

Article 7

THE SABI-LUNDI FLY BELT

1. The discovery of trypanosomiasis in Matibi II cattle watering on the Lundi; the infection of one animal on Lone Star Ranch; the capture of tsetse on the Western Game Fence, and the undoubted increase in tsetse numbers around the Sabi-Lundi Junction indicate the development of a new and more serious situation in the area. Evidence from Portuguese East Africa suggests that the westward encroachment of tsetse along the Lundi is but the right hand flank of a very large scale advance in a generally south-westerly and westerly direction which has developed during the last three years, mainly in Portuguese East Africa.

2. The first point of practical consequence is that the Sabi West Game Destruction Scheme has, at any rate in the south, failed in its objective of preventing an advance westwards.

3. It is necessary to re-plan the whole campaign. The initial step of reporting to the Ministry of Agriculture has been taken and provisional agreement obtained to proposals which will permit of more flexibility in the use of available funds than the printed estimates show. We shall be able to set up a station for survey purposes, when an officer is available. A new entomologist will arrive at the end of August.

4. There is no question at the moment of abandoning or even altering the present hunting programme in the Sabi area this year. The scheme may still develop into a valuable defence feature in the area.

5. Intensive operations against game in Portuguese East Africa are now developing, with the object of halting the very large advance towards the cattle lands of the Limpopo basin. At first action will be directed intensively against elephant and buffalo. The Portuguese authorities have drawn attention to the likelihood of disturbed elephants, some wounded, moving westwards into Rhodesia (although the intention is to drive them northwards or north-east across the Sabi into the Game Reserve east of Massangena). It would help the Portuguese and ourselves if these elephants could be kept in Portuguese territory. It is clear, however, from preliminary talks with the Game Officer, that such a task would not be at all easy. I have assured Dr. Andrade Silva that we will cooperate with him as far as we can and that when a Rhodesian plan is finally decided upon, we will inform him of it. The Portuguese have clearly put me very fully in the picture on their side and good liaison arrangements exist between Mr. Phelps, our entomologist, and Dr. Martinez, the V.O. in charge of trypanosomiasis operations, Spungabera.

6. It is emphasized that the whole operation, from Chipinga southward to Kapitan and westwards to Lone Star Ranch and Matibi II must be regarded as a single operation, although it will involve several districts and is too large for the present tsetse entomologist to handle administratively by himself, when he has very heavy technical burdens as well. Moreover, the operation is not purely a tsetse control one. Indeed the burden of control of the disease must for some time be assumed by the Veterinary Department using drugs. The elephant problem and, recently, the lion and wild dog problem in Chiredzi, which has derived from the existing tsetse scheme, must, of course, involve the Game Department. The Native Affairs Department, will, it seems probable, become increasingly involved, if proper use of African settlement is to be made for defence measures.

7. It is suggested that a small working committee be set up to plan this somewhat complex operation, over a number of years. This committee (which could be a Sub-Committee of the Trypanosomiasis Control Committee) should include the Director of Veterinary Services (or the Officer i/c Trypanosomiasis as his representative), a representative of the Native Affairs Department

in having the Assistant Secretary i/c of the latter Department in the Federal Ministry, also on the Sub-Committee, possibly as Chairman. It is essential that the Sub-Committee be small and composed of officers directly interested in the Sabi Operations. It must be able to act with speed and decision. Its deliberations should be reported to the Trypanosomiasis Control Committee, but its actions should not have to wait on that Committee which is necessarily a month or sometimes two months late in receiving its information.

8. The new tsetse campaign will be planned to use all possible techniques against the tsetse, including discriminative clearing and residual insecticides. Game destruction, however, would not extend outside its present limits unless overwhelming difficulties are encountered in applying other methods. The main surveys will begin in the new western infested zone in September. Survey work south of the Lundi has already begun.

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