Bondelswarts^a) grievances, whatever their reasons or their action - and they may have had just and substantial grievances - in the ultimate result a rebellion was brewing there, and it was the swift action of the Administrator at the last moment which prevented a very terrible catastrophe in South Africa".¹⁴².

He was worried, however, about South Africa's image abroad, and proposed sending Major Herbst, the Secretary for S.W.A., to Geneva to help put South Africa's case to the P.M.C.¹⁴³.

On 5 September 1922, Sir Edgar Walton, South Africa's accredited representative at the League of Nations, put Hofmeyr's report at the disposal of the League Assembly. The Haiti representative in the League, M. Bellegarde, proposed that the matter be referred to the P.M.C., and this was accepted. But it was only when the N.A.C. Report was published in 1923 that the P.M.C. could take up the matter¹⁴⁴.

The Anti-Slavery Society and the Aborigines Protection Society tried to bring the Bondelswarts' affair up before the League Assembly again. The British press, especially the Manchester Guardian, disparaged the N.A.C. Report when it came out, and the Times in an Empire day issued in 1923 published a review of the Bondelswarts' revolt. Sir Sydney Oliver attacked South Africa's handling of the affair in a letter to the Times on 2 June 1923, calling the suppression of the rebellion a "massacre"¹⁴⁵.

142. House of Assembly Debates. Vol. 8. p.329. "A Curious Synchronization". 22 May 1923.

143. Davey, pp.10-11.

144. *ibid.* p.17.

145. *ibid.* pp.16-17.

Walton wrote to Smuts saying :

"(Gilbert) Murray seems to hope that we will escape the censure of the (League of) Nations by keeping the thing covered up in the Council. I am quite sure, however, that Harris and other good people will make that impossible and will see that the matter is brought up".

He went on to say that he hoped to have an answer ready for the critics, for he was sure that Hofmeyr had done nothing more than he "conscientiously believed was necessary"¹⁴⁶. Later, Walton wrote :

"With regard to the Bondelswarts business, we are almost sure to get that brought up at the League of Nations and the Representative of Haiti and other will make lengthy extracts from the (N.A.C.) Commission's report. It is rather a pity in some respects that the evidence is not published, for the attack, I think, will be mainly on the line that Hofmeyr got flustered and lost his head."¹⁴⁷

Major Herbst was sent to Geneva to help Walton put South Africa's case to the P.M.C., and prepared a memorandum on the revolt for the P.M.C.¹⁴⁸. In it, Herbst pointed out that the Government had compensated the Bondelswarts for their First World War stock losses¹⁴⁹, and that the Bondelswarts had caused constant friction since the Union takeover¹⁵⁰. Major Herbst said the Bondelswarts resented "laws made by Europeans for the suppression of idleness and vagrancy"¹⁵¹. With reference to the system of native administration through the magistrate, with the police acting as their agents¹⁵², Major Herbst said that while it was understandable that the Bondelswarts might not want to incur the enmity of the police by complaining, Hofmeyr had, on his visit to the Bondelswarts Reserve in 1921, told them that if the magistrates and police failed in their duty he himself could be approached and would see that justice was done¹⁵³.

146. C.A. Smuts Correspondence. Vol. 28, "Letters". 1923. (T-W). (Hereafter referred to as C.A. Smuts Corr. Vol. 28). Walton, London, to Smuts. 29 May 1923. No. 45.

147. *ibid.* Walton, London, to Smuts. 12 June 1923. No. 47.

148. C.A. P.M.O. Vol. 6. Herbst's Memorandum. (28 July 1923).

149. See p. 25.

150. See p. 60.

151. C.A. P.M.O. Vol. 6. Herbst's Memorandum. pp. 2-3. See p. 40.

152. See p. 186.

153. C.A. P.M.O. Vol. 6. Herbst's Memorandum. p. 4.

Major Herbst said that Hofmeyr had consistently resisted pressure from white farmers to give wider powers like flogging to local officials, and had tried to improve black-white relations in S.W.A.¹⁵⁴.

While admitting that the dog tax was high and that its enforcement increased the Bondelswarts' dislike of the police¹⁵⁵, Major Herbst said that Hofmeyr had imposed it to protect the game. As for the branding law, Major Herbst reiterated that it was enacted to protect blacks from unjust accusations of stocktheft by whites¹⁵⁶.

Major Herbst pointed out that Morris had had the opportunity of returning to S.W.A. when the Union forces were demobilized, but instead he had returned to the Union¹⁵⁷. Herbst was convinced that Morris had returned to lead a revolt, and that the Bondelswarts had been preparing for it for some time before Morris's arrival¹⁵⁸.

He also felt that the Bondelswarts were disappointed in their hopes that with the overthrow of the German rule their lands would be restored to them and their German master expelled from the country.¹⁵⁹

But soon Major Herbst and Sir Edgar Walton began to realize that the P.M.C. was not easily convinced. Herbst appeared before the P.M.C. for a re-examination in August 1923.¹⁶⁰ He told them :

"it was only when Sir Edgar Walton and I had given evidence and laid information before the Commission that we really became aware that the matter was far more serious than originally anticipated".¹⁶¹

He went on to tell the P.M.C. that it would have serious consequences if they condemned Hofmeyr "except in the clearest and most undoubted evidence".

154. *ibid.* p.7. See p.52.

155. See p.187.

156. C.A.P.M.O. Vol. 6. Herbst's Memorandum. pp.12-13. See p.171.

157. C.A.P.M.O. Vol. 6. Herbst's Memorandum. p.1. See p.66.

158. C.A.P.M.O. Vol. 6. Herbst's Memorandum. p.8.

159. *ibid.* p.5. See p.167.

160. C.A.P.M.O. L.N. 13/4. Vol. 6. C.P.M. 3rd Session. Provisional Minutes. P.M.C. 7 Aug. 1923. Herbst's evidence to the P.M.C.

161. *ibid.* p.2.

He pointed out that Hofmeyr had tried hard for a peaceful settlement while the Bondelswarts had consistently defied the law¹⁶². As for Hofmeyr going to see the Bondelswarts personally at their camp at Guruchas, Major Herbst asked the P.M.C. :

"how it is possible for any man having the authority of an administrator in a country where the white population far exceeds the native population in the Southern area, to maintain the prestige of Administrator and to follow the Hottentots into their stronghold where they had collected arms and were thus prepared to take the law into their own hands and resist the authority of the Government?"¹⁶³

He also asked the P.M.C. to take more cognisance of General Lemmer's comments in the N.A.C. Report on the rebellion, because :

"after all it reflects the opinion of three-fourths of the (white) population of the South Africa today".

He said that the P.M.C. should consider the effects a condemnation of Hofmeyr would have on South Africans, black and white alike. If the P.M.C. condemned Hofmeyr, Hofmeyr would have to resign, and this would result in white reaction in S.W.A., for they, Herbst said, already felt that the Government in S.W.A. was "far too liberal."¹⁶⁴

Major Herbst concluded by saying that since there was no standing army to speak of in South Africa, and since the white population was far outnumbered by the blacks, the Government had to act swiftly in the event of trouble to prevent a catastrophe developing. The law had to be immediately and forcefully vindicated to keep control.¹⁶⁵

It is not unreasonable to conclude that this unsubtle but frank appeal to the mercy of the P.M.C. may have had a restraining influence on the authors of the final report.

162. *ibid.* pp.3-5.

163. *ibid.* p.8.

164. *ibid.* pp.10-12.

165. *ibid.* p.13.

The P.M.C. examined the reports on the rebellion, and questioned Walton and Herbst closely for supplementary evidence. Among the P.M.C. members were experienced colonial administrators like Sir Frederick Lugard of Britain¹⁶⁶. Wellington says that the P.M.C. was frustrated because there was no expression of black opinion on the Bondelswarts' revolt reports submitted to them¹⁶⁷.

Under its constitution drawn up and approved by the League Council on 29 November 1920, the P.M.C. consisted of seven members, the majority of whom were nationals of non-mandatory powers, and who did not hold any office which made them directly dependent on their Governments. They were appointed by the League Council, and the International Labour Organization was permitted to appoint an expert to attend the P.M.C. and advise it on labour matters. Each mandatory power could have a delegate to sit on the P.M.C.¹⁶⁸.

The P.M.C. submitted its report on the Bondelswarts rebellion to the Assembly of the League of Nations in September 1923¹⁶⁹. The Report¹⁷⁰ opened by stating that under Article 22 of the Covenant of the League of Nations, in which the duties of the P.M.C. were defined, it was bound to "advise the Council on all matters relating to the observance of the mandates".

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166. Davey, p.19. Margery Perham. Lugard: The years of Authority, 1898-1945. (London, 1960). p.649 notes that Lugard was "strongly critical" of South Africa's performance in her mandate in S.W.A., and of the Union's "evasion and delay in the face of criticism".
In 1921 the members of the P.M.C. were M. Beau for France, Madame Anna Bugge Wiekse for Sweden, M. Friere d'Andrade for Portugal, the Hon. W. Ormsby-Gore for Britain, M. Pierre Orts for Belgium, M. van Rees for Holland, the Marquis Theodoli for Italy, and M. Kunion Yanagida for Japan, C.A. P.M.O. Vol. 6. League of Nations Council document. "Report on the P.M.C. - Memorandum by the Secretary-General." Geneva. 26 April 1921.
167. Wellington, p.288.
168. C.A.P.M.O. Vol. 6. League of Nations Council document. 26 April 1921.
169. Davey, p.15.
170. C.A.P.M.O. Vol. 6. P.M.C. Report.

The P.M.C. Report was "principally" based on reports submitted to it by South Africa, and on the evidence of Herbst and Walton¹⁷¹. The P.M.C. had received Hofmeyr's Report, the N.A.C. Report, Hofmeyr's Memorandum and Major Herbst's Memorandum, but no report from the Mandatory Power itself. Therefore, the P.M.C. held that it was ignorant of South Africa's attitude to the rebellion, and of any action taken by Hofmeyr to deal with the situation and the measures taken after the rebellion for the Bondelswarts prisoners¹⁷².

Walton had told the P.M.C. that he was not empowered to declare whether the Mandatory endorsed the opinions of the majority or the minority in the N.A.C. Report, or Hofmeyr's Memorandum on the latter¹⁷³. Thus the P.M.C. concluded that :

"By failing to pronounce on this matter the mandatory power rendered it impossible for the Mandate's Commission to decide which of the contradictory version which had been supplied was the one which should be regarded as exactly describing the course of events and the measures of the administration."

The P.M.C. had been told by Major Herbst that the N.A.C. inquiry had been "unsatisfactorily conducted" and that it was the work of "persons ignorant of the local conditions". But the P.M.C. could not regard Major Herbst's evidence as being sufficient, for he was a member of the South West African Administration. Thus the P.M.C. unanimously decided that "a complete and authoritative enquiry had not taken place"¹⁷⁴. Two members therefore felt that the P.M.C. could not make a full report since it did not have a full inquiry at its disposal, and could not call on witnesses involved in the rebellion¹⁷⁵.

However, the majority of the P.M.C. decided that the qualifications of the N.A.C. Commissioners and the obvious care with which their report was drawn up made it worth considering. Therefore, the P.M.C. decided to meet the wishes

171. *ibid.* p.1.

172. *ibod.* p.2.

173. *ibid.* p.3.

174. *ibid.* p.4.

175. *ibid.* pp.5-7.

of the League Council by giving an opinion on the revolt, subject to the reservations that there was no official report from South Africa and that only the evidence of one party in the affair had been heard.

The P.M.C. upheld the high standards of mandate obligations, and stated that it felt that, with these in mind, any criticism of the local administration in S.W.A.¹⁷⁶ would be shared by Smuts and "by enlightened public opinion, British and Dutch, in South Africa".

The P.M.C. found that the Bondelswarts rebellion was mainly due to mutual distrust between blacks and whites, and said that :

"In South West Africa even the educated classes, the Commission was told, regard the natives as existing chiefly for the purpose of labour for the whites".

This had also been the case under German rule, said the P.M.C.

In general, the P.M.C. felt that it was its duty to determine whether the policy applied, and action taken, in S.W.A. was in accordance with the spirit of the mandate or not¹⁷⁷.

In the case of the dog tax¹⁷⁸ the P.M.C. found that the evidence did not appear to justify a flat rate for both blacks and whites, and felt that the tax must have been quite "prohibitive" for blacks, stating that :

"Since these people, we are told, could not¹⁷⁹ find money to pay the tax or fine, this meant that they had to work for the whites, who, moreover, could not pay cash to their labourers."

As for the Vagrancy law of 1920¹⁸⁰, the P.M.C. condemned the provision that the magistrate could sentence a first offender under the law to a term of work on public works or for a private employer.

The P.M.C. found the reasons for the application of the branding law¹⁸¹ well

176. *ibid.* p.7.

177. *ibid.* p.8.

178. See p.46.

179. C.A.P.M.O. Vol. 6. P.M.C. Report. p.9.

180. See p.41.

181. See p.171.

founded, but added :

"It is, however, open¹⁸² to question whether it would not have been wiser to refrain from exacting payment from the natives".

It stated that since the Bondelswarts rebellion the compulsory purchase of irons had been stopped¹⁸³. The P.M.C. concluded :

"The first cause of the trouble, therefore, was the discontent of a people driven to exasperation by grievances which they probably exaggerated, and for which they could obtain no redress".

While acknowledging the "delicate and difficult" task of the Mandatory, the P.M.C. felt that the treatment of blacks in S.W.A. as shown in the evidence was unjust.

The P.M.C. saw the use of police instead of civil officials¹⁸⁴ in negotiations as a further cause of the rebellion. But the P.M.C. felt that once the revolt had started Hofmeyr had acted wisely in swiftly suppressing it before it could spread.¹⁸⁵ However, since the P.M.C. had no evidence from blacks involved, it could not express an opinion as to whether the military operations were needlessly severe or not. It accepted the effectiveness of the use of aeroplanes¹⁸⁶, and felt that a demonstration might have persuaded the Bondelswarts to surrender. On the other hand, it pointed out that this was not necessarily so, since the war was already on at the time. The P.M.C. thought that Hofmeyr's assumption of personal command was "unfortunate" because it left the Bondelswarts with no higher authority to appeal to and interfered with Hofmeyr's role as "an impartial critic and judge of the conduct of operations"¹⁸⁷.

Major Herbst had told the P.M.C. that after the revolt the bulk of the Bondelswarts had been allowed to return home, and that their stock was later

182. C.A.P.M.O. Vol. 6. P.M.C. Report. p.10.

183. *ibid.* p.11.

184. See p.212.

185. C.A.P.M.O. Vol. 6. P.M.C. Report. p.12.

186. See p.97.

187. C.A.P.M.O. Vol. 6. P.M.C. Report. p.13.

returned to them. The wounded were kept in hospital. The chairman of the P.M.C. drew attention to the high proportion of Bondelswarts killed to wounded, and to reports of the ill-treatment of prisoners. Herbst had told the P.M.C. that wounded Bondelswarts were hospitalized, and that the Bondelswarts "invariably carried away their wounded" from the battlefield, and thus few wounded Bondelswarts were captured¹⁸⁸. Only the ringleaders had been kept for trial, and the other Bondelswarts prisoners had been fed until their release and the return of their stock. No further aid had been necessary¹⁸⁹, since the Bondelswarts men could return to work. No special relief had been requested, although a private society was distributing clothing. The widows were looked after by the tribe. Unfortunately, owing to the drought, only about half the cattle had survived, but all these were returned to the Bondelswarts.

Major Herbst had said that nothing special had been done to rehabilitate the economic life of the tribe, and that the "men were merely encouraged to go out and work"¹⁹⁰.

There was an annexure to the P.M.C. report containing a statement made by the chairman, Marquis Theodoli. In a masterly exposition he set out the whole problem facing the P.M.C. in enquiring into the Bondelswarts rebellion.

He said that to pass judgement on the question meant making a comparison between the theoretical policy which should have been followed in S.W.A. and the actual policy which was. He outlined the theoretical policy. In colonies, he felt, it was necessary to have a peaceful development with whites collaborating with the blacks. For a mandatory territory this policy was, however, radically altered. Under Article 22 the fundamental principle had been laid down that

188. *ibid.* p.15.

189. *ibid.* p.16.

190. *ibid.* p.17.

the Mandatory had to assist :

"peoples not yet able to stand by themselves under the strenuous conditions of the modern world".

and thus :

"The well-being and development of less advanced peoples from a sacred trust of civilization".¹⁹¹

As far as S.W.A. was concerned, he felt that :

"the Administration has pursued a policy of force rather than of persuasion, and further that this policy has always been conceived and applied in the interests of the colonists rather than in the interests of the natives".

While conceding that the special conditions on the spot and the characteristics of the population had made South Africa's task a difficult one, Theodoli concluded :

"My conscience, however, will not allow me to admit that these difficulties justified a departure from the principles of the mandate, a departure which instead of appearing to be a demonstration of strength and superiority, might be considered an indication of weakness and incapacity in the exercise of a mission which is a lofty one only if its true spirit is respected".¹⁹²

Sir Edgar Walton presented a paper containing his comments¹⁹³ on the P.M.C. Report to the League of Nations on 1 September 1923.

He opened his reply by saying that it was impossible for the P.M.C. to report satisfactorily on the Bondelswarts' rebellion because they had no first-hand knowledge of the tensions or conditions of S.W.A. Thus he felt South Africans would find the P.M.C.'s report "incredible".

191. *ibid.* p.18.

192. *ibid.* p.19.

193. C.A.P.M.O. League of Nations. A.48. 1923. VI Geneva, 1 Sept. 1923. P.M.C. "Comments of the accredited representative of the Union of South Africa on the Commissions' Report on the Bondelzwarts rebellion". 23 Aug. 1923. (hereafter referred to as C.A.P.M.O. Walton's "Comments" on the P.M.C. Report).

He pointed out the difficulties of administering a country in which post-war tensions and the overthrow of the old regime had made unrest prevalent amongst the blacks. Hofmeyr had been appointed because of his ability, and Walton described him as being :

"a man of the highest possible character, who is incapable of an act of wrong or injustice, a man of wide sympathy, and a man who certainly felt to the full his deep responsibility for the well-being of the native races placed under his hand".

Indeed, a paragon of virtue!

As for the lack of an acceptable report on the rebellion by the Union, Walton said that he felt he had explained the Unions' position to the P.M.C.¹⁹⁴, and besides which the Union had not been asked to make a report, and felt that it would be incorrect to interfere with the N.A.C. Report. In fact, Walton said :

"the attitude of the Government towards Mr Hofmeyr and its conduct might be sufficiently indicated by the fact that Mr Hofmeyr was left undisturbed at his post".

From this very pertinent statement it would seem fair to conclude that Smuts's defence of Hofmeyr's actions was not made simply in the course of duty.

Walton went on to say that South African experience had shown that the best way to deal with a rebellion was to act swiftly.

He felt that Theodolis' views in the annexure to the P.M.C. report were unsubstantiated and extreme. The maintenance of law and order was an essential prerequisite for the inculcation of the principles of civilization, for :

Unless law and order be established and maintained, the presence of the white man himself in these countries is impossible".

194. *ibid.* p.1.

In general, Walton felt that the P.M.C's. report would be resented by the white population of South Africa and S.W.A., and could make the blacks "more difficult to manage and less amenable to civilizing influences". The success of the Government in S.W.A. was more due to moral force than force of arms, as evidenced by the small police force in the country, and therefore Theodoli's accusation that a policy of force rather than persuasion had been followed was false¹⁹⁵. In a mandated territory, Walton said, it was not true that the interests of the blacks should predominate. Both black and white should rather be treated equally.

The Bondelswarts had only resented the police¹⁹⁶ because they had broken the law, and the dog tax¹⁹⁷ had been reduced a few months before the revolt, and even the P.M.C. had found the branding law justified, said Walton. As for the objections to the Vagrancy law¹⁹⁸ Walton felt that it was better that offenders should be kept away from the contaminating influences of prison. Walton concluded with an eulogy to South Africa's native policies, saying :

"For upwards of two centuries the South African people have been brought into contact with the native races, and it is only just to claim for them that they have not shirked the white man's burden".

The P.M.C. report, Walton said, would be read in South Africa with "bitter feelings"¹⁹⁹.

One of those South Africans was Hofmeyr. He wrote to Smuts saying that he felt the P.M.C. in censuring him had adopted an "unusual to my mind, unconstitutional" procedure²⁰⁰.

195. *ibid.* p.2.

196. See p.187.

197. See p.48.

198. See p.135.

199. C.A.P.M.O. Waltons' "Comments" on the P.M.C. Report. p.3.

200. C.A.P.M.O. Vol. 6. Hofmeyr, Windhoek, to Smuts. 30 Aug. 1923.

As was the case with the N.A.C., so too Hofmeyr felt that the P.M.C. had shown itself susceptible to "the penetrating persistence of the inordinate irrationality of the present time". The P.M.C. had not appreciated the fact that Smuts, by letting Hofmeyr remain undisturbed at his post, had implicitly shown his approval of Hofmeyr's actions and policies in S.W.A.

Hofmeyr felt that the P.M.C.'s judgement was "hasty and immature", and reiterated the points made by Walton to the League of Nations in reply to the P.M.C. He felt that the P.M.C. had not appreciated what had been accomplished by the Mandatory in S.W.A. during the short time the mandate had been in existence, and had instead resorted to "ultra-superior fault finding". For his part, said Hofmeyr, he would do the same as he had done if the rebellion were to happen again²⁰¹.

The P.M.C.'s report was a moderate censure in fact, and was unanimously approved by the League Assembly.²⁰² South Africa came under attack because Major Herbst was appointed Commissioner for Native Affairs under the Hertzog Government²⁰³. But the Bondelswarts affair had been so thoroughly aired in the Union in 1922 that the P.M.C. Report. produced little response when it was tabled in Parliament on 29 January 1924. To improve South Africa's image, Hofmeyr himself, who was left at his post as Administrator of S.W.A., was sent to the League as South Africa's representative to the 1924 session to present his annual report on the mandate in person²⁰⁴.

Thus despite all these reports and memoranda, a conclusive decision either way had not been made. The debate remained largely unresolved.

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201. *ibid.* pp. 16-18.

202. Davey, p. 19.

203. C.A.P.M.O. L.N. 13/4. Vol. 4. 30 Aug. 1923. Daily News article.

204. Davey, p. 20.

CHAPTER 7.

ORIGINS OF THE REBELLION

Some of the causes of the 1922 rebellion can in fact be traced back to the past history and lifestyle of the Bondelswarts tribe. Originally a nomadic, pastoral people, they were dependent for their livelihood on the produce of their stock and on the game and natural produce of their environment. .

They were not cultivators of crops, and the area in which they lived was not climatically suited to agriculture¹. Manual labour was disliked and largely unnecessary. Major Manning agreed with the chairman of the N.A.C., Dr. Roberts, when the latter said that the Bondelswarts disinclination to work was "partly due to history and partly to the particular conditions here (in the south of S.W.A.)"².

The role of the Bondelswarts Raad or council³ had an important part to play in the 1922 rebellion, for it was the Raad that made the final decision not to surrender Morris and to prepare for war⁴. A draft N.A.C. Report stated that :

"It will be pointed out in dealing with the demand for the surrender of Morris that a Captain (Jacobus Christian) could not execute an order to which the people, speaking through their Raad, was opposed".⁵

In 1922 it was the Raad majority that overruled Jacobus Christian and decided on war⁶.

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1. See p. 3.
 2. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p. 115. Major Manning.
 3. See p. 5.
 4. See p. 82.
 5. R.P.N.A.C. Report Drafts. Draft A. p. 2.
 6. T.A. Dept. Justice. Vol. 106. File 2/122/11. Affidavit by Hendrik Jonas, who said that Jacobus Christian's Raad consisted of Timotheus Beukes, Nols Ortman, Gert Jager, Adam Pienaar, Stephanus Christian, Carl Blaauws, Gert Christian, Klaas Isaac, Klaas Mattheuys, Jan Hendriks, and Elias and Mans Stephanus.

The Bondelswarts were proud of their nation and their past⁷. Before the German occupation of S.W.A. the Bondelswarts had had great influence in the south of S.W.A.⁸, and in 1922 there would have been Bondelswarts still living who could remember their former days of freedom not more than thirty years ago. The tribe had a tradition of independence, and had been one of the two tribes that did not acknowledge the Red Nations' suzerainty in S.W.A.⁹. This independence was resolutely maintained and cherished for as long as possible¹⁰. Even after the Bondelswarts independence was broken by the Germans in the 1904-6 rebellion¹¹, their leaders in exile had kept in touch with the tribe¹². The N.A.C. Report found that even by 1922 the Bondelswarts had never easily adjusted to a subordinate position under the whites¹³. Major Eadie, the inspecting magistrate of S.W.A. said that the Bondelswarts unrest led by Adam Christian (alias Pienaar) in 1917 was aimed at the creation "of an independent tribe with Jacobus Christian as Captain"¹⁴. When Jacobus returned in 1919 the Bondelswarts told the local policeman that they had come back to claim their traditional lands¹⁵.

7. N.A.C. Report, p.2, para. 11.

8. Esterhuysen, p.7. See p.8.

9. Vedder, Early Times, p.128. See p.5.

10. Freislich, p.4.

11. See p.14.

12. N.A.C. Report, p.3, para. 12.

13. N.A.C. Report, p.29, para. 1.

14. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Exhibits and Annexures. Ex. 2. p.5. Magistrates Office, Windhoek to Secretary for Protectorate, re; Bondels unrest. 6 March 1917. See p.60.

15. *ibid.* An. 12. p.3. "Correspondence re: entering of Protectorate by Jacobus Christian and others". See p.30.

