

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS OF THE MEETING OF THE COMMISSION OF
INQUIRY INTO THE FISHING INDUSTRY HELD IN THE TOWN HALL, ZOMBA,
ON THURSDAY, 17TH MAY, 1956, AT 9 A.M.¹

Present:

The Hon. J.B. Hobson, Q.C., Chairman

The Hon. J.H. Ingham, C.M.G. M.B.E.

The Hon. F.G. Collins

The Hon. N.D. Kwenje

H.J.H. Borley, Esq.

Miss P.B. Clewes, Secretary.

During a short discussion between members before the meeting it was decided to take evidence on oath. It was also agreed that witnesses should remain outside until their turn came to give evidence and that they should be brought in one by one. After giving evidence, if they wished to remain in the meeting they were at liberty to do so.

The meeting opened at 9 o'clock, and Mr. Coombes, Town Manager, Zomba, was the first witness.

Being duly sworn, he stated:

I am Henry Philip Coombes, a Member of Legislative Council and the Zomba Town Manager. I am aware of the terms of the Commission. With regard to the fishing industry generally, I can say very little on the general aspects of it, and will confine myself to the supply and disposal of fish in Zomba. I have some notes with me which I made as the result of information received from two Indian fish vendors on the market who get their supplies from Fort Johnston.

As will be realised, the supply of fish is seasonable, and supplies that come to Zomba are somewhat erratic. There are good months and bad months. During November and December there is hardly any. In June and July, the coldest months of the year, it is very scarce. For the rest of the year the supply is better. Mr. C. Yiannakis used to send fish down from the Lake, and it was sold in the market by one of his agents. About September, 1955 it was coming at very infrequent intervals and people were in a quandary about whether they could get fish or not. Zomba Town Council wrote to Mr. Yiannakis asking if it were possible to have supplies more regularly. I think, sir, you have the copy of the correspondence which took place. Mr. Yiannakis said it was not a very good proposition as far as he was concerned for various reasons, and that it

¹ This is a transcription from the Commission of Inquiry into the Fishing Industry (1956) conducted during the Nyasaland Protectorate. The original material is held in a single file (C.O.M. 9-3-1) at the Malawi National Archives in Zomba. It was collected for the Lessons from Lake Malawi project by Dr Bryson Nkhoma and transcribed by Dr Milo Gough.

was hardly worth the cost of supervision and appointing an agent. His average sales daily were 40 dozen fresh fish.

Since then two Indian people became interested. The fish is still taken from Mr. Yiannakis' lorries, and is delivered here at 6/- a dozen, irrespective of size and weight, and it is sold in the market at about 8d, again irrespective of size and weight. We get fish to-day no less than twice a week, so that the supplies at present are fairly adequate for the demand both in regard to Asian, African and European demands.

One of the Indians gets his fish from Mr. Yiannakis and the other one from Malachias Bros. The terms and supply and price are just about the same in both cases. From 20 to 60 dozen daily is offloaded to each person, sometimes both on the same day, sometimes on opposite days.

On their way down the lorries distribute a little fish en route at the various places between Fort Johnston and Zomba. I cannot vouch for it, but I am given to understand that it is sold at the same price all the way at 6/- a dozen.

The traders have had on occasions as much as 75 dozen, and in the cooler months they have taken as much as 100 dozen. It must be realised that in Zomba market there is no refrigeration, and as a result in the warmer months a lot of the fish is unsaleable. I think that was one of Mr. Yiannakis' troubles, that he had a lot of fish left on his hands at various times; that would not have occurred if there had been refrigeration to take care of the overload.

I think I have told you about all I know, sir, except that it really does vary in quantity in regard to the season. There is no question of ordering a certain amount of fish and expecting to get it. You might get double or exactly the amount you want, but it ranges between 40 and 100 dozen at various times. Because of the frequent shortages of fish from Lake Chilwa there is a great demand for it by everyone, African, European and Asian alike, so that it does fill a long felt want from that point of view.

