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# Tsetse fly the winner in terror war

**Herald Reporter**

THE terror war has put back Rhodesia's battle against the tsetse fly 20 years. It will cost millions to regain the ground lost to the fly.

The situation is very serious. Tsetse is advanc-

ing "at a rate of knots", said Dr Bill Boyt, Chief Veterinary Officer (trypanosomiasis) in the Ministry of Agriculture.

"In the Mount Darwin area, we are faced with a major advance of tsetse," he said. Already several thousand head of cattle have died of nagana, and the advance threatens an area of 19 000 km<sup>2</sup> and 164 000 head of cattle.

He said that because of the terror war, tsetse and trypanosomiasis control teams were unable to operate. "We have been put back to a position we were in 20 or more years ago. It will take millions of dollars to put it right."

In 1973 Rhodesians were about to embark on a major spraying operation in Mozambique itself, down on the Rio Luia (in Rhodesia it is called the Ruya River) "which we regarded as the stronghold of the persistence of tsetse in that area.

## ADVANCE

"Although we had put in tracks, arranged camps and had the full permission of the Portuguese, this was denied as the security situation deteriorated. Now we are unable to work in the border area. We are facing a major advance of the tsetse fly."

Unchecked, tsetse would spread to the 1500 m contour. "All we can do is our utmost to protect the cattle. We literally can do nothing at the moment to fight the fly. We cannot carry out conventional spraying or spraying of



DR BOYT

trees and bushes," said Dr Boyt.

The closest the fly has advanced to Salisbury is about 25 km to 35 km from Bindura.

"The tsetse fly is now on the Mazoe and may have crossed the Mazoe, which is 20 to 30 km north of Mtoko. There are, possibly, tsetse close to Shamva. But Mtoko, an area which we cleared with our efforts over the last 12 to 15 years, is now threatened again."

## SIMILAR

Asked about places such as Buhera, Gutu and Bilkita, Dr Boyt said: "We are there faced with the possibility of a similar situation developing. East of the Sabi and south of Chipinga in the Lowveld we pushed the tsetse back into Mozambique, we eliminated them from Rhodesia, and we worked about nine or 10 km into Mozambique. Now this facility has been denied to us. The cattle in that area could be infected.

"It could cross the Sabi flood plain, it could cross the Sabi and could be in areas like the Sanga Reserve, Ndanga and so on. "And further south, in

Gona-re-Zhou, we have had a very successful campaign in conjunction with the Portuguese in Mozambique and the South African authorities from 1963 to 1974 we pushed the tsetse completely out of Rhodesia and we were working 80 km into Mozambique.

"Had we been allowed to carry on we would now be within smell of the sea. And that would be the problem removed from that area. The threat to the Limpopo and Kruger National Park would have been removed.

## HERDS

"Now, we haven't even got any sentinel herds along the border. These were herds we kept as alarm systems to check the presence of fly and of the trypanosome parasite. So the first intimation we would have for the return of tsetse would be infection of cattle in Matibi No. 2 Tribal Trust Land, north of Gona-re-Zhou Game Reserve.

"Because we can't work along the border for security reasons, we can't even monitor the tsetse in that area. The whole of Gona-re-Zhou is closed to everyone except the security forces."

From Mount Darwin down to Vila Salazar very little work could be done, said Dr Boyt. "A quite serious position might develop anywhere, or everywhere, along that border."

## Profit from cement

BULAWAYO. — United Portland Cement Co (Pvt) Ltd, an associated company of Rhodesia Cement, increased its net profit in the six months ended January 31 to \$989 075 (1976: \$799 743).

The trading profit was \$2 129 619 against the previous period's \$1 869 637. — Iana.