The Native Reserves Commission reported in 1921 that the Bondelswarts'

"aspirations towards acquiring their former tribal lands under a hereditary chief are viewed with considerable dissatisfaction and uneasiness by European's resident in Warmbad who allege that even today under the control of a chief appointed by the Administration (T. Beukes) their native servants are continually being summoned to attend tribal meetings".¹⁶

The N.A.C. also found that there was a strong Bondelswarts desire for independence¹⁷. David Klaas, a Bondelswarts rebel, said that Morris had told the tribe in 1922 :

"we are to make war against the white people and capture the Protectorate back for ourselves the same as we had it before the Germans took it".¹⁸

Klaas himself said :

"The chief reason of the present trouble is we wanted the land again the same as we had it before the German government came".¹⁹

Lt. Prinsloo, who had played such a major role in suppressing the 1922 revolt wrote years later that he had often

"sympathetically discussed the fact that, the Bondels were, after all, only once more fighting for their freedom as they saw it, and against certain laws which they thought were oppressive"²⁰

6 This desire for independence amongst the Bondelswarts was a major stimulus for their agitation which culminated in the 1922 revolt, and which is under-emphasized by the reports and memoranda on the revolt. Even today some Bondelswarts still feel a strong sense of injustice at the loss of their lands and freedom in 1906 and 1922²¹.

16. W.A. Adm. Private and Semi-Official Docs. Report of the N.R.C. to Secretary for the Protectorate. 1921. p.9. 8 June 1924.

17. N.A.C. Report, p.29, para. 1.

18. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.633. Det. A. Cilliers. Affidavit of David Klaas.

19. ibid. p.637. See p.35.

20. C.A. File A. 106. (Retroactive) p.3. In obituary by Col. Prinsloo for Judge "Toon" van der Heever.

21. Interview with Ludwig Scheeuwe, Wortel. 22 July 1977.

Interview with Johannes Zwartbooi, Gabis. 21 July 1977.

Interview with Isaak Witbooi, Warmbad. 20 July 1977.

Interview with W.J. Adriaanse, Warmbad. 19 July 1977.

And the desire for the restoration of the traditional lands was not only confined to the Bondelswarts, for Hofmeyr remarked that when he had tried to draw up reserves for those blacks without any land²² he had found that

"Almost without exception each section asked for the allotment of the old tribal areas '....'"²³

During the period of German rule and the breaking of black resistance in the 1904-6 revolt²⁴, this desire for a return to freedom and independence among the Bondelswarts seems to have manifested itself in a vaguely expressed desire for "English" rule. The Bondelswarts remembering the mutually respectful relations that they had had with the Cape Colony, fondly imagined that the justice, aid and non-interference they had received at the hands of the British would return if the British came to power. Their disillusionment when this did happen sowed further seeds of discontent, to be reaped in 1922. The Bondelswarts held great hopes for a British victory²⁵ when the First World War began, and some, like Abraham Morris, even took service with the Union Defence force²⁶. Their frustration and anger was thus all the greater when they found that under Union rule their lands were not restored to them and that they were still subject to many of the old German laws, which, albeit in a milder form²⁷, were now more strictly applied.

The Bondelswarts felt that German rule was too restrictive, and the constant enmity between black and white eventually sparked into revolt all over S.W.A. in 1904²⁸. The peace treaty signed with the Bondelswarts on 23 December 1906 reduced what was left of their territory to a Reserve of 175,000 hectares²⁹.

22. See p.54.

23. R.P. Hofmeyr's Memorandum, p.4.

24. See p.17.

25. N.A.C. Report, p.3, para. 12.

26. See p.23.

27. N.A.C. Report, p.3, para. 14.

28. N.A.C. Report, p.3, para. 12.

29. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. pp.239-240. Det.-Sgt. C.C. Pietersen (presented a copy of the 1906 treaty to the N.A.C.).

The diehards, like Jacobus Christian and Morris, fled into the Union as exiles³⁰. It is important to note that the Bondelswarts had not been completely defeated by the Germans. By ably pursuing guerrillatactics they had inflicted heavy losses on the Germans, who were unused to both the terrain and the mode of warfare³¹. It was the sheer weight of numbers and the superior weaponry of the Germans that had made their victory inevitable. But the Bondelswarts had learned that the whites were not invincible and could be successfully opposed. None of their leaders had been captured, but had merely fled into exile in the Union³².

The Bondelswarts had learned another lesson from the 1904-6 rebellion. It had started when the local German divisional commander, Lt. Jobst, had interfered with the Bondelswarts chief's juridicial powers, and had gone to arrest him. In the scuffle both Lt. Jobst and the chief had been killed³³.

This, allied with the wide and often abused powers of the German police had made the Bondelswarts deeply suspicious of any white in uniform, and ready for any duplicity from such whites³⁴.

The "German yoke" fell heavily on the Bondelswarts shoulders after the 1904-6 rebellion. On 18 August 1907 the Governor, Lindequist, drew up new regulations which prohibited blacks from owning riding animals and large stock, and imposed a pass system, vagrancy law and a strict control of master-servant relations, often to the benefit of the master, on them³⁵.

Thus the period of German rule left the Bondelswarts confined to a small portion of their original lands and subject to much disliked pass and work laws.

30. N.A.C. Report, p.3, para. 12. See p.17.

31. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.949. Lt. Prinsloo.

32. See p.17.

33. Bley, German Rule, p.144.

34. See p.187.

35. Bley, German Rule. pp.172-173. See p.20.

It also left a legacy of enmity between blacks and whites and a deep Bondelswarts distrust of the law and the police. These feelings were re-awakened with Lt. Jordaan's duplicity in arresting Jacobus Christian's emissaries in 1919³⁶, and with Sgt. van Niekerk's attempted arrest of Morris in 1922³⁷. And it was these Bondelswarts suspicions which hampered the negotiations preceding the 1922 revolt³⁸.

The Bondelswarts were badly hit economically by the First World War. During their trek to Tsumeb³⁹ most of their stock had died of drought and disease⁴⁰, and many of their huts were destroyed. But their hopes for a redress of their grievances were high once the Union had won the war in G.S.W.A.

The Union troops found the Bondelswarts at Tsumeb. But the question of their resettlement and compensation for their war stock-losses was to give the Bondelswarts a foretaste of what was to come. The N.A.C. found that the Union victory had aroused "extraordinary" hopes among the Bondelswarts and that when they were disappointed in these their anger at the Germans was redirected at the Union⁴¹. Hofmeyr said that although the blacks in S.W.A. had had their lands confiscated, cut up and sold by the Germans, they had expected these to be restored to them with the Union's victory, and were aggrieved when this did not happen⁴².

The Germans had taken most of the Bondelswarts with them to Tsumeb, for reasons which are not entirely clear. Some said that the Germans were afraid that the Bondelswarts would aid the Union forces⁴³, while others held that the Bondelswarts had wanted to avoid capture by the Union and had acted as

36. See p.30ff.

37. See p.69ff.

38. See Ch.10.

39. See p.23.

40. See p.24.

41. N.A.C. Report, p.29, para. 2.

42. R.P. Hofmeyr's Memorandum. p.4.

43. W.A. Adm. Vol. 50. File 599. Extracts from minute by Dr. Jorison, Omaruru. 13 July 1915.

scouts and guides for the Germans⁴⁴. Whatever the case, after some initial delay, the Bondelswarts were resettled at Warmbad in August 1915⁴⁵, and £950 worth of rations was issued to them⁴⁶.

But the question of compensation for stock losses was not solved quite so easily. In 1922 Jacobus Christian wrote a letter to Le Fleur⁴⁷ complaining that, amongst other things, the Union Government had not yet compensated the Bondelswarts for their war stock losses⁴⁸. The complaint was a recurrent one for the Bondelswarts, and proved to be their first disillusionment with Union rule. In 1920 they petitioned General Smuts about it⁴⁹.

In fact the Bondelswarts did get some stock⁵⁰, but a study of the military Government's correspondence about the compensation is revealing, showing a peculiar combination of ineptitude, tactlessness and delay, as well as a complete lack of understanding for and communication with the Bondelswarts' wishes, starting off Union rule in S.W.A. on a sour note.

On 21 July 1915 Major Pritchard at Windhoek was informed that the Bondelswarts at Tsumeb had 400 cattle which they wished to sell, and that they wanted to have the proceeds transmitted to Warmbad⁵¹. However, three days later the information was sent that the 400 cattle did not actually belong to the Bondelswarts, but had been given to them by the Germans to provide food⁵². After the Bondelswarts had been resettled at Warmbad they wanted the money from the sale to buy stock. Lt. Kendrick at Kalkfontein-South telegraphed the Native Commissioner at Windhoek on 18 September 1915 stating that the Bondelswarts would not be compensated for any losses caused by the German Government, but

44. Interview with Joseph Christian, Gibeon. 26 July 1977.

Interview with Johannes Zwartbooi, Gabis. 21 July 1977.

Interview with Izaak Witbooi, Warmbad. 20 July 1944.

45. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. pp.90-91 Major Manning. See p.24.

46. R.P. Hofmeyr's Memorandum. p.8.

47. See p.62.

48. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.1,112. Lt. J.H. Thomas. Jacobus Christian to Dirk Schas, Cape Town.

49. W.A. Adm.Vol.106.File 3353. Warmbad Magistrate to Sec:for S.W.A.14 Apr.1920.

50. See p.25.

51. W.A. Adm.Vol.50.File 599. Telegram Maj. Leisk to Maj. Pritchard. 21 Jul.1915.

52. ibid. Telegram Capt. Leifeldt, Tsumeb to Windhoek. 24 July 1915.

would prefer cattle instead of the cash owed to them from the sale of the Tsumeb stock⁵³.

When nothing had happened by November 1915 Lt. Kendrick sent a letter to the acting Native Commissioner, on 4 November, reminding him that the Bondelswarts should be paid in cattle and not cash. With some foreboding, Lt. Kendrick wrote that since the Union authorities had agreed to sell the Bondelswarts' stock at Tsumeb and to transmit the proceeds he felt that

"The administration has therefore incurred responsibility in the matter and should not adopt a course which would be to the detriment of the Bondelswarts who appear to have suffered more than other natives in the conditions brought about by our occupation".⁵⁴

But the officer in charge of Native Affairs at Keetmanshoop was informed by the Native Affairs department of S.W.A. on 6 November that the Bondelswarts were to be paid in cash and not cattle, in order to obviate any misunderstanding⁵⁵. In fact, it would have had the opposite effect. The Keetmanshoop Native Affairs officer replied to the effect that, if cash had to be paid, it should be paid out in February 1916 when the Government sales of unclaimed stock would take place. Otherwise the Bondelswarts might squander the cash or if they tried to buy stock, would have to do so at inflated prices from white farmers who would be aware that the Bondelswarts had been paid out⁵⁶.

But the months went by, and on 27 March 1916 the military magistrate at Warmbad reported that he had received a deputation of Bondelswarts complaining that their ration supplies had been stopped and that the £2,000 realized by the sale of the Tsumeb stock had not been given to them. While he felt that the Tsumeb stock had actually belonged to the Government and not the Bondelswarts, since it had only been given to them to provide milk, the military magistrate felt that for obvious reasons the money, or its equivalent in stock,

53. *ibid.* Telegram Lt. Kendrick to Native Commissioner. 18 Sept. 1915.

54. *ibid.* Lt. Kendrick to Acting Native Commissioner. 4 Nov. 1915.

55. *ibid.* Protectorate Native Affairs Dept. to Native Affairs Officer, Keetmanshoop. 6 Nov. 1915.

56. *ibid.* Native Affairs Officer, Lt. Kendrick, to Native Commissioner, Windhoek. 25 Nov. 1915.

should be given to the Bondelswarts⁵⁷.

The Secretary for the Protectorate replied on 19 July 1916 saying that some of the Tsumeb stock had belonged to a local farmer, and so £300 would be deducted from the £2,000 to compensate him. The remaining £1,700 was to be used to buy small stock, not cattle, at the lowest possible price for the Bondelswarts⁵⁸. In addition, the cost of rations supplied to indigent Bondelswarts since the official ending of ration supplies was to be deducted from the £1,700. The Bondelswarts finally got their compensation on 16 August 1916. It had taken a year and two months to come through, and when it finally did they were compensated with goats, not cattle or even sheep⁵⁹.

So, after an unnecessarily long delay and with some reluctance, the Government had fulfilled its obligations. In the process they had lost a chance to win the Bondelswarts' goodwill.

However, the Bondelswarts did not regard this as adequate compensation, and on 30 June 1917 a deputation of Bondelswarts met the Secretary for the Protectorate of S.W.A. to complain about the lack of compensation for war stock losses. He replied that "The English government does not pay the German governments' debts".⁶⁰

This lack of compensation remained a strong Bondelswarts grievance, and left many of them impoverished. Some Bondelswarts still remember the great stock losses they incurred during the war and the lack of compensation with bitterness⁶¹.

As for the stopping of rations before the proceeds of the sale of the Tsumeb

57. *ibid.* Military magistrate, Warmbad to Sec. for Protectorate. 27 March 1917.

58. *ibid.* Deputy Sec. for Protectorate to military magistrate, Warmbad. 19 July 1916.

59. *ibid.* Military magistrate, Warmbad to Sec. for Protectorate.

60. W.A. Adm. Vol. 51. File 599/2. Bondelswarts deputation to Maj. J.F. Herbst, Sec. for the Protectorate.

61. Interview with Joahannes Zwartbooi, Gabis. 21 July 1977.

Interview with Isaak Witbooi, Warmbad. 20 July 1977.

See Appendix A.

stock were transmitted, Col. de Jager told the N.A.C. that he had :

"heard from many districts (in S.W.A.) that the natives say that the British are in sympathy with us, they kill us with sympathy but our stomachs are empty".⁶²

Immediately after the First World War Lord Buxton, the Governor-General of the Union of South Africa (1914 to September 1920) toured S.W.A., making speeches. He proclaimed the equality before the law of black and white, and said that there was to be no more indiscriminate flogging of blacks, and that the rights of black employees would be safeguarded. Blacks would be able to own land communally, would be allowed to own cattle, and would have their existing reserves secured to them⁶³.

General Lemmer felt that Lord Buxton's speeches might have aroused false hopes among the blacks of S.W.A. as to the liberalization they could expect under Union rule⁶⁴. This opinion was echoed by many authorities, some of whom saw the disappointment caused by the false hopes as a direct cause of the 1922 Bondelswarts rebellion⁶⁵. General Lemmer felt even more strongly about it, blaming Lord Buxton's speeches for the "licentiousness" of the blacks in S.W.A. under German rule⁶⁶.

The Bondelswarts were aware of Lord Buxton's speeches, and they did seem to base some of their hopes for Union rule on them. In 1921 they had protested about the branding law's discriminatory treatment between blacks and whites "terwyl Gouverneur Lord Buxton gezegt heeft dat wy allen gelyk hebben"⁶⁷.

62. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.316. Col. de Jager.

63. W.A. Private and Semi-Off. Docs. 6293/10. "Tour of Governor-General in Protectorate. Speech delivered by His Excellency the Governor-General of the Union of South Africa at Windhoek, on the 2nd October 1919. Printed by Swakopmund Buchhandlung. pp.8-9

64. N.A.C. Report, p.10, para. 39a).

65. Die Suid-West. 2 June 1922.

R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.1,028. Lt. Col. Trew.

66. R.P.N.A.C. Report Drafts. Draft C. pp.8-9.

67. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.447. Nouthout.

The Bondelswarts' disillusionment with Union rule was all the greater, since after the First World War they were faced with the fact that over 8,000 Germans had been allowed to stay in S.W.A.⁶⁸, and sometimes they had to work for these Germans to raise money.

The Bondelswarts' disillusionment was expressed by a desire for "English" and not "boer" rule. They regarded the Union Government of S.W.A. as being "boer" rule. On the eve of the 1922 rebellion Jacobus Christian wrote to Abram Watt that he had been "dumbstruck" when Noothout had told him that S.W.A. had separate laws to the Union, since he felt that the Bondelswarts acknowledged only "English" law⁶⁹. Mgr. Krolikowski said in 1922 that the Bondelswarts had told him that :

"in the Union the dog tax was 2s and 6 pence and they asked if they were not now under the English flag. They asked why they should pay more".⁷⁰

Several Bondelswarts told the N.A.C. that it was the "boer law" and the "boer government" that was responsible for their sufferings, and not the "English law", which they desired⁷¹. There seems to be some parallel in this with the Union Richtersveld "Old law"⁷² party, which, under Jasper Cloete a follower of Le Fleur⁷³, vaguely promised a return to "English law" as it had been in the days of Queen Victoria⁷⁴.

The Administration's action on the occasion of Jacobus Christian's return from exile in 1919⁷⁵ did not exactly endear it to the Bondelswarts, and set in motion a growing mood of distrust amongst the Bondelswarts which culmi-

68. Hancock, p.103.

69. N.A.C. Report, p.15, para. 62. Jacobus Christian to Abram Watt. 16 May 1922.

70. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.354. Mgr. Krolikowski.

71. *ibid.* p.752. John Brown.

ibid. p.774. Johannes Matroos.

ibid. p.879. J.W. Haite.

72. See p.62.

73. See p.63.

74. See p.63.

75. See p.33.

nated in the 1922 revolt. Jacobus Christian had made repeated but unsuccessful applications⁷⁶ to return from exile once the Union Government took over S.W.A. Eventually, in 1919 he decided to return anyway, and crossed with a number of followers, spurred by the climate of economic depression in the Union Little Namaqualand area which had forced copper mines there, a major source of employment, to close down⁷⁷.

The Bondelswarts first contact with the new Government in S.W.A. for which they held such high hopes was with Trooper Roux, a lone policeman stationed at Haib⁷⁸. His actions gave the returning exiles a taste of what to expect in the future. He refused the Bondelswarts cattle water for some time, and arrested the first messengers to arrive⁷⁹. It was Trooper Roux and a local farmer⁸⁰ whose alarmist reports contributed to the debacle that followed.

Lt. Jordaan went with fourteen policemen to investigate and their armed arrival at Jacobus's camp caused many Bondelswarts to take cover and prepare to fight⁸¹. Jacobus, his suspicions aroused, refused to accompany Lt. Jordaan to Warmbad but instead sent four of his headmen as emissaries⁸². But Lt. Jordaan, lying in wait ahead, captured and imprisoned the emissaries⁸³, and although, as soon as he heard of it, the Administrator ordered their immediate release, the damage was done. Jacobus angrily told the magistrate who came to investigate the case that the Bondelswarts had returned openly and in peace⁸⁴, and took strong exception to Trooper Roux's initial refusal of water for their stock, saying :

"How can a person who is thirsty, that went without water for four days between Uhabis and Haib with a thirst, be treated in such a manner"⁸⁵.

76. See p. 29.

77. See p. 29.

78. See p. 29.

79. See p. 30.

80. See p. 19a.

81. See p. 30.

82. See p. 31.

83. See p. 31.

84. See p. 33.

85. R.P. Exhibits and Annexures. Anl. 2. Jacobus Christian to Warmbad Magistrate. 8 Aug. 1919.

Poor relations between the Bondelswarts and the police were thus further aggravated⁸⁶, and Lt. Jordaan's actions left the Bondelswarts suspicious and angry. A draft N.A.C. report summed up the effects of the incident, saying that it was :

"recorded as exemplifying the 'ruses de guerre' which were considered justifiable in dealing with the Hottentots and as explaining why in subsequent negotiations the Bondelzwarts were unwilling to trust the promises and safe conducts of the administration".⁸⁷

Major Manning told the N.A.C. that it would have been better for the magistrate himself to have gone to see Jacobus, rather than the police⁸⁸. On his 1921 visit to the Bondelswarts Reserve he reported that the 1919 incident had made them suspicious of the Government and he condemned the handling of the affair, saying that :

"perusal of the report discloses hasty action of the part of the police calculated to bring on a disturbance and excitement which it should have been their first object to prevent. This comparatively small body of Bondelzwarts appears to have left the Union in good faith on declaration of Peace and after an arduous journey and having difficulty about water at one farm, arrived at its old reserve, where it was promptly met by armed force, instead of some representative of the civil administration"⁸⁹

He felt that Lt. Jordaan's duplicity -

"was likely to create a want of confidence in Government methods, and it could hardly be wondered if Jacobus Christian became nervous or suspicious, and was reported unwilling to comply with summonses."⁹⁰

Although it was not desired that Jacobus should be allowed to stay in S.W.A., the S.W.A. Administration had to let him stay since the Union refused to allow the stock that Jacobus and his followers had brought with them to be brought back to the Cape, in order to prevent the spread of stock diseases⁹¹.

86. See p.32.

87. R.P.N.A.C. Report Drafts. Draft A. p.9.

88. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.112. Major Manning. See p.187.

89. R.P. Exhibits and Annexures. An.1. A.R.B. p.8. Major Manning's report on Bondels' unrest. 1921.

90. *ibid.* p.9.

91. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. pp.14-16. Major Herbst.

What is striking about the 1919 incident is its similarity to the cause of the outbreak of the 1904-6 rebellion, with Lt. Jobst's attempted arrest of the Bondelswarts' Captain⁹². Jacobus and his followers had been involved in that rebellion and would have remembered the incident, as their reaction on Lt. Jordaan's arrival showed. But, more important, was that it showed the returning Bondelswarts that little had changed since 1906, and it inculcated a mistrust and fear of the police and the Government which was to severely hamper negotiations on the eve of the 1922 rebellion⁹³. Lt. Jordaan's double-cross was to make the Bondelswarts all the more reluctant to let Morris go to Warmbad, especially when they knew that Sgt. van Niekerk was waiting for them on the road to Warmbad⁹⁴. The 1919 incident was not forgotten, and was vividly remembered by one of the informants interviewed in 1977⁹⁵.

Over the next four years after 1919 there was a steady trickle of returning Bondelswarts exiles to S.W.A.⁹⁶. Once there, they found that labour conditions under Union administration were nearly as burdensome and poor as in German times, and the situation was aggravated by the prevailing drought and depression⁹⁷. Things worsened in 1920 when military rule ended because with the withdrawal of garrisons there were fewer jobs available and less money was in circulation⁹⁸. Lt. Prinsloo felt that the Bondelswarts were suspicious of the rising inflation in the country⁹⁹.

Labour conditions were poor¹⁰⁰. In 1915 Lt. Kendrick had reported that some Bondelswarts refused to work for white farmers because they alleged they were ill-treated by them¹⁰¹.

92. See p. 14.

93. See p. 184.

94. See p. 198.

95. Interview with Isaak Witbooi, Warmbad. 20 July 1977.

96. See p. 34.

97. See p. 39.

98. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p. 865. Lt. Col. Kruger.

99. *ibid.* p. 949. Lt. Prinsloo.

100. See p. 39.

101. Adm. Vol. 50. File 599. Report of Lt. Kendrick, Officer of Native Affairs Dept. to Native Commissioner, Windhoek. 22 Sept. 1915.

In 1917, Lt. Col. Kruger, investigating Bondelswarts unrest, said that he had given :

"instructions that all natives present in the Warmbad district not in possession of working passes are for the present to be left alone. I am of the opinion that this had a great deal to do with the alleged unrest".¹⁰².

The N. A. C. found the relationship between the Bondelswarts and their white employers to be generally unsatisfactory¹⁰³. The problem was also that there were no local industries and that the educational system was backward¹⁰⁴.

But, if the Bondelswarts were reluctant to work there were ways that the Government could put pressure on them to do so, by reducing their economic independence by preventing them from hunting, or¹⁰⁵, indirectly by forcing them to look for work in order to get cash to pay the dog tax¹⁰⁶.

The N.R.C. investigated the labour position in S.W.A. in 1921¹⁰⁷. The commission heard complaints from white farmers that the blacks were lazy, unreliable and insolent, that the qualifications for black exemption from labour requirements were too low, that too many visiting passes were issued to blacks, and that penalties for black contract-breakers were too light. Thus the N.R.C. recommended stricter control over contracts, stricter pass laws, and that powers of corporal punishment should be restored to the police¹⁰⁸.

The Vagrancy law¹⁰⁹ which provided that a first offender under the law could be sentenced to a term of work on public works or for a private person was another hidden form of making blacks seek work. It was defended by the Govern-

102. W.A. Adm. Vol. 106. File 3353. Gorges to Secretary for Defence, Pretoria. p.3. Report of Col. Kruger on Bondels' unrest. 16 Jan. 1917.

103. N.A.C. Report, p.11, para. 43.

104. *ibid.* p.32.

105. See p.51.

106. See p.175.

107. See p.183.

108. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. pp. 842-845. Lt. Col. Kruger on N.R.C. Report.

109. See p.41.

ment on the grounds that it kept the blacks out of jail¹¹⁰.

But the N.A.C. Commissioners, Roberts and Loram, felt that the

"freedom to work or not to work which we regard is fundamental to native policy and administration."

was being eroded in S.W.A.¹¹¹. Wellington accurately described the effect of the Vagrancy law as being that

"the unrest of vagrants thus became in fact a useful means of supplying farmers with labourers".¹¹²

Some authorities felt that work was "good" for blacks, basing their argument on the idea that civilization could be transmitted through the dignity of labour. Hofmeyr felt this way, but strongly denied that there was any law in S.W.A. directly or indirectly forcing blacks to work¹¹³.

There remains the fact, however, that offenders under the Vagrancy Law had to work, and that unless they owned a certain number of stock blacks were required by law to work.