With regard to the arrival of the fish in the lorries and its condition, it has struck me that fish would remain for longer in a better condition if it was transported in a different way. It would still come by motor vehicle, but I think that if it was arranged so that the fish was not all in one heap a good deal more of it would be saleable later in the day. I think that if the vehicle was fitted with slatted shelves with trays about 4 feet deep the fish would remain in better condition for a longer period, although my conjecture is that, even with shelves, the fish would arrive in a bad condition in the hot weather if the lorry was not covered.

I go down to the market fairly regularly to watch the fish being put on the stalls, and I examine a dozen at various places, a very cursory examination just to see that the gills are pink and the flesh firm. At this time of the year the fish keeps longer and the traders are able to sell it sometimes as late as 4 o'clock, which is an unusual time. There have been occasions when I have had to go to the market at 11.30 and insist on the balance being destroyed.

One of the reasons that fish is not disposed of easily some days is the question of supply and demand. When there are a lot of traders on other commodities such as vegetables, maize, etc., the fish sells well, for they are the majority of buyers. It is difficult for the fish traders to know how many fish to order, as they never know how many people are going to be on the market.

The African population of Zomba is not less than 5,000; the Asian I would put at 300 and the European at 400 to 500.

The nearest markets to Zomba are Namadzi and Songani, but I do not know anything about those. There are a lot of people who work in Zomba live out there and who buy from those markets because they are nearer to their homes than Zomba.

The fish from Lake Chilwa is brought into the market by boys with baskets on bicycles between 1 o'clock and 2.30 in the afternoon. The supply from Chilwa is according to the season and the state of the water in the lake, etc. A lot of fresh fish is brought from Chilwa, but I would say that the majority of fish sold by the boys is dried. The price is about 1/- or 1/6 for 4 on a stick, and the size of a dried fish is about that of a small kipper. The majority of dried fish comes from Chilwa. I could ascertain for you the total amount over, say, a week. I have a covered shed on the market for dried fish. There is a shortage of supplies of dried fish in June, July and August, and also in December, but for the rest of the year it is very plentiful, providing weather conditions are normal.

Regarding the amount of fish brought in from Chilwa, I can get my captao to take the number in each basket as it comes in. I will get him to do an immediate count, and another one in July.

Comparing the price of goods in the past and the present prices, I am of the opinion that the African fish trader is not getting his fair share, that the prices of vegetables, chickens, etc., have gone up more than the price of fish. In 1939 the price of a chicken was 1/6 to 1/9, now it is 3/6 to 5/-. The price of fish in 1939 was 4d as compared with 8d now. I do not think that the rise in the price of fish is extraordinary, taking all things into account, motor vehicles, servants, wages, etc.

I think there is room for cold storage facilities if meat could be coupled with fish. Naturally, there would have to be a closer inquiry into the matter, but I think they would be widely used, even on a rented basis. The reason I couple meat with fish is because there is a lot of meat on Zomba market now, and this, like the fish tends to go bad.

I am not responsible for finding food for any of the Town Council's employees, and as far as I know all domestic servants receive a money allowance.

If there was no fish on the market the Africans would not be very happy. There is always a certain amount of fish from Chilwa, but the fish from Fort Johnston is always a great supplement to the food supply. I do not know whether the African fish vendor would take advantage of fish refrigeration if he had to pay for it. He might prefer to sell it at lower rates. I do not think that a private company could run a refrigeration plant in the market: it would either have to be the Government or the Town Council, but I do not think there is enough trade to make a real business out of it. It is outside my province to say whether refrigeration could be run by a co-operative society.

When the Africans finish work in the afternoon many of them call in the market on their way home and buy fish. I agree that if fish could be kept in cold storage a larger amount could be available to these workers. They cannot be in the market to buy when the fish arrives and is still in a good condition.

I would stress the factor of the weather. By and large during the cold weather there is not a lot of wastage, but during the hot months the vendors might only be able to sell about 15 dozen in good condition before the fish became tainted, maybe not unfit for human consumption but enough to make the selective buyer dubious about purchasing. If there was a larger place on the market in which to sell the fish more could be sold before it deteriorated.

I have known the price of fish lowered so that the fish can be sold before it goes bad entirely.

Fresh fish from Chilwa, provided the boys come straight to the market and do not take a long time on the way, is still in good condition when it arrives about 2.30 p.m.

There is very little dried fish from Fort Johnston, but I have no doubt that if it was available there would be a sale for it.

With regard to the African workers, if fish came into the market at 2 o'clock it would still be fresh when they leave work at 3 or 3.30, and I feel that a larger amount could be sold.

Mr. M. Sangaya, of the District Commissioner's Office, was sworn as Interpreter.

Dr. Clarke, being duly sworn, stated:

I am John Hugh Chiswell Clark, and I am the Director of Medical Service in Nyasaland.

I think that the first thing to do is to give you the food value of meat as found in this country and then compare the various forms of fish with it. The most important thing as far as the African is concerned is protein. Meat has 5.2 grammes per ounce. You will see from the table which I produce as Exhibit "A" that fresh fish is very near it, dried fish has about three times as much as meat, and the small whitebait is a valuable source of protein and calcium for growing children. Meat contains 12 milligrams of calcium per ounce, whereas fresh fish has about half and dried fish about twelve times as much. In other words, dried fish is more nutritive than an equal quantity of meat. You can take it that salting and smoking is much the same, the salt preserves. Dehydrated fish is almost the same as the ordinary smoked fish. There are no actual figure available. The figure shown on Exhibit "A" are actually taken from Nyasa fish by Professor Platt of London.

Dried fish is more nutritive than fresh fish because the water has been taken away from it.

One of the biggest troubles among Africans is that they do not get protein. It is stressed by experts that protein is more necessary than vitamins. 1 lb. maize meal has 43 grammes of protein, whereas 1 ½ lbs. cassava has 10 grammes only. In cassava-eating people it is absolutely essential that protein is obtained. Rice has 38 grammes per pound. Nutritionists are agreed that wherever possible half the protein needed should be got from an animal source. The usual amount needed per day is about 80 grammes per day. Half a pound of fresh fish, or quarter of a pound of dried fish, and a pound of maize meal would given a good protein intake.

In working out these figures the bone structure has been included in the case of the small fish, and account has also been taken of the local methods of cooking.

In dried fish the reason for the high calcium content is that the bones are consumed as well as the flesh.

The figures in the table have been worked out on a mixed collection of Lake Nyasa fish. There are lean fish and fat fish, but I have purposely not gone into the details of that. There is very little difference between a lean British fresh water fish and a Lake Nyasa fish. The figures are affair average for all over the world.

If a person is sick you can tell whether he needs protein or not. There are distinctive symptoms in a man who is suffering from high protanaemia. If fish were cheap and the African could buy more they would be getting a good protein intake.

Salted and dried fish are the same. A dried fish has 30 grammes of water in 100 grammes of fish. There is .8 of a gramme of water in 1 ounce, which is very small. A dehydrated 1 ounce portion would have a little more than that. I cannot give actual figures, as there has been no analysis of dehydrated fish.

No work has been done which could give an idea of the general protein deficiency in this country. A lot of work has been done in Southern Rhodesia and Uganda, but we have no laboratories here. Surveys were done ten to fifteen years ago, but the whole aspect of nutrition has changed. A large amount of work was also done in Northern Rhodesia. As far as I know nothing has been done here to show that there is a greater protein deficiency in some places than in others, but where there are cassava-eaters away from the Lake shore there there is protein deficiency.

Maize eaters have about 2 lbs. maize a day, so, although it is better to have half of the protein needed from an animal source, they do get the 86 grammes. It is difficult to discuss this without getting involved in medical technicalities, but fish contains what is known as amino acids, and small beans also contain it.

On the Lake shore there is not a high proportion of Africans suffering from obvious protein deficiency, but I cannot vouch for the Lower Shire. The people round Fort Johnston are very well nourished. I cannot speak for the country as a whole, as I have not been in Nyasaland long enough to go into the question.