It should nonetheless be remembered that there had been some improvements in the legal aspects of labour conditions for blacks under Union rule¹¹⁴. The old German laws had been ameliorated to eliminate indiscriminate powers of flogging, and to ensure the payment of wages and a certain degree of protection for employees¹¹⁵. But these legal safeguards were not always implemented, and depended largely upon the attitudes of the local officials involved¹¹⁶.

A draft N.A.C. report summed up the position :

"The wages paid (to the Bondelswarts) ranged from 10/- to 15/- a month with food which is not a living wage; the prevailing depression and poverty made it doubtful if the wages always paid or the food always supplied, and there were numerous complaints about beating and other forms of ill-treatment by the European masters".¹¹⁷

110. C.A.P.M.O. Vol.6. Walton's "Comments" on the P.M.C. Report. p.3.

111. R.P.N.A.C. Report Drafts. Draft A. p.16.

112. Wellington, p.283.

113. R.P. Hofmeyr's Memorandum. p.8.

114. See p.42.

115. R.P. Exhibits and Annexures. Ex1. N.A.M. p.9.

116. See p.149.

117. R.P.N.A.C. Report Drafts. Draft A. p.17.

158.

Thus the N.A.C. recommended a minimum wage level and standard rations¹¹⁸. General Lemmer disagreed feeling that the Bondelswarts, being "temperamentally lazy" and unreliable, were only worth low wages¹¹⁹. Major Herbst excused the farmers who paid low wages by saying that they had to import their food at high cost because the conditions in the south were unsuitable for agriculture¹²⁰. But the high costs of food affected the Bondelswarts just as much. Herbst admitted that a certain class of poor farmer or "bokboer" had entered S.W.A.¹²¹ and could not afford to pay decent wages. He said :

"I agree that economically it is not sound to have these people here but on the other hand one cannot prohibit them to come into the country".

But Herbst felt that the Bondelswarts' inadequate wages were compensated for by the fact that they did not pay a poll tax, and so received the "benefits" of white administration for nothing. He spoilt the effect somewhat by adding :

"The wages paid to the native are so low that it would be an impossibility for him to pay the poll tax".¹²²

As for paying higher wages, the local farmers in the Warmbad district told the N.A.C. that they had

"thought about it but we never did it. They are too bad to work and do not deserve more pay".¹²³

A consequence of the low wages was that the farmers suffered from a shortage of labour. In 1919 the military magistrate at Warmbad said :

"It is regrettable, however, to have to state that the farmers have themselves to blame for not getting reasonable employment because the tendency is to get labour as cheaply as possible. These natives are by no means stupid".¹²⁴.

118. N.A.C. Report, p.27, para. 31.

119. *ibid.* p.30, para. 6a).

120. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.27. Major Herbst.

121. See p.3b.

122. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. pp.84-85. Major Herbst.

123. *ibid.* p.343. F. van R. Coetzee.

124. W.A. Adm. Vol. 106. File 3353. Military magistrate to Secretary for Protectorate. No. 45. 28 Oct. 1919.

Instead of attracting better labourers and increasing their productivity and motivation through incentives like fair wages and reasonable rations, the farmers resorted to pressurizing the Administrator into imposing taxes like the dog tax to force blacks to work to pay the tax¹²⁵. The white farmer's attitude towards their black labourers was nearly always selfish and exploitative. Even the N.A.C. in 1921 remarked :

"the apparent reluctance at some of the meetings (with white farmers) to consider such questions as minimum wages and a standard ration served to indicate that the whole question had been approached from the standpoint of the European with little or no regard to the interests of the natives".¹²⁶

Another difficulty which faced the Bondelswarts and aggravated their steadily mounting frustration was their lack of ready cash to pay their tax. They sold lime and grass to the Government¹²⁷. But the N.A.C. found that the traders exploited them, and that the traders' system of allowing unlimited credit and charging high interest rates kept the Bondelswarts perpetually in debt. The traders did not pay cash for the Bondelswarts stock, but instead paid in "good fors" redeemable at their stores, thus making a profit both ways on the stock and produce exchanged for it. Farmers too often paid in stock, and the value of the stock was often less than the cash value of the wages¹²⁸. The traders paid low prices for Bondelswarts' stock anyway, knowing that the Bondelswarts had to sell their stock in the Warmbad area due to the strict quarantine controls¹²⁹. In addition, Fleck told the N.A.C. that farmers often paid their Bondelswarts employees dog tax for them "so that the boys would not leave their service",¹³⁰ a system of debt bondage which left the Bondelswarts perpetually short of cash.

125. See p.184.

126. W.A. Adm. Private and Semi-Off. Docs. N.A.C. Report. p.2. 8 June 1921.

127. *ibid.* Public Works Office, Keetmanshoop to Director of Works, Windhoek. 17 July 1918.

128. See p.43.

129. N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.102. Major Manning.

130. *ibid.* p.415. Fleck.

This was an important cause of the Bondelswarts' anger and frustration, because they had to buy their food since their stock was few in numbers and the area was unsuitable for agriculture¹³¹, and under Union law hunting was forbidden¹³². Hofmeyr himself said that amongst the Bondelswarts

"those unable to work have to depend almost entirely upon such of their old staple diet, meat and milk, as they can get".¹³³

After the rebellion of 1922 the number of stock captured¹³⁴ led the Government to say that the Bondelswarts were not as poor as had been commonly imagined¹³⁵, and that therefore many of their grievances connected with their supposed poverty were exaggerated. But, as an editorial in the Star at the time pointed out, the numbers of stock captured did not represent extraordinary wealth, and it wondered if Hofmeyr had expected the Bondelswarts to sell of the few stock they possessed, their only independent means of livelihood, to pay taxes¹³⁶.

The low wages and, sometimes, the harsh treatment of the Bondelswarts working for white farmers did not encourage any enthusiasm amongst them for their work. There were no major towns nearby to provide much of an alternative source for labour, and Hofmeyr wished to discourage the black urban drift anyway¹³⁷.

General Lemmer felt that the Bondelswarts' poverty was not due to Government neglect, but to the world-wide economic depression at the time, and also because he felt that there was

"no doubt that if the method of living of the Bondels had been differently arranged, they would have been better able, by hard labour, if necessary outside the Reserve, owing to their limited needs, to combat this poverty!"¹³⁸

131. See p.1.

132. See p.50.

133. R.P. Hofmeyr's Memorandum, p.2.

134. See p.46.

135. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.27. Major Herbst.

136. Star editorial. 5 June 1922.

137. R.P. Hofmeyr's Memorandum, p.2.

138. R.P.N.A.C. Report Drafts. Draft C. p.5. (Gen. Lemmer's draft).

161.

However, he failed to give any concrete examples or suggestions as to how this could have been done. Whatever the case, there was poverty among the Bondelswarts, and this was attested to by the N.R.C.¹³⁹ and graphically illustrated by Major Manning on his visit to the Bondelswarts' Reserve in 1921¹⁴⁰. Bishop Simon said that, in his opinion,

"the miserable conditions of the natives is the main cause of the trouble they gave lately in the South West".¹⁴¹

It was this poverty, combined with disillusionment and discontent, that caused the Bondelswarts to become frustrated, bitter and angry.

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139. See p.55 and p.183.

140. See p.45.

141. R.P. Exhibits and Annexure 7. Statement by Bishop Simon sent to N.A.C. 1. September 1922. p.1.

CHAPTER 8.

THE CAPTAINCY QUESTION, LAND AND LAWS

One of the biggest of the Bondelswarts' disillusionments with Union rule came over the Captaincy question¹. Immediately after the Union Government took over S.W.A. the Bondelswarts had begun agitating for a Captain². It was part of their desire to restore their traditional tribal status. The Warmbad military magistrate said in 1917 :

"The Native wants some chief whom he can recognize and to whom he can have recourse in matters affecting his interests. He does not understand departmental administration and is suspicious of it".³

The strength of the Bondelswarts' desire to have a Captain and their strong belief in their traditional tribal status is reflected by a comment by the military magistrate of Warmbad, who said :

"I cannot in my opinion too strongly advise the Administration not to appoint a Captain over the Bondels as that would immediately combine the nation which could then give endless trouble".⁴

Difficulties arose because most of the Bondelswarts specifically wanted Jacobus Christian, who had been living in exile in the Union since 1906, to be Captain. Jacobus had taken part in the 1904-6 rebellion and had had no part in the signing of the hated 1906 treaty. Freislich holds that the Bondelswarts' tribal elders had often crossed the Orange River to confer with their leaders in exile⁵.

But the Administration in S.W.A. was no less aware of Jacobus's reputation. After Jacobus return to S.W.A. in 1919⁶ the N.R.C., while realizing that the tribe "clearly" regarded Jacobus as their chief⁷, did not recommend that the Administration recognize him as such, since he was regarded as an "undesirable person". Unfortunately for the Administration, there was little they could do

1. See p.27.

2. See p.27.

3. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.851. Lt.Col. Kruger on N.R.C. Report.

4. W.A. Adm. Vol. 51. File 599/2. Military magistrate to Secretary for Protectorate. 30 Aug. 1915.

5. Freislich, p.5.

6. See p.29.

7. W.A. Adm. Private and Semi-Off. Docs. Report of N.R.C. 8 June 1921. p.4.

to prevent the Bondelswarts from regarding Jacobus as the real Captain because, as Jacobus himself explained it :

"I am considered Captain amongst my people because my father was Captain before me".⁸

Hofmeyr later told Smuts that he had been requested by the Bondelswarts to officially recognize Jacobus as their chief. But, said Hofmeyr, he had found out that Jacobus had been regarded as an outlaw since 1906, and that his applications to enter S.W.A. before his 1919 arrival had been refused because the Government had felt that he would, "sooner or later", lead his people to make trouble. After 1919 Jacobus had been under a suspended sentence for a year and so could not be appointed⁹. But, said Hofmeyr, Jacobus had "openly" led agitation for his instalment as Captain. Hofmeyr, however, admitted that the Bondelswarts regarded Jacobus as their Captain, and that :

"Jacobus should therefore either have been recognized as such when he came over the Orange River, or he should have been punished and sent back to the Cape Province".

But, Hofmeyr said that his advisers had "strongly urged" him not to revoke the previous Administrators' decision not to recognize Jacobus as chief, because the authority of the Government would "be undermined".¹⁰ This led the N.A.C., in a draft report, to condemn as "official weakness" the

"failure or unwillingness to recognize Jacobus Christian as Captain as soon as the period of his suspended sentence had expired, seeing that he was the real Captain and that even the officials of the Administration were in the habit of addressing him and referring to him as Captain. If it was not considered necessary to punish and deport Jacobus Christian for breach of the law a good opportunity was missed of showing the Bondels that the Government was not only willing to listen to their complaints but to give effect to them where it could".¹¹

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8. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.455. Jacobus Christian.
 9. See p.33.
 10. C.A. P.M.O. Vol. 6. Hofmeyr to Smuts pp.8-9. 30 Aug. 1923.
 11. R.P.N.A.C. Report Drafts. Draft. B. p.7.

The absurdity of the situation is highlighted by a study of those "Captains" whom the Government saw as acceptable for the Bondelswarts. In 1918 the Bondelswarts were allowed to have a Captain, but Willem Christian was appointed as Jacobus was still in exile¹². Willem died in the influenza epidemic in December 1918. The military magistrate at Warmbad described him as "a harmless idiot" who had shown no interest in his tribe.¹³ On 21 February 1919, Captain Wentzel, the military magistrate at Warmbad, held a Bondelswarts meeting to appoint a new Captain. They wanted Jacobus Christian to be made the new Captain, despite all Wentzel's efforts to dissuade them¹⁴. But instead of Jacobus, Hendrik Schneeuwe was appointed Captain. The result, said Major Herbst later, was that

"the Administration's man drew the money and the other man (Jacobus) wielded the influence".

The Government held that Jacobus had forfeited his claim to the Captaincy because he had left the country in 1906¹⁵. Hendrik Schneeuwe was an unusual candidate for the Captaincy. He was not of the royal family, but had been a Native Constable appointed as foreman of the Bondelswarts at Warmbad, whereas all other Bondelswarts' foreman were elected¹⁶. However, he was elected as Captain on 15 May by a meeting of Bondelswarts at which were present "all recognized headmen, foremen and old men personally or by proxy", as indeed the Secretary for the Protectorate had insisted they should be¹⁷.

Schneeuwe's reign was short lived. The Bondelswarts objected to his enthusiasm in rounding up labour for the local farmers¹⁸, and on 11 March 1920 the acting magistrate at Warmbad held an enquiry into Bondelswarts allegations that Schneeuwe had embezzled tribal moneys and defrauded individual Bondelswarts.

12. N.A.C. Report, p.5, para. 18.

13. W.A.Adm. Vol. 51. File 599/2. Military magistrate to Secretary for Protectorate. 3 Dec. 1918.

14. *ibid.* Copy of report from Lt. H. van de Made, officer commanding 1st M.C. Police district No. 18, Keetmanshoop to Adjutant, Keetmanshoop. 23 Feb. 1919.

15. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.14. Major Herbst.

16. W.A.Adm. Vol. 51. File 599/2. Military Magistrate, Warmbad to Secretary for Protectorate. 11 Jan. 1918.

17. *ibid.* 15 May 1919.

18. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.457. Jacobus Christian.

The magistrate was suspicious of the Bondelswarts' accusations however. Schneeuwe was asked to resign, and in April 1920 the Government recognized Timotheus Beukes as Captain, with a salary of £4 per month¹⁹. Beukes did not last long either, for, as Major Herbst told the N.A.C. "no native would accept the position that a commoner be the Chief".²⁰ In fact, Beukes was not even a Bondelswart, but was a Baster²¹.

However, Beukes had long been a favourite of the Administration. In June 1918 he had been appointed a foreman for the Warmbad location²². The Warmbad magistrate in 1921 recommended Beukes as "efficient" and as being of "great assistance" in persuading the Bondelswarts to pay their dog tax and generally helping the magistrate in "obtaining information"²³. This may account for the view of a reliable informant who remembered Beukes as being a Government stooge and a labour-gatherer²⁴.

Not all Government officials idolized Beukes. The Warmbad magistrate, Fleck, told the N.A.C. that Beukes was a "drunkard"²⁵. Major Manning, in 1921, felt that Beukes had "no desire or particular ability" to rule the Bondelswarts²⁶. In fact, Beukes was Captain only in name, and he acknowledged Jacobus's position as the real Captain²⁷. Beukes resigned his post in April 1921, and no other Bondelswarts Captain was appointed until 1924²⁸.

The views of the Bondelswarts tribe on this procession of Captains is reflected by the opinion of informants, who without exception were adamant that Beukes and Schneeuwe were only "waarnemende" or acting Captains, and most described them as only being foremen²⁹.

19. W.A.Adm. Vol. 106. File 3353. Acting Magistrate, Warmbad to Secretary for Protectorate. 14 April 1920.

20. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.19. Major Herbst.

21. *ibid.* p.417. Noothout.

22. W.A.Adm. Vol. 51. File 599/2. Military magistrate to Secretary for Protectorate. 21 June 1918.

23. *ibid.* Magistrate, Warmbad, to Secretary for S.W.A. 28 Dec. 1921.

24. Interview with Isaak Witbooi. Warmbad. 20 July 1977.

25. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.416. Fleck.

26. *ibid.* p.97. Major Manning.

27. R.P. Exhibits and Annexures. Ex. 3. Copy of letter from T. Beukes to Jacobus Christ'an.

28. See p.103.

29. See Appendix A.

Thus, in quick succession the Government had foisted on the Bondelswarts an idiot, a swindler and a drunkard stooge as Captain. The last two were not of the royal family, and the last one was not even a Bondelswarts. At the same time, while not officially recognizing him, the Government held Jacobus responsible for his tribe's actions right until the 1922 revolt, and it was obvious that he was the legitimate and rightful Captain. In fact, it was the restraint exercised by Jacobus that helped to delay the 1922 rebellion as long as it was³⁰. Nevertheless, the Government could hardly have worked out a better way to disillusion and embitter the Bondelswarts, to injure their pride, and to exhibit a clumsy tactlessness and a complete lack of any desire to understand the Bondelswarts' wishes.

The land question was another major Bondelswarts' disillusionment. They had a deep-rooted desire to regain their traditional tribal lands³¹, and their disappointment when these were not restored to them when the Union took over S.W.A. was a contributory cause of the 1922 rebellion³².

Major Herbst summed up the Bondelswarts' feelings when the expected restoration of their traditional lands did not materialize. He told the P.M.C. :

One can understand their (Bondelswarts) feeling against the farmers who now occupy their land Then came the last and greatest disappointment. With the arrival of the 'English' he expected the Germans would be driven out and deprived of the land which would be restored to its original owners".³³

The Bondelswarts found that not only were their lands not returned to them, but also that many Germans were allowed to stay on in S.W.A. under Union rule³⁴.

The Bondelswarts had, in German times, lost most of their land to the land companies, especially the S.A. Territories Company³⁵. They lost the rest under the 1906 treaty³⁶, retaining only a small fraction of their original

30. See p.215.

31. See p.30.

32. See p.144.

33. C.A.P.M.O. Vol. 6. Herbst's Memorandum. p.5.

34. See p.54.

35. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.479. T. Beukes.

36. See p.18.

lands as a Reserve. As far as the Reserve was concerned, Wellington pointed out that :

"There was little land in the reserve which could be cultivated, and, in any case, the Bondels were never cultivators; the area for pasturing their flocks of sheep and goats was now too small, so that they were forced to work for the German settlers in the vicinity and to hunt game with small packs of dogs".³⁷

To aggravate matters, when the Union took over the administration of S.W.A. not only were the Bondelswarts' traditional lands not restored, but they were opened up to a flood of South African settlers³⁸. As Goldblatt points out :

"The German Government, by confiscating the land of the Natives, provided itself with a large portion of the Territory as crown land, which in terms of the Versailles Treaty became German lands of South West Africa, under the Mandate.

The Union Government, as Mandatory, thus reaped the benefits of the actions of the German government which had been deemed unworthy to own colonies".

General Botha after the conquest of S.W.A., and with elections looming up in 1918, thought that it might help matters and smooth ruffled feelings about the Union's entry into the First World War if it was known that the S.W.A. would offer plenty of openings for farmers and civil servants from the Union.³⁹ The results of this policy had far-reaching ramifications for black-white relations in S.W.A.⁴⁰, for, as Goldblatt says,

"No applications (for land) were received, or expected to be received from the natives, who all looked on with dismay at the disposal of the lands which they had thought would be restored to them after the defeat of the Germans."⁴¹

For some, like the Bondelswarts, the feeling was somewhat stronger than "dismay". White settlers poured into the Warmbad district, aided by low interest loans which enabled them to start farming with little capital investment, a system controlled by a Land Board under the Land Settlement Act which had been extended to S.W.A. in 1920⁴².

37. Wellington, p.284.

38. See p.36.

39. Goldblatt, p.226.

40. See p.199.

41. Goldblatt, p.226.

42. See p.36.

A side-effect of this system was that many poor farmers, known as 'bokboers', arrived in the district who could not afford to pay a fair wage to their labourers⁴³.

One informant, a white farmer, W.J. Adriaanse, whose family had trekked into the Warmbad district in 1916, recalled the influx of white farmers in the period from 1920 to 1921 under the "Nedersettings' Wet" or Land Settlement Act⁴⁴.

The Bondelswarts felt very strongly about this invasion of what they regarded as being their territory. With no prospect of their lands being returned to them they jealously defended what land they still had. The influx of white settlers increased the pressure on the land available, and soon the Crown lands along the boundaries of the Reserve were being divided up for white settlers. Conflict was inevitable⁴⁵. The 1906 treaty had restricted the Bondelswarts to a Reserve of 175,000 hectares, the boundaries of which had been fixed by a commission of three German officials and three Bondelswarts' representatives, with a sketch plan and certain beacons marking the boundaries.⁴⁶

A dispute broke out over the farm "Plankieskop"⁴⁷. The Bondelswarts argued that the boundary line drawn up under the 1906 treaty had included the farm in the Reserve, while the Union administration was adamant that it was outside the Reserve. In 1921 matters came to a head, and Noothout was instructed to move the Bondelswarts squatting on Plankieskop back to their Reserve, since the farm had been allocated under the Land Settlement Act.⁴⁸ The Surveyor-General of S.W.A., A.G. Landsberg, had checked the Bondelswarts' Reserves' boundaries and found that the co-ordinates as determined by his survey differed hardly at all from the German survey, and hence the Bondelswarts claim of

43. See p.158

44. Interview with W.J. Adriaanse, Warmbad. 19 July 1977.

45. N.A.C. Report, p.12, para. 50.

46. See p.38.

47. See Map D.

48. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.423. Fleck to Noothout, No. 2/8/20. 3 July 1921.

encroachment was invalid⁴⁹. Thus the matter was regarded as settled by the Government⁵⁰.

But the Bondelswarts were adamant. Lt. Prinsloo told the N.A.C. that he thought the Bondelswarts felt threatened by the increasing number of white farmers being allocated farms around the Reserve⁵¹. They felt that the Reserve was too small and had insufficient water, and were indeed supported on the latter point by the N.R.C.⁵².

The boundary question was a very real Bondelswarts grievance. On the eve of the 1922 rebellion, in May, the Bondelswarts had told Noothout that newly-arrived white farmers were encroaching on their Reserve and that the Government was ignoring the Bondelswarts' complaints to that effect⁵³. A local white farmer told the N.A.C. that prior to the 1922 rebellion the Bondelswarts had "often" held meetings protesting, amongst other things, that they wanted certain farms "which in former days were their property" returned to them⁵⁴. Jacobus Christian himself cited the boundary question as one of the causes of the 1922 revolt⁵⁵.

In fact, so strong a grievance was the boundary dispute that it still rankles today. A reliable informant, Johannes Zwartbooi, remembered it vividly and could still point out the disputed Plankieskop boundary. Most of the informants interviewed remembered the affair as a cause of the rebellion and a strong Bondelswarts' grievance⁵⁶.

49. *ibid.* p.42. Surveyor-General, A.G. Landsberg, to Native Commissioner, No. 1548/1/5016/21. 3 December 1921.

50. *ibid.* p.427. Fleck to Noothout, No. 2/8/20. 27 Feb. 1922.

51. *ibid.* p.951. Lt. Prinsloo.

52. *ibid.* p.843. Lt. Col. Kruger on N.R.C. Report.

53. *ibid.* p.447. Noothout.

54. *ibid.* p.332. F. van R. Coetzee.

55. *ibid.* p.374. Fleck. Jacobus Christian to Fleck. 27 July 1922.

56. Interview with Johannes Zwartbooi, Gabis. 21 July 1977.

Interview with Nols Kennedy, Gibeon. 27 July 1977.

Interview with Frank Basson and Sara Ortman, Gibeon. 25 July 1977.

Interview with Joseph Jacobus Christian, Gibeon. 26 July 1977.

Interview with Isaak Witbooi, Warmbad. 20 July 1977.

See Appendix A.

Despite the disillusionments, and perhaps spurred by them, the Bondelswarts nurtured what remained of their independence fiercely, and resented any action of the Union Government which they regarded as interfering with it. And, being basically a conservative pastoralist society, they particularly resented Government interference with their stock.

One such interference in Bondelswarts eyes was the compulsory dipping of stock. Although regular dipping was enforced the strict quarantine regulations prevented the Bondelswarts from selling their sheep and goats at the most lucrative markets⁵⁷. The dipping was done to prevent "brandsiekte" or scab disease, which is highly contagious. Hofmeyr in February 1922 had appealed to the Bondelswarts to support the Government dip-tanks⁵⁸. Regular dipping was necessary since the plentiful springbuck in the area spread the disease⁵⁹. This was particularly irksome to the Bondelswarts since they were not allowed to hunt game⁶⁰.

Many of the informants felt strongly about the issue. J.J. Christian saw it as a contributory cause of the 1922 rebellion, and said that the Bondelswarts did not believe in dipping and had resented the interference. Johannes Zwartbooi⁶¹ said that the Bondelswarts disliked it because the dipping killed the stock which was already weak from drought and disease⁶².

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57. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.102. Major Manning. See p.47.
 58. R.P. Exhibits and Annexures. An 1. p.8. A.R.B. Maj. Manning's report.
 59. *ibid.* Ex. 4. Copy of reply from Hofmeyr to Bondelswarts petition. 24 Feb. 1922.
 60. *ibid.* An. 1. p.7. A.R.B. Maj. Manning's report. See p.50.
 61. Interview with Isaak Witbooi, Warmbad. 20 July 1977.
 Interview with J. J. Christian, Gibeon. 26 July 1977.
 Interview with J. Zwartbooi, Gabis. 21 July 1977.
 See Appendix A.
 62. See Davenport, T.R.H., The Afrikaner Bond. (Cape Town, 1966), p.156, for a similar objection by Afrikaner families in the north-western Cape in the 1890's to the compulsory dipping of sheep under the Cape Scab Act of 1886. See also the "Report of the Scab Disease Commission, 1892-1894". (G 194) 1884, which covers the same subject.