With the exception of Barotseland, in Northern Rhodesia there is a deficiency as compared with the areas of Nyasaland which I have visited. I have no knowledge of the protein deficiency in Southern Rhodesia, but I could get the figures.

The column Exhibit "A" headed "B Complex" means nicotini acid, and vitamin B.A. Meat is good, fish not so good, but in the absence of meat could be obtained from certain root vegetables and milk.

Tinned foods are higher in protein content than fresh foods. Regarding calories, they matter up to a point, but they are not as important as protein. From a protein point of view, it is better that fish should be dried, smoked, salted or dehydrated.

I put in as Exhibit "B" a diet scale for Africans engaged by Mtandizi. This is for Nyasaland only. When they get to the asbestos mines their diet is increased by 500 calories for heavy work. A lot of the workers are not in a fit condition when recruited, so they are kept in Nyasaland for a short time on this diet and then are sent to the mines.

I would say that the Lake Shore people get their necessary amount of protein, but there is a lack of it in Lilongwe, Kasungu, Mzimba and Fort Hill. Wherever there is animal trypanosomiasis you will get a deficiency, for there are no cattle which can be eaten.

John Grey, Christian, being duly sworn, stated:

I am John Grey, and I am a fisherman at Lake Chilwa. I do not have any other employment. I use a small type of net, which I make myself. I pay 2/6 for the thread. Sometimes it takes me one day, sometimes two days, sometimes a week to make one, depending on how I am able to get on with it. When it is finished the net is 6 or 7 yards long.

I catch the fish and bring it ashore, where I sell it to the people. In 1925-28 small fish used to sell 8 for 1d. That is chambo. 1935-38 some fish were 3 for 1d, some 2 for 1d, some 1d each. 1946 to the present time sometimes fish 1d each, some 2d each, some 2 for 3d. From a day's fishing, using 20 nets, I might get £1.10s. I have 30 nets.

The weather is bad now at Chilwa, so I do not get so many fish. This last week I got 5s, sometimes 10s, sometimes 15s a day for my catches.

Each of my nets is 6 yds. long and the small openings are about 14 in the width. The price of fish is always the same, even when fish is scarce. That is for chambo. With mlambo it is different, because some are big and some are small. In 1955 it was 4 for 1d, sometimes 5 for 1d, sometimes 2 for 1d, according to size. Kanga is 4d. In 1935 lambo 3 for 2d, 2 for 3d. 1946 to now we sell lambo at 2 for 3d, 4d, 6d, 2/6. The fish which in 1935 cost 2 for 1d are 4d each.

In the olden days a net only lasted for 2 weeks. Now before we use a net we boil it in ordinary water and it lasts for 3 months. During that 3 months it has to be repaired about every 2 weeks.

When people are working in their gardens they do not come to buy fish and we have some left. From January to July the sale of fish is very good, but from the middle of August, when people start making gardens, we do not sell so much. The fish is never wasted, for what we cannot sell we dry. Some people buy the fish just by the shore and some ride to the lake so that they can buy quickly. The people who take fresh fish to the town have to buy it from the shore. As soon as the fish is brought to the shore there are people there to buy it.

Sometimes I catch fish myself and sometimes I have employees, to whom I sometimes pay £1 and sometimes £1.5s. a month. It is difficult to say how much I pay in a year. I just pay them and do not keep account. I pay them a monthly wage. I employ one or two. No one employs more than two. I think I do very well if I get 10s. a day from my catches.

I catch both chambo and kanga, some day only chambo, some days only kanga. All the people who catch fish sell to other people, who bring it into Zomba to sell. The fish that we do not sell fresh is dried at the lake shore. There is more dried fish taken away than fresh fish. Some people buy 12 lbs, some people 6 lbs. Most people round lake prefer fresh fish.

In 1935 we had no difficulties about fishing, but now we have difficulties. There is a small growth, like palm leaves, which floats about in the lake and sweeps the nets away. These growths have been in the lake since 1946. Another difficulty is that sometimes the nets are stolen, and we feel that the Chiefs and native courts ought to put the thieves in prison. When they are only fined, as at present, they find the money for the fine from the nets they have stolen.

There are no Europeans who fish in Lake Chilwa.

Sayenda, Christian, being duly sworn, stated:

I am Sayenda, and I am a fisherman on Lake Chilwa. I do not do any other work. My two sons work with me, but I do not actually employ anybody.

I use a net made a thread. I have 20 nets, each 6 or 7 yds long. I buy the thread and make the net myself. The cost is about 2/6. One makes the net by himself, and it take sometimes 2, sometimes 4 days, depending how quickly he works. If he does nothing else it may take 2 days.

When I catch a fish I sell it to people who take it for selling. Sometimes chambo is 1d, 2d, sometimes 2 for 3d. In 1939 some used to be 4 for 1d, and that which is now 2 for 3d used to cost about 4 for 1d. The smallest mlambo cost 1d, but the price goes up to 2/6, according to size. The one which now coasts 2/6 used to cost 4d.

In January there is plenty rain, and fisherman at the lake catch plenty fish. The prices are very low then. Some sell 6 for 1d, others 3 for 1d. Depending on how much fish I catch, I make sometimes 8s and sometimes 10s a day.

If I do not sell all my fresh fish I dry it and we eat it ourselves. I have never sold dried fish. People at the lake never have to buy fish, as they all catch what they want for themselves.

If I use a net without boiling it lasts a week, but if I boil it it lasts 2 weeks.

More dried fish is taken away than fresh fish.

There are more people fishing now in Lake Chilwa than there were some years ago. More money is being made by fishing now than there used to be, both because the price of fish has risen and more people are buying.

I fish about 3 times a week and make about 10s each time. I do not know about the other fishermen. I can only speak for myself.

A.G. Salemahomed, Mahommedan, being duly sworn, stated:

I am A.G. Salemahomed, and I trade in fish on Zomba market. I get the fish from Mr. C. Yiannakis. Sometimes I get 100 dozen and sometimes 120 dozen. I get the fish nearly every day. The driver of the lorry tells me how much I can have. I get 100 dozen in the cool weather, but in the hot weather I only get 20 to 25 dozen, because the fish gets hot and I only buy good fish. In the hot weather I can say how much I want but this time of the year it depends on how much he can let me have. At this time of year I could get rid of more than 100 dozen if I was able to get the fish. I could sell every day 200 dozen.

The time I start selling depends on how early the lorry arrives. Sometimes it comes at 1 a.m., sometimes 2 o'clock, sometimes 5 o'clock, etc. I start selling as early as 5 o'clock, and finish about 1 o'clock or 2 o'clock.

I pay 6s a dozen for the fish, and sell them at 7d or 8d each. Sometimes there are small fish, and I sell them as low as 5d. Sometimes I drop the prices of fish when I am afraid that it might go bad. Sometimes I drop the price to 3d to get rid of it. This happens very seldom. The time it did my friend also had fish from Fort Johnston, and there were many traders in with fish from Lake Chilwa, and we had to drop the price.

My friend gets his fish from Messrs. Malachias Bros. We are the only two people who buy fish from Fort Johnston to sell on the market. My friend is Mr. Jussab Ebrahim Patel. We do not often have the fish go bad. If there was some form of refrigeration on the market I would be willing to pay a reasonable rent to use it so that my fish would not go bad.

I do not do any other work, but make my living by selling fish. I dispose of most of my fish, but sometimes I have to drop the price. I sometimes sell dried fish, and some the dried fish I dry myself when I have not sold all my fresh fish and what is left is not going bad. Sometimes I have to throw away some of my fish because it is bad, but this does not happen very often. I have been selling fish for 3 years, but I used to have a shop, which I closed on 1st February this year, and have been selling fish only since then.

I do not get much fish during the cold weather because at the Lake they do not catch much and I do not have much to sell. That applies to both Mr. Yiannakis and Messrs. Malachias Bros., as well as to the fishermen.