Even more strongly resented was the branding law, introduced in September 1921⁶³. The provision that the police or superintendent had to brand the blacks' cattle⁶⁴ for them did not help the already strained relations between the Bondelswarts and the police⁶⁵. In addition, the cost of compulsory branding iron was 30s,⁶⁶ the equivalent of the average Bondelswarts' wages for two months, or of two to three goats. The Bondelswarts felt strongly about this, and many witnesses told the N.A.C. that it was a cause of the 1922 rebellion⁶⁷. In February 1922 Jacobus Christian, T. Beukes and twenty-nine other Bondelswarts petitioned Hofmeyr to allow them to keep their branding irons like the whites did. Hofmeyr refused⁶⁸. In May 1922 Noothout reported that the branding law's discriminatory treatment between black and white was a Bondelswarts grievance⁶⁹. Major Herbst said :

"they (Bondelswarts) feel the slight and that they think 'why should the white man have it and not we'.⁷⁰

It appears that some Bondelswarts resented the law because they felt that by branding their stock they were in some way transferring ownership of the stock to the Government. A Bondelswarts, David Klaas, said that a cause of the 1922 rebellion

"came through the Magistrate wanting to put the Government brand on our cattle, given to us by the German Government".⁷¹

Although Fleck, the Warmbad magistrate, reassured Jacobus Christian that the stock would still belong to the Bondelswarts, and Jacobus agreed to bring the stock in for branding, the other Bondelswarts refused⁷².

63. See p.47.

64. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.39. Major Herbst.

65. See p.187.

66. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.43. Major Herbst.

67. *ibid.* p.522. Hendrik Jonas.

ibid. p.525. Hans Ortman.

ibid. p.636. Det. Cilliers presents affidavit of David Klaas.

ibid. p.766. Johannes Boois.

ibid. p.374. Fleck. Jacobus Christian to Fleck. 27 July 1922.

68. *ibid.* p.37. Major Herbst.

69. *ibid.* p.447. Noothout.

70. *ibid.* p.40. Major Herbst.

71. *ibid.* p.636. Det. Cilliers presents affidavit of David Klaas.

72. See p.47.

All the Bondelswarts informants interviewed saw the branding law as an infringement of their rights and independence. Johannes Zwartbooi claimed that unbranded stock was liable for confiscation, and J.J. Christian said that the Bondelswarts felt that the old system of ear-marking their stock was a good enough form of identification. He was supported in this by a white farmer informant, W.J. Adriaanse, who remembered that the Bondelswarts had felt strongly that their Reserve was their land and resented the interference of an alien government in their independence⁷³.

The general attitude of the whites was recorded by the N.R.C. in 1921, who found them strongly opposed to blacks being allowed to retain their branding irons, since they felt that they would use them to brand stolen stock⁷⁴.

The Government claimed that the law was designed to protect blacks from unjustified allegations of stocktheft, and to try and prevent stocktheft generally⁷⁵. But their real attitude was revealed by Major Herbst, who told the N.A.C. that, while it had not been proven that the Bondelswarts were stock thieves, he felt that it was "generally held" that "the natives in this country were cattle thieves".⁷⁶ In fact, Hofmeyr in the A.R.B. stated that he felt that the Bondelswarts' opposition to the branding law was based on a desire to steal stock undetected⁷⁷. Major Herbst said that the discriminatory treatment of blacks and whites under the law was because :

"The allegations are that if you give a native a branding iron he will brand anything".⁷⁸

However, it is interesting in this light to note that the N.R.C. of 1921 had found the white allegations of black stocktheft exaggerated, and said that in 1920 only 160 blacks in the whole of S.W.A. were convicted for stocktheft⁷⁹.

73. Interview with J. Zwartbooi, Gabis. 21 July 1977.

Interview with J.J. Christian, Gibeon. 26 July 1977.

Interview with W.J. Adriaanse, Warmbad. 19 July 1977.

74. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.842. Lt.Col. Kruger on N.R.C. Report.

75. *ibid.* pp.44-46. Major Herbst.

76. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. pp.44-46. Major Herbst.

77. *ibid.* p.66. Major Herbst on the A.R.B.

78. *ibid.* p.38.

79. *ibid.* p.844. Lt.Col. Kruger on N.R.C. Report

The N.A.C. pointed out that there were only twenty-two cases of stock-theft in the Warmbad district from 1 January 1920 to 1 August 1922⁸⁰.

In fact, Mgr. Krolikowski told the N.A.C. that he had had more stock stolen by whites than by blacks⁸¹, and he is supported in this by informant W.J. Adriaanse⁸².

However, Bondelswarts opposition to the law was so strong that Fleck took no action against them for not complying with it⁸³.

General Lemmer felt that there was no reason why the Bondelswarts should have felt especially aggrieved by the branding law, since it applied to nearly all blacks⁸⁴. But the evidence is overwhelming that it was a strongly felt grievance for the Bondelswarts. The P.M.C. Report stated that the law

"was not calculated to diminish the irritation known to exist in a tribe which was extremely distrustful of any obligation imposed by the authorities".⁸⁵

A draft N.A.C. Report concisely summed up the faults of the branding law. It found that the Bondelswarts resented the fact that the Rehoboth Basters had been allowed to keep their irons. Furthermore, it stated :

- "(iii) The clear implication of the regulations that they (Bondelswarts) were cattle thieves increased the bitterness of the Bondelzwarts against the Government.
- (iv) Certain of the more ignorant Bondelzwarts believed that the brand put on by the police was the Governments' brand, and that the cattle now belonged to the Government.
- (v) No prosecutions took place among the Bondelzwarts for contravention of the branding laws. If the law was necessary and just it should have been enforced; if it was not necessary it should not have been made".⁸⁶

In fact, the Bondelswarts may have felt that for once their agitation had had some effect, and this may have encouraged them to pursue similar tactics

80. N.A.C. Report, p.9, para. 34.

81. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.369. Mgr. Krolikowski.

82. Interview with W.J. Adriaanse, Warmbad. 19 July 1977.

83. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.415. Fleck.

84. R.P.N.A.C. Report Drafts. Draft C. p.13. (Gen. Lemmer's draft).

85. C.A.P.M.O. Vol. 6. P.M.C. Report. p.11.

86. R.P.N.A.C. Report Drafts. Draft A. pp.15-16.

against the dog tax.

The dog tax⁸⁷ was undoubtedly the single most hated law for the Bondelswarts, and a major cause of the 1922 rebellion. It interfered with their traditional way of life, and with their economic independence.

Hofmeyr, in 1921, had greatly increased the dog tax, on a graduated scale⁸⁸. He had imposed the tax because on his tour of S.W.A. he had found that blacks kept large packs of dogs. Major Herbst said :

"these dogs went about hunting game and it would irritate the farmers. If they (blacks) could live by hunting they would not work".

He did not believe, however, that the tax had been imposed because black owned dogs attacked sheep⁸⁹. Herbst admitted that the tax was a heavy one, but said that this was done on purpose "to do away with the dogs", and, besides which, he said that the Bondelswarts could sell firewood in Warmbad at "£2-£3 a load" to pay the tax⁹⁰.

Hofmeyr felt that the Bondelswarts' grievance against the tax was exaggerated and had been whipped up by extremists to incite them to revolt⁹¹. He denied that the tax was meant to force the Bondelswarts to seek work⁹², and told Smuts that he had imposed it to

"minimize the growing evil of the ruthless destruction of game by a special class of dog kept for the purpose of Europeans and Natives alike, but it was intimated at the time that when the evil abated the tax would again be reduced".

He felt that the Bondelswarts were "not sincere" in bringing up the dog tax as a cause for rebellion, since other blacks had not objected, and he had reduced the tax by 50% just before the May 1922 revolt⁹³.

87. See p.48.

88. See p.49.

89. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.33. Major Herbst.

90. *ibid.* p.36.

91. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Exhibits and Annexures. Anl. p.5. A.R.B.

92. R.P. Hofmeyr's Memorandum. p.9.

93. C.A.P.M.O. Vol. 6. Hofmeyr to Smuts. 30 Aug. 1923.

However, the facts of the matter belie Hofmeyr's supposed intentions for the tax. Major Herbst said that :

"The Europeans were also discontented (about the dog tax) but they kept quiet because they knew that the measure was meant to destroy the native's dogs".⁹⁴

A local farmer, Coetzee, told the N.A.C. that the white farmers had told Hofmeyr in 1921 on his tour of S.W.A. that :

"if the Hottentots were not made to pay this tax they would not be in a position to get labourers. The main idea was to get the Hottentots to come out and work".⁹⁵

Fleck told the N.A.C. that :

"The farmers had made representations in regard to the number of dogs belonging to the Hottentots - this was at a meeting at which Mr Drew (Inspecting magistrate for S.W.A.) was present and then the dog tax was imposed. The farmer was of the opinion that he would not have to pay the same amount but he found out that he was mistaken".⁹⁶

The Bondelswarts' feeling for their dogs seem to have been passed on more than just commercial or utilitarian motives. Herbst felt that the Bondelswarts were "fonder of dogs than we are"⁹⁷. But the dogs also played an important part in the economic life of the Bondelswarts. Major Manning pointed out that since the Bondelswarts were not allowed to own rifles they needed dogs to protect their small stock from vermin like jackals⁹⁸. Lt. Prinsloo also said that the dogs were used for hunting, which gave the Bondelswarts a "cheap and easy" livelihood.⁹⁹

The tax was a heavy burden for the Bondelswarts. They were frustrated by the difficulty of raising ready cash to pay the tax¹⁰⁰, and when Major Manning visited them in May 1921 to investigate reports of Bondelswarts unrest over the tax, he found them poor and struggling to raise the cash to pay the tax. As a result Hofmeyr granted them a time-extension to pay¹⁰¹.

94. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.43. Major Herbst.

95. *ibid.* p.333. F. van R. Coetzee.

96. *ibid.* p.405. Fleck.

97. *ibid.* p.33. Major Herbst.

98. *ibid.* p.97. Major Manning.

99. *ibid.* p.950. Lt. Prinsloo.

100. See p.159.

101. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.92. Major Manning.

The tax became a major Bondelswarts grievance. Noothout felt that it "caused excitement"¹⁰², and Tim Beukes cited it as a major grievance¹⁰³.

But Christian Marcus, a half-breed Bondelswart, said :

"When we paid the dog tax the people prepared for war. They said they would rather make war because they were suffering too much".¹⁰⁴

While this exaggerates the role of the dog tax as a cause of the 1922 rebellion, it does show how strong a grievance the tax was. It was yet another grievance in a long line of Bondelswarts' complaints, and increased their anger and frustration. Most of the informants felt that the Bondelswarts need their dogs to hunt vermin, and that the dog tax was a major contributory cause of the 1922 revolt¹⁰⁵. In May 1921 the Bondelswarts had held a large meeting to protest about the dog tax, which led the Warmbad magistrate to order the police not to destroy any Bondelswarts' dogs on which the tax had not been paid, for fear of causing unrest¹⁰⁶. In 1922 Jacobus Christian wrote to Le Fleur via the latter's agents, complaining that the Bondelswarts could not hunt because they were not allowed to own rifles and the dog tax was doing away with their dogs¹⁰⁷.

General Lemmer proposed in a draft N.A.C. Report that the dog tax was not a justifiable Bondelswarts grievance since it applied to black and white, and none of the other blacks, in S.W.A. had complained¹⁰⁸. However, the N.A.C. Report found the tax "extraordinarily high" and opposed it as an indirect method of forcing the Bondelswarts to seek work¹⁰⁹.

102. *ibid.* p.418. Noothout.

103. *ibid.* p.490. T. Beukes.

104. *ibid.* p.771. Christian Marcus.

105. See Appendix A.

106. W.A. Adm. File 388/1. Telegram Warmbad magistrate to Hofmeyr. 14 May 1921.

107. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.247. Det.-Sgt. Pietersen presents copy of letter from Jacobus Christian to Le Fleur.

108. R.P.N.A.C. Report Drafts. Draft C. p.12. (Lemmer's draft).

109. N.A.C. Report, p.30, para. 6.

The P.M.C. Report found the tax "prohibitive", and pointed out that there had been 140 prosecutions for non-payment of the dog tax in the Warmbad district from September 1921 to January 1922, with fines averaging £2 or 14 days, a further financial burden for the Bondelswarts¹¹⁰, which worsened their relations with the police and further distorted their conception of the law, and increased their distrust of the Government. The P.M.C. Report summed up the situation :

"Since these people, we are told, could not find money to pay the tax or fine, this meant that they had to work for the whites who, moreover, could not pay cash to their labourers. In the circumstances described such sentences (for non-payment of the tax) could only result in exasperating the tribe, already discontented for other reasons".¹¹¹

Despite Hofmeyr's denials, it seems clear that the tax had a fourfold purpose - to induce people to seek work to pay it, to reduce black economic independence, to gain revenue, and to reduce the number of dogs used to hunt game. The tax was far too high, and this fact, combined with the Bondelswarts' low wages¹¹², shortage of cash¹¹³, and the high prices of foodstuffs, and the branding law, made the dog tax a very real and deep Bondelswarts' grievance. To own one dog and a branding iron would cost the equivalent of the average Bondelswarts' wages for four months. Neither Hofmeyr nor General Lemmer could legitimately deny that the dog tax albeit indirectly, was meant to induce the Bondelswarts to seek "honest labour" with¹¹⁴ the whites.

The 50% reduction in the tax in 1922¹¹⁵ was a case of "too little, too late", for by then the spark had been struck. Jacobus Christian summed up the Bondelswarts feelings about the dog tax when he wrote, on the eve of the revolt, "This is how they torture us here in Africa".¹¹⁶

110. C.A.P.M.O. Vol. 6. P.M.C. Report.

111. *ibid.* p.10.

112. See p.158.

113. See p.159.

114. See p.175.

115. See p.50.

116. R.P.N.A. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.1,112. Lt. Thomas presents letter from Jacobus Christian to Le Fleur and Dirk Schas.

178.

Like most pastoralist societies the Bondelswarts preferred to hunt game for meat rather than to kill their domestic stock. But the Union Government enforced strict controls on hunting, and it was a serious crime to be found in possession of big game skins¹¹⁷.

While this was more of an irritant than a grievance for the Bondelswarts, it further reduced their economic independence, and they resented this added interference by the Government with their rights on their own land¹¹⁸.

Even more frustrating for the Bondelswarts was that large herds of springbucks could now graze unhindered on the limited grazing available in the Reserve, spreading the scab disease¹¹⁹. The Bondelswarts also alleged that the white, to add insult to injury, were shooting game on the Reserve¹²⁰.

After the 1906 rebellion the Bondelswarts had been prohibited from possessing rifles, and the Union administration took this law over¹²¹. In 1919 Jacobus Christian had handed his followers' rifles over to the Government¹²², and some Bondelswarts' felt bitter that the Government did not pay compensation for the confiscated rifles¹²³. Many Bondelswarts were arrested after the First World War for bringing rifles into the Reserve without the required permit¹²⁴, and it was partly the enforcement of this law that triggered off resistance in 1922, when Sgt. van Niekerk came to confiscate Morris's rifle¹²⁵. The effect of the ban was that when the rebellion did break out the Bondelswarts were unprepared and hopelessly short of rifles and ammunition¹²⁶.

117. See p.50.

118. Interview with Johannes Zwartbooi, Gabis. 21 July 1977.

119. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.843. Lt.Col. Kruger on N.R.C. Report.

120. *ibid.* p.92. Major Manning.

121. See p.51.

122. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.165. Major Van Coller.

123. Interview with J. Zwartbooi, Gabis. 21 July 1977.

Interview with Isaak Witbooi, Warmbad. 20 July 1977.

124. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.226. Det.-Sgt. Pietersen presents evidence of Sgt. Naude.

125. See p.69.

126. See pp.89-90.

179.

The Bondelswarts regarded these laws and taxes as an unwarranted interference with their independence on their own traditional lands, and their discontent grew. They felt threatened, and saw the Administration as oppressive and hostile to them.

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CHAPTER 9.NATIVE POLICY AND RACE RELATIONS

Gysbert Reitz Hofmeyr's arrival in S.W.A. in 1920 as Administrator heralded a new stage of Native administration¹ and the extension of the Union's segregation policies there under the recommendations of the Native Reserves Commission of 1921². At the same time, S.W.A. was handed over to South Africa as a "C" class mandate by the League of Nations³.

Major Herbst told the N.A.C. that the main difference between native policy in the Union and in S.W.A. was that in "this country the native is regarded purely as a labourer"⁴. Education for blacks was severely limited, and was restricted largely to mission schools, of which there were only forty-three in the whole of S.W.A., with a total enrolment of 2,430 pupils and forty-seven teachers⁵. Obviously, this was inadequate for any real black educational advancement.

Under Hofmeyr's predecessor, Gorges,⁶ with the fate of S.W.A. still undecided, the native policy had been mainly one of ameliorating old German laws and there had been a general laxness in Native administration. Hofmeyr arrived determined to tighten the controls, leading some to remark :

"Gorges gave the native everything - Hofmeyr came along and introduced another system".⁷

This probably spurred the discontent of blacks in S.W.A., recovering as they were from their disillusionment at the non-materialization of their hopes for Union rule.

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1. See p.54.
 2. See p.55.
 3. See p.53.
 4. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.84. Major Herbst.
 5. R.P. Hofmeyr's Memorandum. p.6.
 6. See p.52.
 7. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.502. C. Weidner.

Black opposition made itself felt, but the Administration in S.W.A. tended to regard the black's grievances against Hofmeyr's native policy as not being sincere, and merely the work of agitators⁸. However, the truth of the matter was, somewhat surprisingly, stated by Major Herbst, the Secretary for S.W.A., when he said that he felt that the S.W.A. Administration was "not in touch with the Hottentot mind"⁹. In general, the attitude of the Government to black unrest was summed up by Sir Edgar Walton, who told the League Assembly during his "Comments" on the P.M.C. Report¹⁰, that :

"the outbreak among these unfortunate people and their rebellion afford an illustration of the revolt, perhaps natural revolt, of the barbarian against the restrictions which interfere with the wild life to which he had been accustomed".¹¹

The Union administration in S.W.A. saw, or said it saw, its role as that of the "civilizer" by inculcating in the blacks an appreciation of the "dignity of labour", by maintaining law and order, and by encouraging white economic development. The result was reflected in Herbst's expression of surprise at the Bondelswarts' 1922 revolt, when he said :

"It was never apparent to me why these people should go into rebellion".¹²

It was apparent to others, however. With regard to the pass and work laws¹³ in operation in S.W.A. a N.A.C. draft report stated that the

"freedom to work or not to work which we regard as fundamental to native policy and administration"

was lacking in S.W.A.¹⁴. The draft stated that it was felt that, in general, the :

"peaceful occupation of the country which the Administrator desires will not be advanced by hasty and irritating legislation and by subsequent severe and lasting lessons but by sound and well-thought out Native policy which will be to the advantage of all sections of the community".¹⁵

8. *ibid.* p.66. Major Herbst on the A.R.B.

9. *ibid.* p.71. Major Herbst.

10. See p.135 ff.

11. T.A.P.M.O. Walton's "Comments" on the P.M.C. Report. p.2.

12. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.21. Major Herbst.

13. See p.40.

14. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Drafts. Draft A. p.16.

15. *ibid.* p.44

The N.A.C. Report stated that, as far as the Bondelswarts were concerned, no adequate attempts had been made either to improve or to build up their position. Instead, they had merely been given back their Reserve as in German times¹⁶, and had been given some stock¹⁷ and a Superintendent¹⁸.

The administration's vacillations, such as changes in the amount of the dog tax¹⁹, non-enforcement of the branding law²⁰, and the lack of a firm policy for dealing with Bondelswarts returning from exile²¹ also came under criticism from the N.A.C. A draft N.A.C. report stated that these vacillations in the face of Bondelswarts protest might have encouraged the Bondelswarts to think that they could achieve their ends in 1922 by a bluff or show of force²². As for the branding law, it was said that :

"Careful consideration of the situation and consultation with the natives should precede Native legislation but when once the law has been made it should be strictly enforced".²³

Hofmeyr's much vaunted Reserve proposals for S.W.A. blacks²⁴, primarily the Hereros, are also open to question. Wellington points out that the area on the eastern side of the Gobabis and Waterberg districts, and abutting on present-day Botswana, which was chosen by Hofmeyr for blacks to buy land, is in fact Kalahari sandveld, arid and desolate. The Hereros protested saying that it was fit only for wild animals. In fact, as Wellington caustically states:

"In applying the mandate the white man's first acts reveal him using the screen of "vested interests" to conceal his decision to put the white's interests first and foremost and to fob off onto the Native the poor land that the whites scorn to occupy"²⁵.

16. See p.37,

17. See p.148.

18. N.A.C. Report, p.29, para. 1.

19. See p.49.

20. See p.48.

21. See p.34.

22. R.P.N.A.C. Report Drafts. Draft A. p.9.

23. *ibid.* p.16.

24. See p.56.

25. Wellington, p.280.

He pointed out the irony of the Union administration allowing Germans to retain the lands "which on South Africa's showing²⁶ they wrongfully wrested from the Natives".²⁷

To Hofmeyr the native question was largely synonymous with the labour question, as the terms of reference of the N.R.C. so clearly show²⁸. The N.R.C. provided the framework for Hofmeyr's native policy, and concentrated on the problems of utilizing black labour to the best advantage. In fact, this approach was inevitable, for, as Goldblatt points out,

"there was the obvious dilemma of entrusting a mandate, which emphasizes the primary interests of the Natives, to a mandatory whose Government was dependent upon the votes of its own white electorate, which was concerned primarily with white interests".²⁹

And, in this sense, Marquis Theodolis' comment that the Union administration's policy in S.W.A. had

"always been conceived and applied in the interests of the colonists rather than in the interests of the natives" ³⁰

was correct. Although S.W.A. was a mandated territory, the Union did not treat it as such. Indeed, if anything the 1922 rebellion highlighted the faults of the Union's native policy in S.W.A., dramatizing

"In the light of glaring publicity the shortcomings of policies and directives which were ill-conceived either to alleviate the conditions of some of the most poverty-stricken people in the territory or to gain their confidence".³¹

The Union defended its policies to the P.M.C. by saying that the only way to civilize the blacks in S.W.A. was to do it indirectly, by developing the white economy³². In addition, the Union had not been the Mandatory power long enough for any major beneficial effects to be felt in S.W.A.³³. But a study of the Administration's reforms concerning the Bondelswarts shows that little was done except to appoint a Reserve Superintendent and to allow

26. See Gorges Report, passim.

27. Wellington, p.280.

28. See p.55.

29. Goldblatt, p.217.

30. T.A.P.M.O. Vol. 6. P.M.C. Report. p.19.

31. Swanson, p.655.

32. T.A.P.M.O. Walton's "Comments" on the P.M.C. Report. p.2.

33. N.A.C. Report, p.5, para. 16a). (General Lemmer's comment).

the Bondelswarts sell grass, firewood or lime³⁴ to raise cash to pay the dog tax.

In fact, native policy in S.W.A. was influenced in almost every sphere of action by white pressure-groups, who were intent on bending it to their own advantage³⁵. Col. de Jager, a leader of local white opinion in S.W.A., told the N.A.C. that "the only thing that will put these people (the Bondelswarts) right is powder and lead"³⁶. This sort of attitude did not lend itself to compromise or negotiation, and highlighted the

"problems of concerning and administering any native policy in the presence of a vociferous and self-centred white community...." ³⁷

Major Herbst told the N.A.C. that Hofmeyr had been under constant pressure from white farmers in S.W.A. for increased local powers for police, like the return of the powers of flogging³⁸.

White feelings about native policy were largely dictated by the labour shortage experienced by farmers in S.W.A.³⁹. In addition to the shortage of black labourers, partly due to Van Trotha's extermination policies in the 1904-6 rebellion⁴⁰, Herbst stated that "the great difficulty in this country is that the native does not wish to work".⁴¹ The labour conditions and wage levels prevailing in S.W.A. did not exactly provide an incentive for blacks to seek

34. See p. 159.

35. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. pp.310-328. Col. de Jager. One such white pressure group was the "Zuid West Afrika Vereeniging". Col. de Jager was chairman of its central Executive. Supposedly non-party, it aimed to promote co-operation in S.W.A., presumably between Germans and South Africans. It supported the segregation policy, and wanted blacks settled in unified, demarcated reserves under the control of experienced magistrates and Native Affairs Commissioners. In 1920 the Z.W.A.V. asked Smuts to set up a Commission of Enquiry into S.W.A. native policy, and asked for stricter pass laws, special Justices of the Peace, and branding of black-owned cattle under supervision.

36. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.324. Col. de Jager.

37. Swanson, p.656.

38. C.A.P.M.O. Vol. 6. Major Herbst's Memorandum. p.7.

39. N.A.C. Report, p.10, para. 40.

40. See Bley, German Rule, p.163.

41. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.84. Major Herbst. See p. 142.

work⁴². The alternative was to pressurise them, directly or indirectly, into seeking work, and this aim was reflected in the pass and work laws⁴³ affecting blacks. It was white pressure which led the N.R.C. to recommend that, in order to prevent stocktheft, blacks should not be allowed to keep their branding irons⁴⁴.

Hofmeyr in his Memorandum stated that Jacobus Christian could not be appointed as the Bondelswarts' Captain⁴⁵ because it "was well known that Christian's return would create a scare" among the whites⁴⁶. The N.A.C. was told that it was the pressure of white farmers on Hofmeyr that had induced him to greatly increase the dog tax, so that blacks would seek work to get money to pay the tax⁴⁷. Herbst himself admitted that the tax was introduced "in defence to public (i.e. white) opinion".⁴⁸

More ominous was Herbst's statement that Morris could not have been pardoned in 1922⁴⁹, since it would have made a poor impression on the whites, because:

"(Die Administrasie) is ieder jaar beledig oor die naturelle politiek wat hier gevolg word. Die witmense dink dat ons nie weet hoe om die naturelle te behandel".⁵⁰

Col. de Jager was more specific about what the white reaction to the pardoning of Morris would have been :

"I say now that if the Administrator had compromised with the Hottentots he would have had the European population up in arms".⁵¹

Hofmeyr himself stated that he was supported in his decision to strike a swift, "severe and lasting" blow to the Bondelswarts in 1922 by "public opinion".⁵² Indeed, this opinion was reflected in local newspapers at the

42. See p.39.

43. See p.40.

44. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.842. Col.de Jager on N.R.C. Report.