Depending on the time of the year I pay 4s a dozen, 5s a dozen, 4/6, sometimes 6s. When it is cold I pay 6s. I have an arrangement with Mr. Yiannakis to pay a different price for different months. Most people come to buy fish in the morning about 8 o'clock, and mostly people buy fish on Monday and Saturday. When I buy 100 dozen, by 8 o'clock I have probably sold about 30 to 40 dozen. In the hot weather, when I only take 20 to 25 dozen I shall have disposed of them by about 10 o'clock. If the price were to go up and I had to pay 1d extra for each fish I would still remain in the business. I pay the driver by cheque each time fish is delivered to me. Sometimes I cannot get fish. For the past 4 days there has been none.

If there was no other fish coming to the market I could sell 300 dozen a day, and at the end of the month perhaps more than 300 dozen, at present prices.

Jussab Ebrahim Patel, Mohammedan, being duly sworn:

I am Jussab Ebrahim Patel, and I sell fish on Zomba market. I buy the fish from Messrs. Malachias Bros. at Fort Johnston. I pay 6s a dozen and buy sometimes 100 dozen, sometimes 50 dozen, sometimes 60 dozen. At this time of the year I buy 100 dozen. This month I have bought 50 dozen, because there is a shortage of fish in the Lake. I buy once or twice a week. The driver tells me how much I can have, I am not able to say how much I want. In January and February I take 10 to 15 dozen, sometimes 20 to 25 dozen, because it is hot, and I pay 4s a dozen for them.

This time of year I buy for 6s a dozen and sell at 8d each. Sometimes when I have small fish I sell at less than 8d. Sometimes I get small fish, sometimes large ones. If the fish begins to go bad I drop the price so that they will sell quickly. Some days I start selling fish at 6 o'clock or 7 o'clock, other days I start selling fish at 6 o'clock or 7 o'clock, other days not until I start selling at 6 o'clock I could sell 100 dozen by 12 o'clock. Sometimes I dispose of 120 dozen, and in the hot weather the most I have disposed of is 20, 25, 30 dozen. That took from 6 o'clock until 9 o'clock. If there was no Chilwa fish and I was the only person selling on the market I could sell from 150 to 200 dozen each day, on any day of the month. From the 1st – 10th, 200 dozen; 11-20th, 150 dozen; 21st-31st, 100 dozen.

Sometimes my fish comes on the same day as Mr. Salimahomad, sometimes on different days. We buy from different people. We cannot arrange to have it on different days for we would not know whether it would come or not.

In the hot weather when the fish are plentiful I am afraid to buy a lot because they go bad. If a cold storage room were built I would be willing to pay rent to use it so that I could put my fish into it.

I do not dry fish. If it goes bad I throw it away. I do not have the place where I can dry it. During the hot weather the lorry comes early, sometimes as early as 3 o'clock, and the fish looks good when it arrives. The fish has never arrived in such a condition that I have bought none.

On the days when both lots of fish arrive, we start selling at 8d each, but when it gets to about 9 o'clock and we have not disposed of much then we drop the price. We think that if we leave it at the same price it might go bad. I agree with my friend. If there was a cold storage room where I could keep my fish fresh there would be no need to drop the price.

L.G. Nkhwafi, Christian, being duly sworn, stated:

I am Laison Grant Nkhwafi, and I live in Makungula Village, about 3 miles from Zomba. I buy fish from the Chilwa fishermen and sell it in Zomba market. When I have bought the fish I bring it to the market on my bicycle. I buy chambo, mlambo, small fish: whatever is there I buy. I like trading in chambo and mlambo best. I deal only in fresh fish.

At this time of the year I pay 3d for a big fish, smaller ones are 2 for 3d, 1d each. I spend £1 to £1.10s each time I buy a fish, it all depends on how much is caught. My basket holds an average of £1.5s worth and I get that in one day. If many people want fish I sell all in my basket the same day, and I usually finish the same day. I sell the fish I pay 2 or 3d for at 3d each.

I choose the best fish when I buy, so mostly the fish does not go bad before I have sold it. Sometimes, when it is getting late and fish might go bad, I drop the price, but not many people buy when it is late, so I take the rest of the fish to my house. Sometimes I dry it and sometimes I bring it again the following morning to the market.