45. See p.27.

46. R.P. Hofmeyr's Memorandum. p.1.

47. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.33s. F. van R. Coetzee.

48. ibid. p.34. Major Herbst.

49. See p.208.

50. N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.68. Major Herbst.

51. ibid. p.320. Col de Jager. (Chairman of the Zuid-West Afrika Vereeniging).

52. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Exhibits and Annexures. An.1.p.5. A.R.B.

time. One such article read that :

"Die Hotnots was in volle opstand een daarna was dit dwaasheid en nadelig vir die prestige van die witman in die land om hulle te gaan soebat om gehoorte to gee aan die wet".

and also that :

"Die Hotnots moes eens en vir altyd geleer het dat geen verset teen die gesag van die witman geduld sal word nie".⁵³

Another weakness in the system of Native administration in S.W.A. was that the offices of magistrate and superintendent were merged⁵⁴ after the Bondelswarts had been resettled, and in addition the magistrates were, for reasons of economy, in control of the police⁵⁵. This inevitably led to a conflict of interests, and the Bondelswarts resented it. In 1917 a deputation of Bondelswarts requested the appointment of a Commissioner "to look after the interests of the Bondelswarts". When the magistrate told them that he was the Native Commissioner as well, the Bondelswarts replied :

"Our custom is that the magistrate is the Judge and therefore we want a Commissioner over us".⁵⁶

After Major Manning's visit to the Bondelswarts in 1921, Noothout was appointed Superintendent of their Reserve, and they welcomed this⁵⁷. The disadvantage of the arrangement of putting the magistrate in charge of the police was pointed out by Lt. Prinsloo, when he said that the only real channel for Bondelswarts grievances, the magistrate, was also in charge of the police, whom the Bondelswarts greatly disliked and feared⁵⁸. An identification of the one with the other was inevitable, and, as Herbst told the P.M.C., one could

"understand a native nursing a grievance rather than incur the enmity of the police by complaining to superior authorities".⁵⁹

53. Die Suid-West. p.2. 2 July 1922. It is of interest to note that Die Suid-West, which was the official organ of the Z.W.A.V. (see p.184.) had its editor sacked by the Central Executive of the Z.W.A.V. for his criticism of Hofmeyr's handling of military operations in the rebellion. See 9 July 1922 issue.

54. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.91. Major Manning.

55. ibid. p.502. C. Weidner.

56. W.A.Adm. Vol.51. File 599. Bondelswarts deputation to Major Herbst, Secretary for the Protectorate.

57. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.93. Major Manning.

58. ibid. p.997. Lt. Prinsloo.

59. C.A.P.M.O. Vol. 6. Herbst's Memorandum. p.4.

In fact, when it came to the crunch, the Administration used the police to the exclusion of the magistrate, as was shown in the 1919 and 1922 incidents⁶⁰.

The relations between the Bondelswarts and the police were poor, to say the least. The N.A.C., with General Lemmer in disagreement, found that relations between the two were "unsatisfactory", with the police regarding the Bondelswarts as "insolent and lazy" and the Bondelswarts seeing the police as "unnecessarily severe and harsh".⁶¹

Relations between the Bondelswarts and the police had got off to a bad start almost immediately after the Union takeover in S.W.A., German rule had left a legacy of Bondelswarts mistrust of the police⁶², and in 1916 their old animosities were aroused against the Union police. The Warmbad military magistrate wrote to the Secretary for the Protectorate in connection with the Bondelswarts unrest led by Adam Christian⁶³ (alias Pienaar) and said that he had :

"succeeded in getting all the culprits into Warmbad without the intervention of the Police, who were however too eager to do their duty, and had I not succeeded in dissuading the O.C. from sending out Police to capture the armed natives, bloodshed would have been the consequence"⁶⁴

The situation described is reminiscent of the sending of Sgt. van Niekerk to arrest Morris in 1922⁶⁵.

Relations were further worsened during the period of martial law with cases of the police taking the law into their own hands⁶⁶, and matters were not helped by the police having to enforce the hated dog tax and pass and work laws. Unfortunately, these laws probably identified the magistrate and Government with the police actions too closely. Indeed, the blacks in the Warmbad district seemed to have had particularly bad relations with the police, for

60. R.P. Hofmeyr's Memorandum. p.8. See p.29, p.69.

61. N.A.C. Report, p.30, para. 5.

62. See p.146.

63. See p.60.

64. W.A.Adm. Vol.106. File 3353. Military Magistrate to Secretary for Protectorate, Ref. 4/3353. 21 Dec. 1916.

65. See p.69.

66. C.A.P.M.O. Vol. 6. Herbst's Memorandum. p.4.

in 1917 the Administrator Gorges, wrote :

"Our Native Regulations, as I mentioned in my last Minute, provide that every Native without visible means of support must seek work; but I am informed that in the Warmbad area the Constabulary have been exercising too much severity in enforcing the Regulation".⁶⁷

Conflict with the police also arose when they had to move Bondelswarts squatters off Crown lands adjoining the Reserve which the Bondelswarts claimed were within the Reserve boundaries⁶⁸.

There were Bondelswarts complaints that the police, in their search for illegal kaffir-beer, entered huts with their rifles and without warrants or care for the damage they did⁶⁹. What vestiges of goodwill that remained were destroyed in 1919 with Lt. Jordaan's breach of faith in arresting Jacobus Christian's emissaries⁷⁰, and the distrust this imbued in the Bondelswarts was to have tragic repercussions in 1922.

The situation was summed up by a N.A.C. draft report which stated :

"it is certain that the latter (the police) had a good deal to put up with and often had good cause for their severity and strictness. Yet the judgement formed by the Commission was that they were lacking that sympathy and understanding which is so essential in the government of native people".⁷¹

Lt. Prinsloo said that the Bondelswarts regarded the police as their "worst enemy"⁷².

The Bondelswarts seem to have been in constant conflict with the law. The often excessively severe punishments of German times for minor infringements of the law had inspired in the Bondelswarts a view of the law as being something to be feared, rather than as a protector of individual liberties.

67. W.A. Adm. Vol. 106. File 3353. Gorges to Secretary for Defence, Pretoria. 16 Jan. 1917.

68. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.421. Nouthout. See

69. R.P. "Papers Connected with the Bondelswarts rebellion" MS 14787/A/(ii). Jacobus Christian's complaints to Dr. Roberts.

70. N.A.C. Report, p.6, para. 20.

71. R.P.N.A.C. Report Drafts. Draft F. p.15.

72. N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.950. Lt. Prinsloo.

Their conflicts with the game, vagrancy, pass and work, and branding laws, and with the dog tax, meant that many Bondelswarts were constantly fleeing the law, and as Lt. Prinsloo pointed out, they consequently gained a "distorted conception" of it⁷³.

There were provisions for the protection of the rights of blacks, but there was often a difference between theory and practice. Unfortunately, as a draft of the N.A.C. report stated, "The quality of some of the men used as instruments of the Government left much to be desired".⁷⁴ Gorges had complained of the incompetence of some of the local officials as early as 1917, and, in particular, felt that the Warmbad district needed well-trained officials, since, he said; it would need no elaboration on his part to show how 'highly necessary' it was to have properly trained officials, especially in a border district "of the importance of Warmbad" which was "attracting a steady flow of settlers" from the Union⁷⁵.

In 1918 Col. de Jager had complained that the magistrates in S.W.A., who were also the Native Commissioners, often displayed "lamentable ignorance and incompetence" in their dealings with blacks⁷⁶.

The reason for the presence of untrained and often incompetent local officials in S.W.A. was due, as Hancock points out, to General Botha's strengthening of his political position by opening up S.W.A. to Afrikaners in search of land and jobs. Unfortunately, many of the men who got the jobs, especially in the police, were unsuitable for them, as is shown in the letters written to Smuts by Gorges⁷⁷.

73. *ibid.*

74. R.P.N.A.C. Report Drafts. Draft D. p.65.

75. W.A. Adm. Vol. 106. File 3353. Gorges to Secretary for Defence, Pretoria. p.9. 16 Jan. 1917.

76. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.285. Col. de Jager.

77. Hancock, p.103.

But this policy was followed :

"both for the sake of conciliating the Germans and pro-German Boer settlers of South-West and for the political gains it would promote amongst the Afrikaners of South Africa"78

The effect of this was unfortunate, for

"the policy who intensified at the very outset what was to be a serious weakness in the future - the poor quality of administrative and police personnel, especially in the sensitive areas of native administration and public service under the mandate".79

The Bondelswarts' channels for their grievances were limited. The magistrate also controlled the police, which made them wary of him as a mediator. The Superintendent, when he arrived, proved to be ineffectual⁸⁰. As a result, the Bondelswarts often resorted to petitioning the Administrator, bypassing local officials. But this had very limited success, increasing the Bondelswarts feelings of frustration and alienation.

This was reflected in their attitude to the whites as a whole. The N.A.C. found them to be "antagonistic and suspicious" in their relations with whites⁸¹. This antagonism was increased by the Bondelswarts feeling that the white farmers were encroaching on their land, by the exploitation they suffered at the hands of the traders, by the discrimination in laws like the branding law, and by the low wages and poor master-servant conditions that prevailed. In addition, the extremes of German rule had left a legacy of distrust for the Union administration to inherit⁸².

The N.R.C. found that the blacks attitude

"was to a great extent one of stoical indifference. They seemed to us to be suspicious and reticent about discussing questions relating to labour, and gave the impression that nothing they could say would alter any law the white man proposed to make".83

78. Swanson, p.648.

79. *ibid.*

80. See p.203.

81. N.A.C. Report, p.12, para. 48.

82. *ibid.* p.29, para. 2.

83. W.A. Adm. Private and Semi-Off. Docs. p.2. N.R.C. Report of 1921.

The general attitude of the whites to the Bondelswarts was reflected by Major Herbst's statement to the N.A.C. that :

"There is not a lazier native on the face of the earth than the Hottentot. When the sun comes up then he is finished for the day".⁸⁴

Col. de Jager, a respected figure in the white community, told the N.A.C. that he felt that the evidence of blacks given under oath should not be regarded as reliable as that of a white, since the blacks "did not understand the solemnity of the oath".⁸⁵ Lt. Col. Trew felt that the S.W.A. blacks were "an indolent, truculent lot" who "compared very unfavourably with the South African native".⁸⁶

The N.R.C. found in 1921 that while the whites complained strongly about the blacks' laziness and reluctance to work the complaints were mostly one-sided, with no regard to black interests⁸⁷. A missionary at Steinkopf, Fr. Meyer, held a more balanced view than most whites. He felt that the Nama people were not inherently lazy, but were simply unused to manual labour, and could not be expected to change overnight. He recommended more agricultural training in the schools as a remedy⁸⁸.

Part of the whites' dislike of the Bondelswarts seems to have been based on fear. Indeed, it was this as much as their direct influence on Native policy in S.W.A. which helped to cause confrontations, with an almost hysterical reaction on the part of the whites at any sign of Bondelswarts defiance, and with constantly circulating rumours of rebellion which were invariably proved incorrect and unfounded.

84. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.6. Major Herbst.

85. *ibid.* p.293. Col. de Jager.

86. Trew, pp.140-141.

87. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. pp.841-842. Lt.Col Kruger on N.R.C.

88. *ibid.* p.649. Fr. Gottlieb Meyer.

A typical case of this was the small-scale unrest of 1917 led by Adam Christian (alias Pienaar)⁸⁹, which led the Warmbad Magistrate, Major Van Zyl, to call for "at least" 100 police. Lt. Col. Kruger arrived to investigate, and found that the whole incident had been "greatly exaggerated by various farmers in that area", and condemned the unfounded "alarmist" rumours among the whites⁹⁰.

The white overreaction to Jacobus Christian's arrival in 1919⁹¹ was similar but much more harmful in its effects. Mr. Meintjies, who was magistrate at the time in Warmbad, reported that on the night of Jacobus's arrival the principal of the Warmbad school had come to him and told him that 3,000 Bondelswarts had crossed into S.W.A., some armed, and that an attack on Warmbad was imminent. He said a local farmer, Rocher, had arrived and confirmed this. The Warmbad police set up armed sentries around the town, and, against Meintjie's advice, an armed patrol was sent out under Lt. Jordaan to arrest the "invaders". Meintjies felt that the whole affair had been "greatly exaggerated".⁹² No doubt it helped to cause the subsequent overreaction and the serious consequences thereof.

The rumours continued unabated, however, and in 1921 Major Manning investigated rumours of Bondelswarts unrest over the dog tax and found them to be unfounded.⁹³ Nevertheless, it was partly this white overreaction that limited the options open to Hofmeyr in 1922⁹⁴, and, to say the least, it did not contribute to a peaceful resolution of the crisis. The whites remembered the Bondelswarts' successes in the 1904-6 rebellion⁹⁵, as well as the spectre of the whole black population of S.W.A. combining in revolt as they had done under German rule.

89. See p.60.

90. W.A. Adm. Vol. 106. File 3353. Telegram military magistrate to Secretary for Protectorate. Letter Gorges to Secretary for Defence, Pretoria, enclosing Lt. Col. Kruger's report on Bondelswarts unrest. 16 Jan. 1917.

91. See p.29.

92. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Exhibits and Annexures. An 12. Meintjies to military magistrate, Warmbad. 15 August 1919.

93. N.A.C. Report, p.12, para. 45.

94. See p.185.

95. See p.16.

Their imagination did the rest.

If the Bondelswarts had any white friends, they were the missionaries, mainly Roman Catholic⁹⁶. But the missionaries wielded little or no political power, and their strict neutrality, as shown by Mgr. Krolikowski's conduct the negotiations before the 1922 rebellion, incurred the displeasure of the Administration, and especially of Hofmeyr⁹⁷.

Thus, although the intentions of the Government in S.W.A. may have been good, as shown by the reductions in police powers, these intentions were not always put into practice. In addition, the emphasis of the Union administration's policies was on developing the white economy and interests. As far as the Bondelswarts were concerned, things had largely remained unchanged since German times, and their hopes for British rule remained unfulfilled. In fact, in many ways the situation seemed worse, for under Hofmeyr's missionary zeal, the theory and practice of segregation was put into effect, together with its concomitants of pass and work laws, and enforced with a hitherto unprecedented thoroughness and strictness. The Bondelswarts, frustrated, angered and humiliated by the new laws and the increase in white settlement, felt threatened in their own land. Inter-racial tensions mounted, and unrest was inevitable.

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96. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.349. Mgr. Krolikowski. He told the N.A.C. that 1,300 to 1,400 of the Bondelswarts were Roman Catholics.
97. W.A. Adm. Vol. 145. File C 301. "Statements. Bondelzwarts and extra copies of Annexures." Draft of A.R.B., p.15, para.7.

CHAPTER 10.THE BUILD-UP TO REBELLION

General Lemmer felt that the Bondelswarts revolt was partly due to:

"ever increasing preaching, emanating from America, of the motto "Africa for the Africans", meaning 'Africa for the natives'." ¹

Major Herbst said that there was a branch of the Garveyites at Lüderitz-bucht, and that they had held a meeting in Windhoek at which they had stated that the whites were to be driven out of S.W.A. by the blacks². There was one letter found that had been sent in April 1922 from the "African Political Organization" in Cape Town to Jacobus Christian, offering to try and help him redress his grievances and asking for full particulars about them³. But there is no evidence of any sort of outside influence as a cause of the 1922 Bondelswarts rebellion⁴.

It was alleged that the Bondelswarts rising was only part of an abortive plot for a general rising in association with the Union Nama in the Richtersveld⁵ area. However, the N.A.C. found no organized or extensive support for the Bondelswarts from the Union Nama⁶, although some individuals did cross the Orange River to assist their Bondelswarts relatives. Thus the N.A.C. concluded that the 1922 rebellion was not caused by Union influences⁷. But at the same time, as the Rev. Steenkamp told the N.A.C., "if a chord is struck in S.W.A. it vibrates here".⁸

Det.-Sgt. Pietersen of the S.W.A. C.I.D. said that among those who surrendered after the Guruchas battle⁹ were fifteen Nama who said that they had come from the Union in answer to Jacobus Christian's call. A final tally of captured

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1. R.P.N.A.C. Report Drafts. Draft C. p.9. (General Lemmer's draft). See p.113.
 2. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p. 87. Major Herbst.
 3. W.A. Adm. Vol. 158. File W.60 A.P.O., Cape Town to Jacobus Christian. 8 April 1922.
 4. See p.64.
 5. See p.104.
 6. See p.64.
 7. N.A.C. Report. p.32, para. 20.
 8. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.579. Rev. Steenkamp.
 9. See p.92.

rebels showed that sixteen came from Port Nolloth and twelve from Stinkfontein in the Union¹⁰, which was hardly indicative of extensive outside support. Zwartbooi Links, the Richtersveld Captain, told the N.A.C. :

"(Jacobus) Christian did not send to the Richtersveld, but some of his people were across the (Orange) river and he sent for these men to join his ranks".¹¹

In addition, Lt. Prinsloo found that the Bondelswarts had got some rifles from the Richtersveld¹². Undoubtedly the Richtersvelders felt some sympathy for the Bondelswarts cause¹³, for they themselves were suffering from similar disabilities.

The N.A.C. found Le Fleur and his Richtersveld organization to be a disruptive influence in the Union, and recommended that his activities be curtailed¹⁴. General Lemmer felt that Morris had been greatly influenced by Le Fleur¹⁵. But the N.A.C. could find no evidence that Le Fleur had organized any extensive support for the Bondelswarts rising¹⁶.

Le Fleur probably did influence the Bondelswarts in an indirect way, by helping to crystallize their desires by his own example. But it seems certain that his influence did not extend much further, for as late as 16 May 1922, the Bondelswarts wrote to Abram Watt, a Le Fleur agent, asking for Le Fleur's help in redressing their grievances¹⁷.

But the extent of real influence exerted by Le Fleur on the Bondelswarts rising is illustrated by the fact that only one informant remembered him. Le Fleur's Nama name was "!gai !hoab", meaning "smooth talker", for, according to the

10. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.259. Det.Sgt. Pietersen.

11. *ibid.* p.668. Zwartbooi Links.

12. *ibid.* p.984. Lt. Prinsloo.

13. *ibid.* p.710. R.H. Chenoweth.

14. N.A.C. Report. p.36, para. 124.

15. *ibid.* p.13, para. 55a).

16. *ibid.* p.27, para. 129.

17. *ibid.* p.15, para. 62. Jacobus Christian to Abram Watt. 16 May 1922.

informant, Le Fleur had eventually absconded with the funds he had collected¹⁸.

The Bondelswarts unrest on the eve of the 1922 revolt was more symptomatic of a general feeling of discontent among blacks in S.W.A. at the time¹⁹.

Acting Inspector H.C. de Preez was fired on by Veldschoendrager Nama near Keetmanshoop in July 1922²⁰. Sgt. Naude told the N.A.C. that the Beersheba and Keetmanshoop Nama also regarded Jacobus Christian as their leader²¹.

Indeed, in May 1922 the Keetmanshoop Nama Captain, Manasse, wrote to Jacobus asking for advice on what to do about the intolerably strict pass laws²².

Thus, when Hofmeyr came down to Kalkfontein-South²³ to deal with the Bondelswarts revolt he told Col. de Jager and Andries de Wet to keep a careful watch on blacks in central and northern S.W.A.²⁴. He feared that the Bondelswarts revolt would stir up unrest in other tribes in S.W.A., as had happened in the 1904-6 rebellions²⁵.

Abraham Morris thus arrived in 1922 at a tension-filled time²⁶. General Lemmer felt that Jacobus Christian had asked Morris to come, that the Bondelswarts leaders were all under Le Fleur's influence, and that Jacobus and Beukes were inciting the Bondelswarts at the time of Morris's arrival. Lemmer said that Morris knew the consequences of breaking the law, and had come to lead the Bondelswarts in revolt because of his military ability and experience²⁷.

18. Interview with Captain Frank Basson, Gibeon, 25 July 1977.

19. See p.64.

20. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. pp.220-221. Major du Preez.

21. *ibid.* p.823. Sgt. Naude.

22. W.A. Adm. Vol. 158. File W60. Manasse to Jacobus Christian. 4 May 1922.

23. See p.85.

24. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.59. Major Herbst on the A.R.B.

25. Freislich, p.18.

26. See p.64.

27. N.A.C. Report. p.14, para. 55a).

Hofmeyr felt that it was :

"perfectly clear that Morris was invited by Christian and the people to come over to take command of the fighting men and conduct military operations."²⁸

But Lt. Prinsloo felt that it was more likely that Morris knew he was an outlaw in S.W.A., and that the Government action taken against him on his arrival had persuaded him to fight²⁹. The majority of the N.A.C. felt that it seemed probable that Morris's arrival was used by some Bondelswarts' extremists to urge the tribe to revolt³⁰. In some way Morris's arrival crystallized the Bondelswarts' discontent, for his prowess in the 1904-6 rebellion had made him a legendary and heroic figure for many of them³¹, and a reminder of the tribes' "golden age" of the past.

Unfortunately, the lessons of 1904³² and 1919³³ were lost on the Warmbad magistrate, Fleck, when he heard of Morris's arrival. He sent a policeman, Sgt. van Niekerk, and Native Constable Gert Kraai to arrest Morris, if necessary³⁴.

The Bondelswarts knew Sgt. Van Niekerk well. He had dipped a total of 18,000 sheep to enforce the hated scab disease³⁵ laws³⁶. He had fought against Morris in the Anglo-Boer War, when Morris had been a scout for the British, and again in the 1904-6 rebellion, when van Niekerk had fought with the Germans against the Bondelswarts. Indeed, as a draft N.A.C. report pointed out :

"one hazards the view that it would have been wiser, if police must be sent, to have made use of an officer who had not been an antagonist of Morris in previous wars. We are quite convinced that this fact had no influence on the mind of Sergeant van Niekerk - but it may have had on the mind and attitude of Morris".³⁷

28. R.P. Hofmeyr's Memorandum. p.9.

29. Freislich, p.9.

30. N.A.C. Report. p.13, para. 55. See p.181.

31. See p.15.

32. See p.14.

33. See p.30.

34. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.405. Fleck.

35. See p.170.

36. *ibid.* p.1,003. Sgt. van Niekerk.

37. R.P.N.A.C. Report Drafts. Draft B. p.43.

Several incidents stand out in the controversial accounts of the attempted arrest of Morris by Sgt. van Niekerk³⁸. When van Niekerk arrived at Guruchas he did not say that he was coming to arrest Morris. He had taken Morris's rifle and the Union rifle permit and the names of those who had crossed into S.W.A. with Morris, and then gone to Us to count the stock the returning exiles had brought with them³⁹. Before he left for Us, Adam Pienaar (alias Christian) had come to Native Constable Kraai and asked him whether van Niekerk had come to arrest Morris. Kraai replied that he had heard nothing about that⁴⁰.

When Sgt. van Niekerk returned to Guruchas and announced that he was going to arrest Morris, Jacobus Christian offered instead to bring Morris to Warmbad the next day. van Niekerk rode ahead to Haib to wait for them, much as Lt. Jordaan had done in 1919⁴¹. When he got Jacobus's letter saying that the tribe refused to let Morris go, van Niekerk went back to arrest Morris.

Jacobus said later that the people had refused to let Morris go since he had stolen nothing⁴². When van Niekerk arrived the Bondelswarts asked him why he wanted to arrest Morris, since the latter had handed over a rifle and permit⁴³. Morris said that he was willing to go to Warmbad, but that the Bondelswarts objected to him being arrested⁴⁴. He asked Sgt. van Niekerk why he had wanted to wait at Haib for them. Remembering 1919, Adam Pienaar said to van Niekerk :

"Daardie ding wat jy wil he dat die mense moet weggaan en jy vooruit gaan en half-pad wag om die mense te vang om hulle aan te jaag Warmbad toe dit zal nooit gebeur nie." 45

38. See p. 69.

39. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.779. Jafta Christian.

40. *ibid.* p.811. Gert Kraai.

41. See p. 31.

42. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. pp.380-381. Fleck. Jacobus Christian to Fleck. July 1922.

43. *ibid.* p.762. Johannes Boois.

44. *ibid.* p.779. Jafta Christian.

45. *ibid.* p.814. Gert Kraai.

The breach of faith of 1919 had been recalled by the Bondelswarts, and, with their suspicions thoroughly aroused, they refused to let Morris be arrested. The Bondelswarts claimed that Sgt. van Niekerk threatened them and said that "die lood van die Goevernement zal nou up julle smelt", which they regarded as a declaration of war. Pienaar turned to Kraai and said :

"Jy het gehoor wat hier gepraat is en jy het die gezien loop se dit net so as dit is".⁴⁶

Both Kraai and van Niekerk denied later that they had made this threat. Kraai says that van Niekerk told the Bondelswarts, with Kraai translating it into Nama, that :

"Ik zal nou na Warmbad gaan en gaan rapportereen aan die mense die groter zijn dat ik ben en ik weet niet wat Sgt. Naude hiervan zal zeggen en die groot baas zal zeker plannen maken om Morris to arresteren".

To which Kraai said Pienaar replied :

"Julle hoor nou dit is klaar oorlog daar is niks meer om te se nie".⁴⁷

Kraai said that Pienaar then warned him that no police would be allowed on the Bondelswarts' reserve, and told him to warn Sgt. van Niekerk not to lay a hand on Morris, and that it would be best for them to get off the Reserve⁴⁸.

What is clear is that Sgt. van Niekerk did threaten the Bondelswarts with the use of greater force to arrest Morris. The N.A.C. Report points out that the Bondelswarts believed that the Government, via Sgt. van Niekerk, had declared war on them⁴⁹, and from now on their mood was one of defiance.

46. *ibid.* p.763. Johannes Boois.

47. *ibid.* p.815. Kraai.

48. *ibid.* p.814.

49. N.A.C. Report, p.15, para. 61.

They were all accomplices in resisting Morris's arrest. The evidence for the Bondelswarts belief that the Government had declared war on them is over-whelming⁵⁰. They were determined to resist. In a letter to Le Fleur of 16 May 1922, Jacobus Christian said that the Bondelswarts had collected at Haib because Sgt. van Niekerk had promised that they would be "exterminated" by the Government⁵¹. On the evening of van Niekerk's departure Morris made the military appointments and called all the Bondelswarts into Haib⁵².

An informant, Johannes Zwartbooi, recalled how the Bondelswarts had resented the attempted arrest of their hero, Morris, on Bondelswarts territory. They suspected that the police would kill Morris because of his reputation gained from the 1904-6 revolt. Zwartbooi was supported in this by another informant, Isaak Witbooi⁵³.

General Lemmer felt that the Bondelswarts had been planning to revolt all along, and used the negotiations to play for time until they were ready⁵⁴. While this was highly unlikely,⁵⁵ a draft N.A.C. report pointed out that :

"Whatever may have been the intention of the people with regard to armed resistance it is clear ... that at the time of van Niekerk's visit they were unprepared. They had not one rifle for four men."⁵⁶

Major Van Coller told the N.A.C. that Jacobus Christian was guilty of not assisting the police in arresting Morris, when called upon to do so⁵⁷. Besides the fact that this was an unfair expectation since the Government had consistently refused to recognize Jacobus as the Bondelswarts Captain, it may have induced Jacobus, who as an intelligent man would have realized the re-

50. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.460. Jacobus Christian.

ibid. p.486. T. Beukes.

ibid. p.520. H. Jonas.

ibid. p.727. A. Matroos.

ibid. p.781. Jafta Christian.

ibid. p.786. K. Matthebus.

ibid. p. 788. J. Prens.

51. N.A.C. Report. p.15, para. 62.

52. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.383. Fleck.

53. Interview with J. Zwartbooi, Gabis. 21 July 1977.

Interview with I. Witbooi, Warmbad. 20 July 1977.

54. R.P.N.A.C. Report Drafts. Draft C. p.19. (Gen. Lemmer's draft).

55. See p.90.

56. ibid. p.68.

57. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.131. Major Van Coller.

percussions of Sgt. van Niekerk's failure to arrest Morris, to make a stand once and for all⁵⁸. Jacobus told Mgr Krolikowski that he had collected his people at Haib to die together, Mgr. Krolikowski told the N.A.C. that, in any case :

"Christian was powerless against the younger men and he was against this war "⁵⁹

The Bondelswarts had turned to Morris, and only three members of the Raad supported Jacobus's attempts to keep the peace⁶⁰. The N.A.C. Report found that after van Niekerk's visit ,

"Jacobus ceased to have influence and the direction of affairs appears to have passed to Morris."⁶¹

Morris mobilized the tribe to prepare for possible resistance⁶². As for Morris's determination to resist force with force, a draft N.A.C. Report stated :

"Possibly his public arrest may have contributed to this. Morris was a proud man. He was a hero to the people".⁶³

In any case, as Hofmeyr pointed out :

"Morris, on the other hand (as compared with Jacobus Christian), had gained a very high reputation in the Hottentot war against the Germans, and would in the event of any trouble be at once accorded the leadership".⁶⁴

Lt. Prinsloo felt that the Bondelswarts' regard for Morris was so high that he easily persuaded them to resist⁶⁵ - if indeed they needed any persuasion.

Nonetheless, while some extremist Bondelswarts might have used Morris's arrival to urge revolt, the N.A.C. found that the Bondelswarts as a whole did not intend to assume hostilities at the time of Morris's arrival. Jacobus

58. See p. 71.

59. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.350. Mgr. Krolikowski.

60. ibid. pp. 385-386. Fleck. Jacobus Christian to Fleck. July 1922.

61. N.A.C. Report. p.15, para. 63.

62. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.475. Stephanus Christian.

63. R.P.N.A.C. Report Drafts. Draft F. p.84.

64. R.P. Hofmeyr's Memorandum. p.9.

65. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.953. Lt. Prinsloo.

had reported Morris's arrival to the Administration, and at first the Bondelswarts had been willing that Morris should go to Warmbad⁶⁶. But with the attempted arrest the situation changed. The N.A.C. Report stated :

"Apparently the turning point in the attitude of the (Bondelswarts) people was the visit of Sergt. van Niekerk - after the events of Sunday 7th May, the whole tone and disposition of the people changed".⁶⁷

Morris's arrival and the attempted arrest had "bound the Bondelswarts together as an active resisting force".⁶⁸

The N.A.C. found that Morris was an intelligent man, experienced in warfare, and thus must have realized the futility of revolt against the Government. Certainly the Bondelswarts did not rush into it. But Morris may also have felt that things could not get any worse, and that the Bondelswarts would be able to put up a lengthy resistance as they had done in the 1904-6 rebellion⁶⁹.

On 10 May 1922 Fleck sent a messenger, Johannes Bezuidenhout, to ask Jacobus Christian to come to Warmbad. Bezuidenhout delivered the message, but defected to the Bondelswarts and warned Jacobus that he would be arrested if he went to Warmbad⁷⁰. This no doubt confirmed the Bondelswarts suspicions, and, remembering 1904 and 1919, they went into laager.

After Jacobus Christian had refused Major Van Coller's invitation of 14 May 1922 to come to Driehoek, Van Coller decided to send Noothout and Mgr. Krolkowski to visit the Bondelswarts⁷¹. A controversy subsequently arose out of what, if anything, had been promised to the Bondelswarts by these two if

66. N.A.C. Report. p.31, para. 8.

67. N.A.C. Report. p.16, para. 68.

68. R.P.N.A.C. Report Drafts. Draft D. pp. 66-67.

69. N.A.C. Report. p.16, para. 69.

70. See p.73.

71. See p.75.

Morris and the five men who had crossed with him surrendered to the Warmbad magistrate⁷².

Jacobus Christian had requested that the Bondelswarts Reserve Superintendent, Noothout, come and see them⁷³. The N.A.C. had found Noothout to be an "exceptionally sensitive man",⁷⁴ and he was generally regarded as being a pleasant, but ineffectual person, inexperienced in dealing with blacks⁷⁵.

Noothout had been a magistrate in the Transvaal, had served in the Union Defence Force in the First World War, and had been appointed officer in charge of Native Affairs under the Keetmanshoop magistrate before he was appointed to be the Bondelswarts' Reserve Superintendent⁷⁶. Major Van Coller observed that the Blacks were :

"very fond of Mr. Noothout. He mixed fairly freely with them and he talked to their women and children".⁷⁷

Noothout regarded himself as a "good friend" of the Bondelswarts, and he had been so confident that a solution to the Bondelswarts unrest on the eve of the rebellion would be found that he felt he no longer required a policeman to guard his house at Driehoek in the Reserve⁷⁸. He was indeed

"kind-hearted and well-meaning but nervous, emotional and gullible ..."⁷⁹

Major Krolikowski told the N.A.C. that on his visit to the Bondelswarts with Noothout⁸⁰, Noothout had been frightened and had wept⁸¹. During their visit the Bondelswarts' extreme distrust and suspicion of the Government was shown by their demand for a written statement, signed and sealed by Hofmeyr, before they would believe Noothout's promises.

72. See p.76.

73. See p.76.

74. N.A.C. Report, p.19, para. 82.

75. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.325. Col. de Jager. Interview with informant W.J. Adriaanse, Warmbad. 19 July 1977.

76. R.P. Hofmeyr's Memorandum, p.1.

77. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.134. Major van Coller.

78. ibid. p.452. Noothout.

79. R.P.N.A.C. Report Drafts. Draft A. p.18.

80. See p.76.

81. N.A.C. Report. p.18, para. 76.

Major Van Coller himself, in a telegram to Major Herbst on 18 May 1922, stated :

"I have every reason to believe that desire of Bondels to have letter Administrators signature is inspired by the Jordaan incident⁸² (1919) particulars of which are known to yourself and Drew and on account of what took place at that time no reliance is placed in promises or arrangements of subordinate officers."⁸³

The controversy arose as to what exactly Noothout had meant by saying that "everything will be forgiven and forgotten"⁸⁴. Noothout claimed that he had said that if Morris and those who crossed with him reported to the magistrate, "everything would be forgiven and forgotten", but that they should first go to the Warmbad magistrate to get their punishment. He also said that he and Mgr. Krolikowski would be there to see that Morris and the others had a fair trial⁸⁵.

Mgr. Krolikowski, however, reported that Noothout had told the Bondelswarts that if Morris and the five men reported to the magistrate everything would be forgiven and forgotten, and that they would only be tried for being without a pass and there would only be an enquiry about the rifles⁸⁶. Noothout had

"told the men (Bondelswart^s) that if those four men reported themselves no further steps would be taken against them".⁸⁷

Thus Mgr. Krolikowski wrote to Noothout immediately after their visit, asking him to telegraph Hofmeyr to ensure that if Morris and the five men reported to the Warmbad magistrate they should not be heavily punished, because they would "certainly look upon that as a broken promise". To make doubly sure, Mgr. Krolikowski also wrote a letter to Hofmeyr himself in the same vein.

82. See p.30.

83. W.A. Adm. File A. 338/1. Major Van Coller to Secretary for S.W.A. 18 May 1922.

84. See p.78.

85. N.A.C. Report. p.18, para. 78.

86. ibid. para. 79.

87. ibid. para. 80.

As for Noothout's later denial that he had made any promises of leniency for Morris, Mgr. Krolikowski was prepared to swear that Noothout had⁸⁸. Noothout, however, had agreed to convey Mgr. Krolikowski's request to Hofmeyr because, although he said that he had not promised Morris and the five men that they would not be punished if they surrendered, he was of the same opinion as Mgr. Krolikowski that they should only get light sentences⁸⁹.

When Hofmeyr, receiving Mgr. Krolikowski's request, telegraphed Major Van Coller to ask what promises Noothout had made the latter said that while Noothout had denied making any promises, he, Van Coller, had information that in fact Noothout had exceeded his instructions⁹⁰.

Fleck said he had told Noothout before he went to visit the Bondelswarts with Mgr. Krolikowski that :

"he had no right to give any promises to the people or make any conditions with them unless he got these from a Superior Officer...."⁹¹

General Lemmer felt that Noothout would not have exceeded this "strict injunction", and had merely seen the statement he had drawn up for the Bondelswarts to sign⁹² as a list of the conditions upon which the Bondelswarts would be willing to treat with Hofmeyr. While Noothout out saw the letter as meaning that if Morris and the five men gave themselves up, the actions of the rest of the tribe in preventing Sgt. van Niekerk from arresting Morris would be overlooked, Mgr. Krolikowski, possibly as a result of his private talk with the Bondelswarts,⁹³ saw it as meaning that Morris and the five men would also be forgiven.⁹⁴ However, it seems clear that the Bondelswarts saw

88. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.360. Mgr. Krolikowski. See p.79.

89. *ibid.* p.444. Noothout. Letter No. 2/5/22. 18 May 1922.

90. *ibid.* p.142. Major Van Coller.

91. *ibid.* p.394. Fleck.

92. See p.78.

93. See p.77.

94. N.A.C. Report, p.19, para. 82a).

it in the light of Mgr. Krolikowski's interpretation, and , as the N.A.C. Report pointed out, when the promise failed to materialize, the Bondelswarts would have felt deceived and threatened⁹⁵.

Mgr. Krolikowski refused to accompany Major Van Coller on another visit to the Bondelswarts, since he did not wish to be identified with the police by the Bondelswarts⁹⁶ - a view point which had some substance⁹⁷. He had offered to go alone instead and deliver Hofmeyr's message, but when he saw that the message was a list of the terms of surrender⁹⁸, instead of the expected promise of amnesty, he refused to prejudice either his Church's or his own name by associating with it. However, he did agree to go and try and arrange a meeting between the Bondelswarts and Van Coller, or failing this, between the Bondelswarts and the Administrator himself.

When he got there, Mgr. Krolikowski was told by Jacobus Christian that the Bondelswarts were afraid of Major Van Coller, but wanted to meet with Hofmeyr, and they asked Mgr. Krolikowski to be present as a witness⁹⁹.

Mgr. Krolikowski later told the N.A.C. that he felt if Hofmeyr had visited the Bondelswarts personally, the matter would have been settled. However, he felt that for the Bondelswarts the non-materialization of Noothout's 'promise' had been "the last drop in the bucket".¹⁰⁰ Their distrust and suspicion grew even greater. Mgr. Krolikowski himself would have nothing more to do with the negotiations after his visit on 20 May 1922. His last advice to Major Van Coller, after conveying the Bondelswarts' request for a meeting with the Administrator, was that he did not think it wise for either Van Coller or Fleck to visit the tribe¹⁰¹.

95. See p.79.

96. See p.80.

97. See p.187.

98. See p.81.

99. N.A.C. Report. p.20, para. 90.

100. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.367. Msg. Krolikowski. See p.79.

101. ibid. p.158. Major Van Coller.

However, Van Coller, Fleck and Noothout visited the Bondelswarts on 21 May. What must particularly have galled the Bondelswarts was Noothout's re-appearance without the expected promise from Hofmeyr, but with a list of demands instead¹⁰².

Major Van Coller was inexperienced in dealing with blacks¹⁰³. This led a draft N.A.C. report to state that it was an error of judgement to have sent Major Van Coller as the chief negotiator, because he had

"had no experience in dealing with natives but was first and last a police officer, an "oorlogsmen" as the Bondels called him".¹⁰⁴

General Lemmer disagreed with this view, saying that the sending of Major Van Coller was useful to show that the Administration was serious, and as a show of force, because he felt that the Bondelswarts had already prepared for war¹⁰⁵. Major Manning, however, felt that it would have been better to use civil officials rather than the police in negotiations, but Manning, the obvious person for the job, was on leave in the Union at the time¹⁰⁶.

The armed Bondelswarts escort for Major Van Coller, Fleck and Noothout to Jacobus's camp infuriated Hofmeyr when he heard of it, and partly caused his decision not to visit the Bondelswarts on their own territory in case he should be submitted to a similar indignity¹⁰⁷. This was to prove a major stumbling block for a meeting because the Bondelswarts, mindful of the events of 1919, would not venture out of their Reserve.

Major Van Coller delivered Hofmeyr's message¹⁰⁸ which said that while the Bondelswarts tribes' resistance to the arrest of Morris would be overlooked if Morris and the five men surrendered¹⁰⁹, he would deal with Morris and the five men himself without any promise of leniency for them.¹¹⁰

102. See p. 81.

103. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.123. Major Van Coller.

104. R.P.N.A.C. Report Drafts. Draft A. p.23.

105. N.A.C. Report, p.16, para. 68a).

106. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.113, Major Manning.

107. See p.124.

108. See p. 81.

109. See p. 81.

110. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.463. Jacobus Christian.

This was unacceptable to the Bondelswarts, for it was to prevent Morris being imprisoned that they had gone into laager in the first place.

On 23 May 1922 the Bondelswarts Raad sent their reply to Hofmeyr's demands. They were fully aware of its implications, and a last minute bid by Hofmeyr to arrange a meeting with the Bondelswarts was ignored by them¹¹¹. They had made up their minds when Noothout's promise as they saw it failed to materialize.

As early as 19 May Major Van Coller had reported to Hofmeyr that he was "satisfied" that the Bondelswarts intended to resist any attempt to arrest Morris and the five men¹¹². Major Herbst summed up the Bondelswarts' attitude when he told the N.A.C. that they

"were in laager with the idea that 'we will not interfere with them but if they come we will resist them'".¹¹³

Hofmeyr had tried for a peaceful solution, as General Lemmer pointed out¹¹⁴. He had instructed Major Van Coller to "take care that every possible care was exercised" and to show patience with the Bondelswarts and to try and reach a peaceful solution¹¹⁵. Hofmeyr told Mgr. Krolkowski on 19 May that he would "give every consideration" to clemency if Morris and the five men surrendered¹¹⁶. If Hofmeyr meant what he said, it seems strange that he refused to put the promise in writing as the Bondelswarts had requested. He probably feared public opinion and loss of dignity and wanted to create an impression of toughness.

111. N.A.C. Report. p.22, para. 95. See p.43.

112. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.55. Major Herbst.

113. *ibid.* p.22. Major Herbst.

114. N.A.C. Report. p.22, para. 97a).

115. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.53. Major Herbst.

116. *ibid.* p.148. Major Van Coller. Telegram Hofmeyr to Van Coller. 19 May.

Many witnesses felt that if Hofmeyr had met the Bondelswarts personally things would have been peacefully resolved¹¹⁷. But Hofmeyr said that while he had made offers to meet them he would not go to them in their Reserve, especially after the armed escort given to Major Van Coller, Fleck and Noothout on their visit. Hofmeyr said :

"In the face of this action (the armed escort) the Commission (N.A.C.) has the temerity to suggest that I personally should have gone to Haiib to see Jacobus Christian".¹¹⁸

Considering what was at stake, this seems to be a weak reason, and is revealing of Hofmeyr's character generally. There were many precedents of greater men than he who had humbled themselves in order to avoid bloodshed¹¹⁹.

Hofmeyr felt that nothing he could have done would have averted the conflict¹²⁰. He felt that the Bondelswarts resistance was only part of a wider Nama plot spreading into the Union, to revolt. Swanson points out that the Bondelswarts were truculent, and Hofmeyr had his knowledge of the disaster of the 1904-6 rebellion in S.W.A. in his mind, as well as the fresh horrors of the Rand Revolt of 1922, and the Bulhoek massacre, where delay and inaction had led to a greater tragedy. "The times," says Swanson, "were ripe for violent unrest", to Hofmeyr's mind¹²¹.

Hofmeyr later came in for some criticism for his collecting of volunteer forces at Kalkfontein-South during the negotiations with the Bondelswarts¹²².

117. *ibid.* p.512. C. Weidner.

ibid. p.451. Noothout.

ibid. p.495. T. Beukes.

ibid. p.792. J. Prins.

N.A.C. Report. p.22, para. 96.

118. R.P. Hofmeyr's Memorandum.p.9.

119. The parallels of the Rhodes meeting the Ndebele leaders in the Matopos in 1896 or Smuts and Botha braving a hostile crowd to talk to strike leaders in 1913 suggest themselves.

120. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.67. Major Herbst on the A.R.B.

121. Swanson, p.656.

122. N.A.C. Report. p.16, para. 67 and p.24, para. 112.

Yet it is difficult to see, as 'indeed' he pointed out, what else he could have done. Nevertheless, the Bondelswarts were aware that troops were collecting, and it increased their suspicions of the negotiator's motives and sincerity, and confirmed their belief that Sgt. van Niekerk had been right and that the Government had declared war on them¹²³.

General Lemmer, defending Hofmeyr as usual, stated that the calling for volunteers during the negotiations was an essential precaution, and he felt that it had made no difference since the Bondelswarts, he said, were intent on revolt anyway and had to be shown that the Administration was ready to use force¹²⁴.

The Bondelswarts were well aware that troops were collecting at Kalkfontein-South. On Mgr. Krolikowski's second visit Jacobus Christian had told him that the Bondelswarts did not want war if the Government did not. As an example of their peaceful intentions, Jacobus pointed out that they were allowing armed whites who were crossing the Reserve to join the Government forces to pass unhindered¹²⁵. Jacobus later told the N.A.C. :

"When the negotiations took place between Mr Noothout and the others I had heard that the police were concentrating".¹²⁶

Right at the start of the negotiations the messenger, Bezuidenhout¹²⁷, had warned the Bondelswarts that the police were collecting. T. Beukes said later that :

"The Bondelswarts had heard that the police had gathered at Driehoek. They thought it was in connection with what van Niekerk has said".

123. See p. 85.

124. N.A.C. Report. p. 31, para. 11a).

125. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p. 159. Major Van Coller. It is interesting in this respect that on 25 May 1922 the trader, Viljoen, was still dispensing his wares at Guruchas, and chatted to Jacobus Christian about the impending conflict. ibid. p. 257. Det. Sgt. Pietersen presents Viljoen's evidence.

126. ibid. p. 468. Jacobus Christian.

127. See p. 73.

He said the Bondelswarts had therefore looked to Morris "to protect them against this war van Niekerk had spoken of".¹²⁸ Jantje Prins, a Bondelswart, told the N.A.C. :

"Wat de Sergt. (van Niekerk) gezegd had gebeurende want de troepen kwamen".¹²⁹

Indeed, Jacobus Christian, in the reply to Hofmeyr's demands, sent on 23 May, wrote :

"Further, I see, as pointed out by Sarg. van Niekerk that the troops are assembling in Warmbad and Kalkfontein and I see no chance of surrendering the rifles and the five men".¹³⁰

In addition, a draft N.A.C. report pointed out that :

"The relations between the Police and the Bondels were such that successful negotiations by the Commandant of the Police could not be expected. To the Bondels the sending of Major van Coller meant war and nothing else".¹³¹

The Bondelswarts had learnt from experience that the police were a law unto themselves. Klaas Matthebus, a Bondelswarts, told the N.A.C. :

"Van Niekerk is een konstabel en wat hy zegt is waar en wat die Kommissaris (Noothout) zegt geloofd en wij niet".¹³²

In addition to their memories of the past, the Bondelswarts were faced with the breaking of Noothout's promise, and the collecting of troops at Kalkfontein-South. In all, as a draft N.A.C. report stated :

"The Bondels raid for arms was not the answer to the Administrator's invitation (23 May) but was the act of a people who feared to trust themselves to the hands of the Administrator, who had not received the expected reply to assurances given by an official and who believed war was being forced on them".¹³³

The Bondelswarts had had enough, and they were determined to go down fighting.

128. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.493. T. Beukes.

129. ibid. p.788. J. Prins.

130. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Exhibits and Annexures. An. 1. p.15. Report of Major Van Coller to Secretary for S.W.A.

131. R.P.N.A.C. Report Drafts. Draft A. p.24.

132. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.786. K. Matthebus.

133. R.P.N.A.C. Report Drafts. Draft A. p.42.

They said that they :

" were tired of talking to white people and of the Government now in the country and all their nonsense they would rather suffer one death at Haib together than the slow death they are now suffering".¹³⁴

The N.A.C. felt that it would have been wiser if Hofmeyr had not used the police to negotiate with the Bondelswarts¹³⁵. General Lemmer, however, felt that the Bondelswarts were not afraid of the police but were insolent¹³⁶, and were merely using delaying tactics while they prepared for revolt¹³⁷. Sir Edgar Walton told the P.M.C. that not only Major Van Coller, but also Noothout, Mgr. Krolikowski and Fleck had failed to placate the Bondelswarts, and so the use of police in negotiations had made no difference¹³⁸. Hofmeyr defended himself by saying that a crime had been committed and that therefore the whole issue was a police matter¹³⁹.

However, Major Van Coller told the N.A.C. that he thought

"it was in the back of Jacobus Christian's mind that he preferred to negotiate with the civil authorities rather than with the police authorities".¹⁴⁰

Lt Prinsloo agreed with this¹⁴¹, and Mgr. Krolikowski was well aware of it, as is shown by his refusal to accompany Major Van Coller on a visit to the Bondelswarts and his advice to Van Coller not to visit the tribe¹⁴².

Jacobus Christian told Van Coller's messenger on 14 May :

"Noothout has been appointed Commissioner to watch over the interests of Bondels but his authority is apparently only nominal and Police appear to be in power".

134. W.A. Adm. File A 388/1. Telegram Warmbad magistrate to Secretary for S.W.A. 15 May 1922.

135. N.A.C. Report. p.7, para. 26. See p.187.

136. *ibid.* p.8, para. 27a).

137. *ibid.* p.17, para. 73a).

138. T.A.P.M.O. Vol. 6. Walton's "Comments" on the P.M.C. Report. p.3.

139. R.P. Hofmeyr's Memorandum. p.8.

140. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.134. Major Van Coller.

141. *ibid.* p.1,121. Lt. Prinsloo.

142. See p.81.

Jacobus had requested that Noothout and not Major Van Coller, come to see him¹⁴³. The Bondelswarts told Mgr. Krolikowski that "Van Coller is een oorlogsman en ons is bang".¹⁴⁴

It seems strange that the Administrator did not recall Major Manning, from his leave in the Union and use him to conduct negotiations. He had known the Bondelswarts since 1915¹⁴⁵, had negotiated with them over the dog tax, had plenty of experience, and was, after all, Chief Native Commissioner for S.W.A.. Indeed, a draft N.A.C. report directed on attack of the failure of Hofmeyr to use Major Manning, stating that it seemed :

"remarkable that this officer (Manning) who had already in the Kaokoveld demonstrated his ability to disarm natives without display of force and who himself had resettled the Bondels on their reserve after the exodus caused by the war was not called into deal with the situation when matters became critical in 1922".

Manning had been

"still within the border of the territory on May 10 when the magistrate at Warmbad wired to the Administrator that Abraham Morris and others had resisted arrest and the Bondels were assembling at Haib".¹⁴⁶

Even when the Bondelswarts did go on raids to local farmers for arms, ammunition, supplies and horses, the N.A.C. report remarked on the

"absence of murder, arson and other forms of violence which have been a feature of most kaffir wars and in the former dealings of these Hottentots with the Europeans".¹⁴⁷

General Lemmer agreed that the Bondelswarts had been non-violent in their raids, but felt that this was only because the farmers had offered no resistance.¹⁴⁸

Freislich¹⁴⁹ sees Lt. Prinsloo and Abraham Morris as the two opposing heroes

143. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Exhibits and Annexures. An. 10. p.10. Major Van Coller's report on military operations.

144. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.364. Mgr. Krolikowski.

145. See p.24.

146. R.P.N.A.C. Report Drafts. Draft A. p.19.

147. N.A.C. Report. p.31, para. 12.

148. *ibid.* para. 12a). See p.86.

149. Freislich, *passim*.

of the saga of the 1922 revolt. While both, and particularly Lt. Prinsloo, had sterling qualities and were very able military leaders, it would seem that, if there are any heroes, Jacobus Christian had at least the makings of one, in a quiet and unassuming way.

Hofmeyr saw Christian as a timid individual, ignoring the fact that he had been one of the diehards of the 1904-6 rebellion¹⁵⁰. But Major Manning, who had had more contact with Jacobus, and who had perhaps more perception than Hofmeyr, said :

"(Jacobus) Christian is all a man should desire to be. I was very much surprised that he had gone into rebellion".¹⁵¹

Major Van Coller admired Jacobus as being "intelligent" and with a "fair education,"¹⁵² Before the 1904-6 rebellion Jacobus had gone to school¹⁵³. Advocate I. Goldblatt, who defended Jacobus at the latter's trial after the 1922 rebellion described him as being "a quiet, well-mannered man, unassertive and sincere"¹⁵⁴. Wellington points out that at Jacobus's trial the court had paid tribute to his character and conduct¹⁵⁵.

An informant and local white farmer, W.J. Adriaanse, had great admiration for Jacobus, describing him as highly intelligent, courteous and educated, and said that when Jacobus died the local white farmers had contributed towards the erection of a gravestone for him.¹⁵⁶

Yet, the question arises as to how an educated, intelligent man could support a rebellion whose end was inevitably disastrous for his tribe.

Hofmeyr felt that Jacobus Christian had been collecting and organizing his people for rebellion since his return in 1919, and had invited Morris to come

150. R.P.Hofmeyr's Memorandum. p.9.

151. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.114. Major Manning.

152. *ibid.* p.163. Major Van Coller.

153. Interview with Izaak Witbooi, Warmbad. 20 July 1977.

154. C.A. File A 106. (Retroactive). A. Davey to I. Goldblatt. 5 July 1962.

155. Wellington, p.286.

156. Interview with W.J. Adriaanse, Warmbad. 19 July 1977.

and lead them in their revolt¹⁵⁷. Indeed, among those who surrendered after the rebellion were Nama who said that they had crossed the Orange River at Jacobus's call¹⁵⁸.

But in fact, Jacobus had consistently tried to keep his tribe within the bounds of the law. He had made them comply with the dog tax, and had tried unsuccessfully with the branding law¹⁵⁹. This was in the face of a Government who held him responsible for his tribes' actions without officially acknowledging him as the Captain¹⁶⁰.

Sgt. Naude saw Jacobus as the root cause of the 1922 rebellion, and recommended that he be deported¹⁶¹. It is important, however, to remember that the Bondelswarts had a Raad, and that the Captian had to abide by the majority decision of that Raad. Thus Jacobus's first action on hearing of Morris's arrival had been to call a meeting of the Raad and summon all the Bondelswarts¹⁶² and before the final defiant reply to Hofmeyr's demands on 23 May, it was the Raad that decided to throw down the gauntlet¹⁶³.

General Lemmer felt that Jacobus Christian under Morris's direction, used delaying tactics throughout the negotiations, in order to give the Bondelswarts time to organize for revolt¹⁶⁴. Yet when the revolt came it was clear that the Bondelswarts had no in-depth organized plans, despite the fact that they had had plenty of time to prepare. This can largely be ascribed to Jacobus's opposition to a revolt.

157. N.A.C. Report. Exhibits and Annexures. Anl. p.5. A.R.B.

158. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.259. Det.Sgt. Pietersen.

159. *ibid.* p.636. Det. Cilliers presents evidence of David Klaas. See p.171.

160. See p.34.

161. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.823. Sgt. Naude.

162. See p.68.

163. See p.83.

164. N.A.C Report. p.17, para. 73a).

Even before Morris returned to S.W.A., Jacobus had opposed Tim Beukes's call to revolt at a Bondelswarts protest meeting held at Haib in April 1922, and he suggested petitioning Hofmeyr instead¹⁶⁵. This was despite the continued ineffectiveness of Bondelswarts protests through this channel. In fact, after Jacobus's attempts at co-operation with Sgt. van Niekerk's arrest of Morris, Adam Pienaar, a Raad member, accused Jacobus of being a Government sympathiser¹⁶⁶.

But Jacobus could not oppose the majority decision of the Raad¹⁶⁷, and when the Raad refused to comply with Hofmeyr's demands¹⁶⁸, Jacobus Christian told the Bondelswarts to prepare for war¹⁶⁹. Noothout later told the N.A.C.:
 "Christian was standing alone and all the others were against him".¹⁷⁰

Jacobus felt that :

"the Government was the guilty party and he could not complain to the guilty party because the Government always pretends that it is the innocent party".¹⁷¹

Nonetheless, Jacobus only reluctantly supported the rebellion. He said he feared to surrender in case he was shot by the Government¹⁷². A Bondelswart rebel, J. Laberlot, said that :

"de man die wyvolgden was Tim (Beukes) doch hy bracht al deze moelikheid oor ons en wy behoorden achter Christian aangegaan to hebben."

He also said that Jacobus had always opposed the revolt :

"Christian radde ons altyd om het te laten staan. Toen wy zagen dat Christian recht was was het te laat".¹⁷³

Even one of the Bondelswarts extremists, Klaas Isaac (alias Babab), said after the revolt :

"als my Christian gevolg hadden zonden wy niet verkeerd gaan zyn".¹⁷⁴.

165. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.374. Fleck. Jacobus Christian to Fleck. 27 July 1922.

166. *ibid.* p.381.

167. See p.5.

168. See p.83.

169. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.235. Det.Sgt. Pietersen presents evidence of J. Prins.

170. *ibid.* p.407. Noothout.

171. W.A. Adm. File A 388/1. Affidavit by John Brown 15 May 1922.

172. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.467. Jacobus Christian.

173. *ibid.* p.471. J. Laberlot.

174. *ibid.* p.473. Klaas Isaac.

Most informants spoken to during field work supported this view, and said that Jacobus Christian, while not supporting the revolt, felt that as Captain of the Bondelswarts he had to stand by his people regardless of the consequences. One informant, Isaak Witbooi, said that Morris had told Christian that he had to support the revolt because, he said :

"Jy sien die mense dood en jy kannie anderste nie".¹⁷⁵

And indeed, as Jacobus himself put it :

"The aeroplanes did not ask whether one had anything to do with it or not, they simply fired".¹⁷⁶

Tim Beukes seems to have been a clever and scheming manipulator among the Bondelswarts. Some Bondelswarts felt that he was a Government agent, and indeed, he himself told the N.A.C. ,

"whenever I hear anything I tell it to the Europeans".¹⁷⁷

Being an ambitious man, Beukes may have seen Morris's arrival as a chance to regain some prestige and status after Jacobus's arrival as the officially unrecognized but generally acknowledged chief of the Bondelswarts¹⁷⁸.

Certainly, it is interesting that Beukes escaped prosecution after the rebellion by turning King's evidence, an act which infuriated Jacobus Christian.¹⁷⁹ A draft N.A.C. report commented on the unreliability of Beukes's evidence, but this was excised from the final draft at General Lemmer's insistence¹⁸⁰.

Jacobus had persistently opposed Beukes' attempts to incite the Bondelswarts

175. Interview with J.J. Christian, Gibeon. 26 July 1977.
Interview with W.J. Adriaanse, Warmbad. 19 July 1977.
Interview with L. Schneeuwe, Wortel. 22 July 1977.
Interview with J. Zwartbooi, Gabis. 21 July 1977.
Interview with I. Witbooi, Warmbad. 20 July 1977.

176. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. Jacobus Christian.

177. *ibid.* p.490. T. Beukes.

178. See p.34.

179. See p.102.

180. R.P.N.A.C. Report Drafts. Draft A, p.67.

to revolt before Morris's arrival¹⁸¹. Beukes himself told the N.A.C. that he had drawn up the reply to Hofmeyr's demands on 23 May 1922¹⁸².

Beukes had gone with Morris at the head of a Bondelswarts force to Warmbad, while Klaas Isaac and Adam Pienaar (alias Christian) had gone to set up an ambush for the Government forces at Driehoek¹⁸³. But Jacobus Christian was left at Guruchas, and was not involved in the revolt until after the flight from Guruchas¹⁸⁴.

Another Bondelswarts leader and radical was Adam Pienaar (alias Christian). He had been involved in the 1904-6 rebellion¹⁸⁵ against the Germans, and was a nephew of Willem Christian, the old Bondelswarts chief who died in 1896. He had fought under Morris in the 1904-6 revolt¹⁸⁶. Pienaar had had reputation as an agitator in German times, and had led Bondelswarts unrest in 1917.¹⁸⁷

Jacobus Christian claimed that Beukes, Morris and Pienaar had framed the reply to Hofmeyr's demands, and pressurized him into signing it¹⁸⁸. Pienaar also took a prominent role in disarming Noothout¹⁸⁹, and in preventing Sgt. van Niekerk's attempt to arrest Morris¹⁹⁰.

Morris himself is something of a dark horse, and little can be found about his character or personality, except that he was courageous and an exceptionally expert guerrilla leader¹⁹¹. He met his match in Lt. Prinsloo, however, who,

181. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.461. Jacobus Christian.
ibid. p.474. Stephanus Christian.

182. ibid. p.481. T. Beukes.

182. ibid. p.472. Klaas Isaac.

184. See p.90.

185. See p.16.

186. Gorges Report, p.98.

187. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Exhibits and Annexures. Ex. 2. Drew's report. 1917.
See p.60.

188. See p.86.

189. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.484. T. Beukes.

190. ibid. p.761 ff. J. Boois.

191. See p.15.

aided by the invaluable reconnaissance conducted by the aeroplanes, and well-versed in Bondelswarts methods of warfare, managed to outwit them¹⁹².

It does not seem, from the evidence given, that Morris came from the Union expressly to lead the revolt. More likely is that his arrival and the Governments' heavy-handed and tactless handling of it, was the last straw for the rising tide of Bondelswarts' discontent, the spark that ignited the blaze of the revolt. Once revolt had been decided on, in the face of Jacobus's opposition, it was Morris who sent out raiding parties to collect firearms from local farmers¹⁹³, and made military appointments and organized military strategy¹⁹⁴.

This was quite natural, since Morris had proved his ability in the 1904-6 revolt, and his almost legendary status in Bondelswarts eyes inspired them with hope, confidence and a sense of history. However, from the state of the Bondelswarts' unpreparedness when the first clash with the Government forces came at Driehoek¹⁹⁵, it seems clear that they had not and were not prepared for revolt, as is shown by their hopelessly inadequate supply of arms and ammunition¹⁹⁶. Some of the rifles had been buried and hidden since the 1904-6 revolt¹⁹⁷.

The Government's attitude to the Bondelswarts defiance was summed up by Major Herbst, who told the P.M.C. :

"We always endeavour to be perfectly just to the native, to treat him with every consideration, but when he opposes himself to the law, it is necessary in a country like South Africa that the law should be vindicated. We still have natives who are only impressed by a show of force".¹⁹⁸

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192. See p. 97.

193. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.252. Det.-Sgt. Pietersen presents evidence of J. Prins.

194. *ibid.* p.383. Fleck. Jacobus Christian to Fleck. 27 July 1922.

195. See p. 91.

196. See p. 89.

197. Interview with Frank Basson, Gibeon. 25 July 1977.

Interview with J. Zwartbooi, Gabis. 21 July 1977.

Interview with W.J. Adriaanse, Warmbad. 19 July 1977.

Interview with Isaak Witbooi, Warmbad. 20 July 1977.

See Appendix A.

198. C.A.P.M.O. Vol. 6. Herbst's Memorandum. p.13.

CHAPTER 11.

THE SUPPRESSION OF THE REBELLION

An article in the New Statesman attacked the way military operations against the Bondelswarts were conducted¹, stating :

"Upon this tribe descended a well-equipped military expedition, horses fleet of foot, cannon and machine-guns raining shot and shell, aeroplanes under knightly command hovering overhead dropping their bombs, maiming and killing babe and mother".²

Strong, if melodramatic, language indeed. Hofmeyr came under much fire, publicly and privately, for the manner in which he conducted the military operations. The Union's English press was particularly virulent, and was led by the Star newspaper, which had sent Capt. William Urquhart on 26 May 1922 to follow the campaign as a special correspondent, with the photographer, Richardson³.

The N.A.C. found that the aeroplanes had inspired terror amongst the Bondelswarts, and had foiled their attempts to escape to the impregnable mountains of the Fish and Orange rivers, as they had done in the 1904-6 rebellion⁴. However, the N.A.C. felt that before the bombing at Guruchas⁵ some warning demonstration of the aeroplane's capabilities should have been given to the Bondelswarts, and a formal demand for surrender should have been made by Hofmeyr. This, the N.A.C. felt, might have led the Bondelswarts to separate the women and children from the fighting men. General Lemmer disagreed, however, feeling that a demonstration would have made no difference, and pointing out the vital role the 'planes had played in suppressing the revolt⁶. The pilots,

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1. See p. 87 ff.
 2. New Statesman. p. 131. 12 May 1923.
 3. Freislich, p. 37.
 4. N.A.C. Report, p. 24, para. 116.
 5. See p. 92.
 6. See p. 94.

Lemmer said, had been unaware that women and children were mixed up with the stock and fighting men, and besides which the Bondelswarts could have surrendered after the first bombs had been dropped⁷.

Major Herbst justified the use of 'planes by saying that since military operations were costly, it was preferable to use "any weapon" which might shorten them⁸. He felt that the Nama would be less likely to revolt in the future now that they had witnessed the effectiveness of the 'planes, and claimed that the low casualty rate of the Government forces was "entirely due" to the 'planes⁹.

Major Van Coller agreed with General Lemmer, and further stated that the 'planes had bombed the stock at Guruchas and had caused little loss of human life, while playing an invaluable role in demoralizing the Bondelswarts¹⁰.

Hofmeyr supported this view too,¹¹ and privately told Smuts :

"In country such as this affording good cover for enemy direct physical damage by air-force is negligible. Moral effect however is enormous".¹²

Indeed, this was not the first time bombers had been used to suppress a tribal revolt. In 1920 the R.A.F. had used bombers against the "Mad Mullah" in Somaliland¹³. Freislich points out that the 'planes' most important role was that of reconnaissance¹⁴ after the Guruchas battle, although they did also occasionally strafe the Bondelswarts rebels in the riverbeds¹⁵. During the Guruchas bombing one Bondelswarts woman and two children were killed, and twelve women and children were wounded by bomb shrapnel¹⁶. The P.M.C. in its Report

7. N.A.C. Report. p.25, para. 116a).

8. C.A.P.M.O. Vol. 6. Herbst's Memorandum. p.11.

9. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.74. Major Herbst.

10. ibid. pp.184-186. Major Van Coller.

Some informants could remember the Bondelswarts' terror at the aeroplanes, which they had never seen before.

Interview with J. Zwartbooi, Gabis. 21 July 1977.

Interview with W.J. Adriaanse, Warmbad. 19 July 1977.

11. R.P. Hofmeyrs' Memorandum. p.9.

12. W.A. Adm. File A388/1. Telegram Hofmeyr to Smuts.

13. Davey, p.14.

14. See p.94.

15. Freislich, p.61.

16. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. pp.274-276.

stated that :

"The question has been raised whether a preliminary demonstration of the destructive power of aeroplane bombs might have brought about the submission of the natives, but it must be admitted that, when once open resistance has been offered, it is difficult to suspend operations or to abandon them before complete surrender".¹⁷

In all, it seems that the 'planes played a vital role in speedily suppressing the revolt, and thus preventing a drawn-out and even more bloody guerrilla war from developing. The bombings were more demoralizing than destructive, and their main contribution was to reconnaissance.

On the whole, Hofmeyr was congratulated for his swift action in putting down the revolt¹⁸, and preventing a guerrilla war from developing, as well as preventing its possible spread to other disaffected blacks¹⁹. The P.M.C.

Report found that :

"As regards the conduct of the military operations it is not disputed that the Administrator, when it became apparent that hostilities were inevitable, acted wisely in taking prompt and effective steps to uphold Government authority, and to prevent the spread of disaffection."²⁰

However, Hofmeyr did come under fire for his assumption of personal command over military operations, with the temporary rank of Colonel²¹. A draft N.A.C. Report stated :

"Without in any way impugning the Administrator's conduct of the campaign it is felt that it would have been a wiser and more seemly course for the Administrator to have appointed a soldier of standing to the military command. There seems to have been considerable friction throughout the service...."²²

In addition, as the P.M.C. Report pointed out :

"The practice appears unfortunate, not only because it excludes in the eyes of the native the possibility of a supreme appeal to the highest authority, but also, as a consequence the Administrator is deprived of his capacity as an impartial critic and judge of the conduct of operations".²³

17. C.A.P.M.O. Vol. 6. P.M.C. Report. p.13.

18. See p.87.

19. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.1,122. Major Prins.

20. C.A.P.M.O. Vol. 6. P.M.C. Report, p.12.

21. See p.88.

22. R.P.N.A.C. Report Drafts. Draft B. p.71.

23. C.A.P.M.O. Vol. 6. P.M.C. Report, p.13.

Hofmeyr defended himself by saying that the need for swift action had forced him to take personal command²⁴. But Lt. Prinsloo pointed out that this could have increased the blacks' suspicion of the Government :

"now that the natives grasp the fact that the highest Civil Official in the country - the Administrator, is also the highest military officer, legally exercising the functions of a Commissioner of Police, and that the second highest, the Secretary for S.W.A. (Major Herbst), is second in the Military Command i.e. legally functioning as the Deputy Commissioner of Police".

Lt. Prinsloo felt that this would further harm black-white relations, because :

"in the ordinary course of events it is calculated to disturb the principles of Justice, as in this system it is possible that the prosecutor and the Judge, the man who works up the charge and the man who sits in judgement over the charge, can be rolled into one".²⁵

The use of local untrained volunteers²⁶ for the Government forces also had some undesirable aspects :

"In dealing with this armed defiance of authority where the matter at stake is the enforcement of law it is desirable that the forces used should be composed of men subject to discipline and restraint. The youth, inexperience and irresponsibility of some of the lads who took part in the suppression of the Bondelzwarts rebellion is very obvious."²⁷

However, Lt. Jordaan said that although his troops were undisciplined, as far as he knew they had followed instructions²⁸.

While Hofmeyr's military operations were ultimately successful, thanks largely to Prinsloo and the aeroplanes, his own military performance was less so. In the only battle of the campaign in which he took an active part, the cordoning off of Guruchas and its bombing, the Bondelzwarts fighting men managed to break through gaps in the cordon and escape under cover of darkness²⁹.

24. See p.88.

25. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.997. Lt. Prinsloo.

26. See p.85.

27. R.P.N.A.C. Report Drafts. Draft D. p.57 (Left out at Gen. Lemmer's insistence).

28. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.806. Lt. Jordaan.

29. See p.93.

Hofmeyr blamed Commandant Schoeman for this, but a draft N.A.C. Report found that, while one group of Bondelswarts did escape near Commandant Schoeman's section

"the other and larger company got away from the hill where the headquarters staff (including Hofmeyr) had their station".³⁰

Commandant Schoeman himself left the campaign after the Guruchas episode, saying that he was "fed up" and would only fight under a soldier³¹. Privately, Major Prins, the Union liaison officer, reported that the commandants were "bitterly" critical of the disorganised and "amateur" way Hofmeyr was conducting military operations. He himself felt that Hofmeyr was showing "doubtful and inaccurate" judgement. In the light of the Guruchas fiasco, Major Prins recommended that Hofmeyr be replaced by a "military man":

"In my opinion campaign carried on in a haphazard way and no hope for speedy success. Enemy underestimated and too optimistic view being taken by Administrator".³²

However, the gloomy prediction did not take into account Prinsloo's skilful and solitary campaign with his small force in the riverbeds of S.W.A.

As for the Tatasberg incident³³, Hofmeyr said that he had given strict instructions to his officers not to cross the Orange River³⁴. If anything, the incident illustrates the problems of using an ill-disciplined, untrained volunteer force.

Another controversial aspect of the military operations was the comparatively low numbers of Bondelswarts wounded³⁵, and rumours of the shooting of Bondelswarts prisoners in the field were rife. But all references to this were left

30. R.P.N.A.C. Report Drafts. Draft B. p.59.

31. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.1,121. Major Prins.

32. C.A.P.M.O. Vol. 4. Major Prins, Kalkfontein-South to Col. Mentz, Cape Town. pp.1-2. 6 June 1922.

33. See p.98.

34. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.949. G.R. Hofmeyr.

35. See p. 137.

out of the final N.A.C. Report, although some attention was given to it in the drafts. Major Prins also mentioned in a private dispatch that the

"Shooting of prisoners by Commanders of detachments in my view very bad policy in view of the fact that according to prisoners there is a reluctance on part of certain numbers of followers to desert from Morris but if information re shooting prisoners will be known no desertions may be expected".³⁶

Several Bondelswarts rebels reported that when they had surrendered they had been shot by the Government forces. Some, like Abraham Matroos, said that the Government forces called on the Bondelswarts to surrender and then shot them as they came out. He was supported in this by other witnesses³⁷.

Major du Preez agreed that the ratio of Bondelswarts dead to wounded was abnormally high³⁸. A farmer who served the Government forces, Coetzee, felt that Bondelswarts fatalities were high because they were poorly armed³⁹.

Lt. Prinsloo said that another cause was that :

"It is very seldom that Hottentots are not shot through the head when sniping takes place. He exposes his head from behind stones".⁴⁰

This seems to be a reasonable explanation. Also, Major H.B. Porteus, who was present when the Bondelswarts surrendered, said that he had seen about fifty wounded amongst them⁴¹.

A draft N.A.C. Report postulated several reasons for the low number of Bondelswarts wounded. The superior weaponry of the Government forces, the nature of the terrain, where often only the combatants' heads were visible amongst the boulders - strewn kopjes, which meant that every bullet that hit was invariably fatal, and natural confusion in the heat of battle, were all seen

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36. C.A.P.M.O. Vol. 4. Major Prins Kalkfontein-South to Col. Mentz, Cape Town. 6 June 1922.
 37. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. pp.524-525. Hans Ortman. ibid. pp.728-729. Abraham Matroos. ibid. p. 777. Jan Laberlot.
 48. ibid. p.206. Major Du Preez.
 39. ibid. p.344. F. Van R. Coetzee.
 40. ibid. p.946. Lt. Prinsloo.
 41. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.1,124. Major Porteus.

as possible reasons. However, the draft report concluded :

"the extraordinary disparity between the casualties on the two sides had not been properly explained to the satisfaction of the Commission, who are unable to deliver a finding on this matter".⁴²

The New Statesman, strongly criticized the N.A.C. for not giving an answer to these allegations in the final Report, and called on the League of Nations to demand explanation of the matter and to demand casualty figures⁴³.

The prevalence of such rumours, and fiascos like the Tatsberg incident⁴⁴, reflected the lack of detailed organization amongst the Government forces, especially when it came to supplies and medical treatment. Capt.⁴⁵ Prinsloo fought in the Haib river-bed without a supply-line or readily accessible medical facilities, although the presence of the two aeroplanes at Goodhouse did help matters somewhat. This sometimes caused needless suffering⁴⁶, such as the incident where David Klaas, a Bondelswarts rebel, was severely wounded, and lay unattended for five days, only receiving proper medical attention at Port Nolloth nineteen days after he had been wounded. He died from blood poisoning, since he was too weak by then to be operated on⁴⁷. One wonders what might have happened if one of the Bondelswarts' ambushes on Capt. Prinsloo had succeeded, and large-scale medical treatment had been needed.

For the rest, the treatment of prisoners was generally good⁴⁸. However, some of the rebels were beaten by police at Warmbad⁴⁹, in which Det. Sgt. Pietersen, via junior policemen like Constable Struweg, seems to have had a hand⁵⁰.

42. R.P.N.A.C. Report Drafts. Draft F. pp.61-62.

43. New Statesman, p.137.

44. See p.98.

45. Prinsloo was appointed temporary Captain for the duration of the campaign.

46. See the Tatsberg incident. p.98.

47. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. p.560. J. Coetzee.
ibid. p.673. Dr. M.W. Cowan.

48. See p.100.

49. See p.226.

50. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. pp.469-470. J. Laberlot.
ibid. p.782. Abraham Christian.
ibid. p.792. J. Prins.

What is significant about this is that Pietersen had been instructed by Hofmeyr to collect "evidence" that the revolt had been planned for some time and influenced by outside agitators. This evidence was to be used to prosecute the ringleaders, and for Hofmeyr's report on the rebellion⁵¹. Constable R.A. Lottering of the S.W.A. police told the N.A.C. that Constable Struweg had flogged Bondelswarts rebels under the instructions of Det.-Sgt. Pietersen. He said :

"The thrashings were given in connection with the taking of statements. This took place on several occasions".⁵²

Struweg, who was fined and dismissed from the police for his part in the beatings⁵³, told the N.A.C. :

"Many Hottentots were sent to me to give strokes because they did not make the right declaration".⁵⁴

Det.-Sgt. Pietersen denied these allegations, saying that what beatings there were were "disciplinary" ones⁵⁵.

However, all reference to these unsavoury incidents were excised from the final N.A.C. Report, including a statement in a draft report which pointed out that :

"When one considers that Det. Pietersen's name is freely mentioned in connection with the flogging of Bondelswarts prisoners, there is the grave possibility of the view that the prisoners were flogged in order to obtain evidence that the Hottentots had made organized preparations and were determined not to make peace. This witness impressed the Commission very unfavourably both with regard to the content of his evidence and his manner of giving it".⁵⁶

It must be stated that these cases were limited in number, and most of the Bondelswarts' rank and file prisoners were left unharmed⁵⁷.

51. *ibid.* p.733. Det. Sgt. Pietersen.

52. *ibid.* p.724-726. Const. R.A. Lottering.

53. See p.102.

54. R.P.N.A.C. Report. Minutes of Evidence. pp.742-746. P.J. Struweg.

55. *ibid.* p.733. Det. Sgt. Pietersen.

56. R.P.N.A.C. Report Drafts. Draft B. p.20.

57. See p.100.

228.

Thus while under the circumstances Hofmeyr's military operations had been very successful, and the strategy well thought out, at the local level things did not run smoothly, and it was largely due to the aeroplanes and Capt. Prinsloo and Lt. Jordaan that things went well at all. Had it not been for them, things could have been far more serious.

The Bondelswarts had surrendered unconditionally⁵⁸, and their last vestiges of independence and unity were broken. Their surviving leaders were tried and sentenced to prison terms. The rebellion had failed.

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58. See p.102.

CONCLUSIONCHAPTER 12.

Hofmeyr had two basic premises about the 1922 Bondelswart revolt. Firstly, he regarded it as being only part of a "sinister" plot among the Nama, linked with Le Fleur's movement in Little Namaqualand¹, and with the influences of outside agitators, mainly American negro movements², as its source. Secondly, because he felt the revolt had been organized and planned for some time, he felt that nothing he could have averted the conflict. The Bondelswarts' alleged grievances were in his view, exaggerated and insincere, a pretext to revolt.

But the evidence shows that Hofmeyr's premises were wrong. There was little or no influence on the 1922 revolt from either Le Fleur or American negro political movements³. The Bondelswarts entered the rebellion unprepared⁴. Had they been prepared, they would have fled to the inaccessible mountain regions of the Orange and Fish rivers, as they had done in 1904-6, there to carry out with far better chances of success the type of warfare at which they had already proved themselves so adept.

The rebellion was the result of many and varied Bondelswarts grievances, accumulating into discontent. The attempted arrest of Morris and the bungling of subsequent negotiations was the last straw. Their distrust, fear and suspicion of the Government, built up from German times, made any negotiations doubly difficult. They were a proud people, proud of their history and traditions, and proud of their tribal identity. Their days of complete independence were not long gone, and only in the early 1920's was there any appreciable white settlement in their area⁵. It was then, while they watched their lands being irrevocably divided up amongst whites, that with the increased white settlement came stricter and more burdensome laws. In some respect, the rebellion was the last stand of a people driven to frustration and poverty. It was indeed, as Freislich calls it, the

1. See p. 62.
 2. See p. 194.
 4. See p. 200.
 5. See p. 36.

last tribal war. They fought a futile battle against the inexorable advance of white technology and civilization, and in this sense their ultimate revolt was perhaps inevitable.

The Bondelswarts were fully aware of what was happening to them⁶. Their protests had gone unheard, and they felt threatened and deceived by a hostile, unsympathetic and alien Government on their own land. They were not an easy people to negotiate with being stubborn, truculent and suspicious. Hofmeyr, was also burdened with incompetent officials like Noothout, and strong, reactionary white public opinion, epitomised by the actions and policies of the Zuid-West Afrika Vereeniging⁷. The whites had political power, the blacks did not. Also hampering the achievement of a peaceful settlement was the deep-rooted white fear of the numerically superior blacks rising in unison to drive them into the sea - a fear common to whites in Africa, and for which there were precedents like the 1904-6 revolt in S.W.A. Hofmeyr's task was thus not an easy one, and he did not shirk his responsibility at any stage. He was well-meaning, sincere and paternalistic in his attitude to the blacks. But he was also too stubborn, too proud and over-hasty in his dealings with the Bondelswarts. His unfounded criticisms of Loram and Roberts and the P.M.C. are revealing of his character⁸. He was too proud and unbending in his assertion of white "dignity" to undergo the possible humiliation of an armed Bondelswarts escort into Guruchas⁹. The white Government was too much obsessed with upholding its dignity, and too little concerned with humanity and understanding. The revolt was a pathetic one, symbolizing the last flicker of a bygone era.

S.W.A. was a "C" class mandate, to be administered as an integral part of the Union¹⁰. But, as Marquis Theodoli pointed out in the appendix to the P.M.C. Report, the interests of the black peoples were to be paramount¹¹. It was a "sacred trust". But it was not treated as such. White economic interests were paramount. The country was opened up for white settlers from South Africa.¹²The

blacks were

6. See p. 151.

7. See p. 184.

8. See p. 125.

9. See p. 124. 12. See p. 36.

10. See p. 53.

11. See p. 138.

to be labourers, not masters, and the economic and native policies, as epitomised by the terms of reference of the Native Reserves Commission¹³, were geared towards white economic dominance. Blacks were not consulted over legislation affecting them. Their freedom of movement and action was curtailed by laws benefitting the white economy. Indeed, Theodoli¹⁴ was correct in saying that the role of the S.W.A. Administration in the suppression of the Bondelswarts revolt was a departure from the principles of the mandate,

" a departure which instead of appearing to be a demonstration of strength and superiority, might be considered an indication of weakness, and incapacity in the exercise of a mission which is a lofty one only if its true spirit is respected".¹⁵

Both the Bondelswarts and the S.W.A. Government were at fault. But the Government's actions are all the more shameful because of its greater strength and technological prowess. It had departed from the "sacred trust" which it had undertaken to fulfill.

The unity and independence of the Bondelswarts tribe was shattered by the revolt. Defeated and impoverished, their loss of pride led to increased demoralization and abuse of alcohol, so that the Bondelswarts people today are a mere scattered semblance of their former greatness.

On the whole, the official reports on the rebellion were unsatisfactory in the conclusions they reached. The Native Affairs Commission's report was thorough and well-researched, and covered all the major grievances of the Bondelswarts¹⁶. But the Report was hampered by the conflict of opinion between Roberts and Loram on the one hand, and Lemmer on the other.¹⁷ It was at the latter's insistence that all the really contentious points, such as Hofmeyr's handling of the military operations and the high ratio of Bondelswarts killed to wounded, were excised from the final report. Whatever value the N.A.C. Report had was lessened by this, and by Major Herbst's comments on the Report to the P.M.C.¹⁸. Herbst's

13. See p. 183.

14. See p. 138

15. C.A.P.M.O. Vol. 6. P.M.C. Report. p. 19.

16. See p. 112ff.

17. See p. 132.

18. See p. 132.

remarks that the N.A.C. Report was unsatisfactorily researched and was the work of persons ignorant of local conditions is a typical example of the deep-rooted stubbornness of the S.W.A. Administration. It was this refusal by the Government to believe or concede that it might occasionally be at fault which had driven the Bondelswarts to such a pitch of frustration and anger.

But the divergence between Roberts' and Loram's opinions and those of Lemmer did, as Herbst pointed out to the P.M.C., reflect the basic difference in views of the liberals and the majority of white South Africans or South West Africans. Lemmer spoke for the latter group.

By contrast to the thoroughness of the N.A.C. Report on which the P.M.C. had remarked Hofmeyr's report on the rebellion was overhasty and simplistic¹⁹. His fixed ideas on the causes of the rebellion are reflected in his instructions to Det. Sgt. Pietersen to find "proof" that the revolt had been plotted for some time and had been influenced by outside agitators²⁰.

The lack of consensus in the N.A.C. Report, Herbst' comments on it to the P.M.C., and the nonexistence of a report officially recognized by the South African Government as representing the true state of affairs, all helped to hinder the P.M.C. Report. Nevertheless, the P.M.C. covered the essential causes of the 1922 revolt, as well as the post rebellion treatment of the Bondelswarts, and some of the more contentious points were raised. But the P.M.C. had no access to Bondelswarts opinion, and this greatly hampered its work²¹. However, Theodoli's annexure to the P.M.C.²² Report pointed out the essence of the problem - had the Mandatory fulfilled its "sacred trust" in S.W.A. and in its dealing with Bondelswarts? The answer was that it had not, for if it had many of the Bondelswarts' grievances would have had no real foundation. And the N.A.C. and P.M.C. reports had shown beyond doubt, that the Bondelswarts' grievances were well founded.

19. See p. 134.

20. See p. 227.

21. See p. 134.

22. See p. 137.

Sir Edgar Walton's defence of South Africa in the League Assembly²³, could not alter these basic facts, and highlighted the determination of the whites to subjugate the interests of the blacks to their own economical and political dominance, and to brook no opposition to this. The position of the white Government in S.W.A. had to be vindicated at all costs - even at the cost of a "sacred trust".

It should be remembered that the Bondelswarts rebellion of 1922 took place in a violent age in southern Africa. In the Union there had been bloody confrontations in 1922 during the Witwatersrand strike and in 1921 in the Bulhoek incident. The world had just been through the most violent and extensive war in mankind's history, tearing the old fabric of society apart. In S.W.A. itself black and white alike could remember vividly the wholesale slaughter of the 1904-6 rebellion. To Hofmeyr it must have seemed as if violence was in the air, and the whole atmosphere of public opinion seemed to work towards violence. Violence was not unusual in southern Africa. What made the situation different in the handling of the Bondelswarts rebellion was that it took place under new circumstances, under a mandate which stressed the "sacred trust" of protecting black interests.

The 1922 revolt and the manner of its suppression had a lasting effect on the future history of S.W.A. and South Africa. As far as S.W.A. was concerned it left a legacy of deep bitterness and disillusionment and a strong sense of grievance among the Nama. This was very evident from discussions with informants. The revolt and its suppression further polarized and embittered race-relations in the country, the effects of which are felt today and which hamper reconciliation between white and black. The legacy of distrust and bitterness has thus left its mark on contemporary politics.

23. See p.138.

For South Africa itself the effect was no less harmful. Black Pan-Africanists, like George Padmore of Trinidad, an associate of Dr. Nkrumah revived the Bondelswarts affair in the 1940's to attack South Africa's race policies²⁴. But what was more serious as far as South Africa was concerned was that the Bondelswarts rebellion resulted in the start of a long and vociferous campaign first in the League Assembly, and then in the United Nations General Assembly. In 1949 the Rev. Michael Scott spoke on behalf of certain Herero, Damara and Nama interests in the General Assembly, attacking South Africa's role in the suppression of the Bondelswarts revolt²⁵.

In 1956 George Padmore condemned South Africa's handling of the Bondelswarts rebellion as part of a general attack on colonial policy in Africa²⁶. As Davey says,

"In many quarters the Union was thenceforth suspect as a ruler over non-white peoples; a climate was created in which lookers-on, especially the non-whites, would be on the alert for any signs of 'oppression'.

.....
 In retrospect, it must be concluded that the Bondelzwarts affair was a grave setback for South Africa".²⁷

Thus the Bondelswarts rebellion and the manner of its suppression cast a long shadow over the international reputation of South Africa.

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24. Davey, p.23.

25. ibid. p.25.

26. ibid. p.25.

27. ibid. p.28.

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APPENDIX A.(i) FIELD-WORK TECHNIQUES.

The Bondelswarts today are scattered over a wide area in the south of South West Africa, from Warmbad northwards to Gibeon. The arid nature of the countryside means that grazing is poor, and thus outside the towns the Bondelswarts live in scattered family groups.

About 300 Bondelswarts reside at Warmbad, working for whites in the area. In the early 1960's there was a severe drought in the south of S.W.A. In order to alleviate pressure on grazing, the Government offered to remove those Bondelswarts who wished to go to Gibeon. In 1964 the Odendaal Report was formulated and put into effect, creating black homeland areas in S.W.A. One of these homelands is Namaland, a homeland for all the Nama tribes, including the Bondelswarts. However, the southern boundary of Namaland starts just north of Keetmanshoop, which means that the old Bondelswarts Reserve given to them by the German government after the 1904-6 rebellion no longer exists. But some Bondelswarts returned to their old Reserve after the drought had broken. Thus there are three main groups of Bondelswarts - at Warmbad, in the old Reserve area, and at Gibeon.

Hence tracking down informants is both costly and time-consuming. In addition, some of the tracks in the area are only accessible to a four wheel drive vehicle, which I did not possess.

The splitting up of the Bondelswarts tribe over such a large area has also led to a lack of strong tribal organization. The Captaincy was allowed to lapse in the early 1950's, owing to a succession dispute. It was revived by the tribe in 1972, with Government encouragement, as part of the political awakening which started then. But only now is there beginning to appear an interest in and an attempt to systematically record tribal history and tradition.

The geographical split of the Bondelswarts tribe had led to deep political divisions. The Bondelswarts living in the old Reserve area have appointed Anna Christian as their Captain, and Hannes Rooi as Under-Captain, and they demand the restoration of the traditional lands to the tribe. The Gibeon group have their own under-Captain, Frank Basson. Each group opposes the other. Contemporary politics, more

specifically the opposing factions of followers of the South West Africa People's Organization and the Government-sponsored Turnhalle group, have been drawn into Bondelswarts inter-tribal rivalries. This affects research, since there is much tension and suspicion of strangers, particularly whites, for fear that they may be policemen. The suspicion was easily noticeable, and on several occasions a highly-recommended informant would, at first, plead deafness, old age or a failing memory, or all three.

Political awareness is beginning to stimulate an interest in tribal history, and to influence it to specific ends. For instance, those Bondelswarts who wish for the return of their old Reserve turn to the tribe's past history for justification for their claims.

Fieldwork lasted for about two weeks, from 15 July 1977 to 30 July 1977. Warmbad, Gabis, Wortel, Driehoek, Keetmanshoop and Gibeon were visited. I visited informants privately in their own homes. Where possible, I visited white farmers who could remember the rebellion. During the interview the outline was written down in point form, and written up fully as soon as possible after the interview.

The Nama language is still widely spoken. Unfortunately I cannot speak it, but nearly all Bondelswarts can speak Afrikaans. German is also often spoken, but English is almost never heard. Informants were not paid or rewarded for information in any way. I worked on my own, carrying only letters of introduction or identification from the different headmen, although it was seldom necessary to use them.

While it is obvious that the limited period of time spent on field work meant that only a fraction of the available evidence was gathered, the evidence was collected from a wide range of informants, white and black, with different political aspirations and differing wealth, and separated by large distances. The evidence obtained varied only in minor points of detail from informant to informant, and was almost completely in agreement with documentary evidence gathered. Thus the evidence was mostly of confirmatory or explanatory value, although, of course, no less important for this.

APPENDIX A.(ii) LIST OF PRINCIPAL INFORMANTS.a) W a r m b a d .

19 July 1977. W.J. ADRIAANSE, a white farmer, aged 69 years old, who arrived in the Warmbad district from South Africa in 1916. Regarded as a local white expert on the history of the area in his lifetime, he had a good memory for details, both of the whites and the Bondelswarts. He claimed to have known Jacobus Christian well, and had very great respect for him. He joined the Government forces under Hofmeyr to help suppress the 1922 revolt.

20 July 1977. NOLS ISAAK, a poor white ex-farmer, who lives in a garage in the town. He arrived in the Warmbad district as a child, and is now about 76 years old. He had a poor memory for details, but had many interesting anecdotes. He took part in the suppression of the 1922 rebellion, and was in Captain Liebenberg's commando. He remembered the Tatasberg incident well.

20 July 1977. GERT JOSEPH, a Bondelswart, about 84 years old. He was working on a farm at the time of the 1922 rebellion, and could remember little about it. However, he was a useful guide to other Bondelswarts more proficient in tribal history.

20 July 1977. ISAAK WITBOOI, a Bondelswart. He was born in 1894 and baptised at the Heirachabis mission in 1918 by Mgr. Krolikowski. He had his baptism card as proof. He claimed to have had no part in the rebellion. He was very ill and was bedridden, but was completely mentally alert. One of the best and most reliable informants, he had an excellent memory for detail, and remembered the build-up to the 1922 revolt clearly in all its aspects. He held a deep sense of grievance at the losses suffered by his tribe under the whites. He was regarded by other Bondelswarts as a local expert in the tribe's history.

b) G a b i s. (A Roman-Catholic Mission Station).

21 July 1977. JOHANNES ZWARTBOOI, a Bondelswart born in about 1900. Recognized as one of the chief authorities on Bondelswarts' tribal history, tradition and genealogy, he was old but still active and very alert mentally, and he had an excellent memory and grasp of the details. At first he was extremely suspicious and reticent, but once satisfied with my credentials, he displayed a vociferous and acute sense of injustice at the loss of the Bondelswarts' old Reserve and traditional tribal lands. He was certainly the most valuable and reliable informant interviewed.

c) W o r t e l. (A small stock-post in the old Reserve).

22 July 1977. LUDWIG SCHNEEUWE, whose uncle was Hendrik Schneeuwe, the Government-appointed Bondelswarts Captain who was deposed for allegedly defrauding the tribe, in 1920. Ludwig is a councillor on the reconstructed Raad of the Bondelswarts under Captain Anna Christian. However, he was an unreliable informant, strongly prejudiced by contemporary politics in his interpretation of the tribes' past. He could remember few details, and tended to mix up the 1904-6 and the 1922 rebellions.

d) G i b e o n.

24 July 1977. GERT ZWARTBOOI, a Bondelswart, born in 1918. His father had been one of the rebels killed in the 1922 rebellion. While lacking in detail, his account, as told to him by his mother, was good on the causes of the Bondelswarts' dissatisfaction.

24 July 1977. WILLEM JAER, a Bondelswart, born around, and probably before, 1900. Slightly senile, he could remember some of the basic details of the 1922 revolt.

25 July 1977. Combined evidence of SARA ORTMAN and her son, CAPTAIN FRANK BASSON. Neither of them was a pure Bondelswart. Basson is only acknowledged as under Captain by the Gibeon Bondelswarts. Sara Ortman's uncle was Jacob Marengo, the famous Bondelswarts rebel leader in the 1904-6 revolt. Neither Sara Ortman nor Frank Basson was very well-informed about the tribe's history, but between the two of them some interesting information with regard to Le Fleur and Morris was obtained. Basson himself was very helpful in

suggesting informants.

26 July 1977. JOSEPH JACOBUS CHRISTIAN, who was born in 1911. He was Jacobus Christian's cousin. He was involved in the rebellion, and had an excellent memory of it. A member of the Bondelswarts' royal family, and as such a claimant to the Captaincy, he was greatly embittered by the inter-tribal rivalries of the Bondelswarts today. Proud of his tribe's past, he was a sincere and very useful informant.

27 July 1977. NOLS KENNEDY, who was born in 1889. His father was an Englishman and his mother a Bondelswart. Very senile, old and bed-ridden. He was an interesting informant for his snatches of memory of the 1904-6 rebellion, the First World War, and Morris's role in the 1922 rebellion, although he sometimes tended to mix things up. Unfortunately the interview was terminated by his daughter, who suspected that I was a policeman.

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APPENDIX B.SHORT BIOGRAPHIES OF HOFMEYR AND THE NATIVE AFFAIRS COMMISSIONERS

- i) GYSBERT REITZ HOFMEYER. b 12 Feb. 1871. d. 12 March 1942.

In 1897 Hofmeyr became the clerk assistant to the House of Assembly. From 1900 to 1902 he was registrar to the Special Tribunals of Court. He was the Transvaal Secretary to the National Convention, and was clerk of the Transvaal Legislative Assembly. From 1910 to 1920 he was clerk to the Union House of Assembly. From 1920 to 1926 he was Administrator of South West Africa, and he served on the 1926 Angola-S.W.A. Boundary Commission.¹

- ii) BRIGADIER-GENERAL L.A.S. LEMMER

He was the South African Party M.P. for Marico, and was a prominent parliamentary speaker on matters concerning Africans.²

- iii) DR. CHARLES TEMPLEMAN LORAM. b. 10 May 1879 d. 9 July 1940.

Loram became assistant inspector of schools in Natal in 1906. In 1910 he was appointed Inspector of schools for Natal, and obtained his Ph.D at Columbia University in 1914, studying negro education. In 1917 he became Chief Inspector of Native Education in Natal. In 1920 he was appointed to the Union Native Affairs Commission, and he helped formulate the Native (Urban Areas) Act of 1923. In 1929 he was appointed as the first chairman of the South African Institute of Race Relations. Loram was an authority on Black education. In 1931 he became Sterling Professor of Education at Yale.³

- iv) DR. A.W. ROBERTS. Born in Scotland.

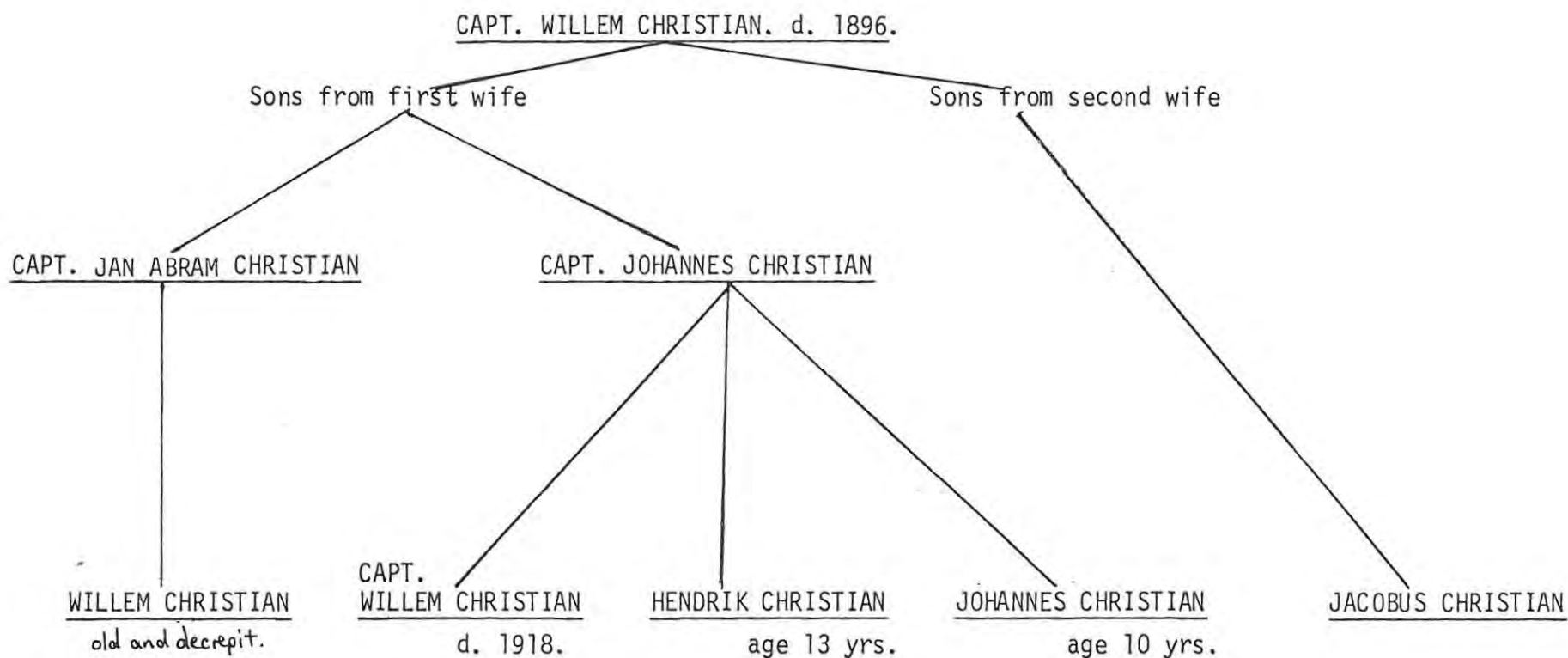
Roberts joined the staff of the Native College at Lovedale, and was a specialist in black education. He became a Senator, and from 1920 to 1930 served on various commissions of enquiry into Native Affairs.⁴ In 1913 he had been appointed President of the South African Science Congress, and in 1928 of the South African Astronomical Society.⁵ His papers, which are stored in the Cory Library at Rhodes University, Grahamstown, form the basis for this thesis.

1. Dictionary of South African Biography, Vol. 3. Ed. in chief. C.J. Beyers. (Cape Town, 1977). p.403.
2. Smurthwaite, p.72.
3. Dictionary of South Africa Biography. Vol. 3. p.537.
4. Smurthwaite, p.71.
5. Hancock, p.93.

APPENDIX C.

GENEALOGICAL STUDY.

THE BONDELSWARTS ROYAL FAMILY. CIRCA 1917



From W.A. Adm. Vol. 51. File 599/2. Compiled by Det. Christiansen. 29 July 1917.

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MAP D. (See Folder at back of thesis.)

BONDELSWARTS RESERVE.

The boundary shown as a dotted line is as appears on the German maps according to original sketch before a rigid survey was made. The boundary shown as an unbroken line is according to the final survey carried out under the German Government in June - Nov. 1911 and 1911 by Surveyor- General.

SHEET 28. ORANGE RIVER MOUTH. G.S.W.A.

From: R.P. N.A.C. REPORTS, MAP AND MEMORANDA. MS. 14 787/A/iv).