Normally, I go to the lake every day for fish, but if I do not feel well or the weather is bad, then I do not go. There is no particular day when I sell more fish than on any other, but if there is no fish on the market we sell very well.

During the hot weather when there is plenty of fish the prices at the lake go down. I would not say there is a particular month when the prices drop, but when the fish is plentiful it is cheaper. The prices are 1d, 2 for 1d, 3 for 2d. The ones I buy for 1d I sell for 2d.

In January, February, March there is plenty of fish at the lake, but from now up to July fish is very scarce. When there is not plenty of fish in the lake we buy in smaller quantities. In January, February and March there is more fish on the market, and when there is plenty of fish selling is more difficult. At these times I don't sell all my £1 5s worth. Sometimes I only sell a quarter, maybe less than a quarter. When I do not sell all my fish I do not throw it away. If a cold storage room were built on the market I would be willing to pay a small sum to be able to use it and leave my fish there when it was not sold.

When I take fish home and dry them I bring them back to the market and charge 4d for them, the same price as they were fresh. I like selling fresh fish because I am used to selling it. There are, I suppose, many people who sell dried fish in the market.

There are three in my village who sell fish. We all sell in Zomba. No one goes to Namadzi. If there are plenty of fish in Zomba there are plenty in Namadzi.

Africans like both dried and fresh fish. Some people buy both fresh and dried at the same time.

When we buy from the fisherman at the lake, the biggest size chambo is 2d, and it is sold for 4d on the market. The chambo from Fort Johnston is slightly bigger than the one from Chilwa. There are very many selling fish from Lake Chilwa on the market here, possibly about 20. If I bought only 1s worth of fish I would not bring to the market, but I would if I bought 5s worth. But I always buy between £1 and £1 10s worth. I would not like to say how much the other traders buy. If there was no fish in Lake Chilwa I think I would go to Fort Johnston to buy.

I do not employ anyone, and the main expense is my bicycle. Sometimes my tyres only last 3 months. It depends on the type of tyre. Other types last 6 months or 9 months.

It was agreed to ask Mr. Coombes to check the number of baskets on the market.

J.J. Kawajo, Christian, being suly sworn, stated:

I am Jonas Joseph Kawajo, and I buy fish from Lake Chilwa and sell it in Zomba. Monday to Friday I sell on the market and on Saturday all my fish is bought by the African Hospital. I bring my fish in 4 baskets, and I employ men to work for me. I go with the 4 men to Lake Chilwa and buy the fish myself. It is loaded onto the bicycles and we come to Zomba. I watch the selling of the fish. We do this 3 or 4 times a week. I buy £5 each time. At this time of year when fish is scarce I pay 3d for big chambo. Others are 2 for 3d and 3 for 2d. On the market I charge 6d for the big chambo, others 4d. When I sell to African Hospital I have to sell by weight, and I get 7d a pound for it. I think I gain by selling to African Hospital, as the hospital takes all my fish, whereas on the market sometimes I do not sell all my fish, or I have to sell it cheaper. That is in January, February and March when there is plenty of fish. The prices are lower at the lake then.

The time taken to sell the 4 baskets of fish depends on whether the Indians have any fish or not. If we arrive at 11 o'clock it takes up to about 4.30. If the Indians have their fish sometimes I only sell 3 baskets. The other basket I take back and dry. I deal in fresh fish only, and only sell dried fish when I have not sold all the fresh fish.

I pay my employees £1 10s a month. They use my bicycles. I have to replace the tyres on each bicycle about 3 times a year. A bicycle lasts about 2 ½ years, after that it is no use.

I think Africans like both dried and fresh fish. If a cold storage room were built on the market I would be willing to pay a small sum to be able to use it so that my fish would keep fresh when I had not sold it all.

If I buy £5 worth of fish at Lake Chilwa I get about £8 for it on the market. At the African hospital I get about £10.

Sometimes dried fish sells at the same price as fresh fish, but if a fish is dried when it is going off a bit the price drops.

If I bring fresh fish to the market at 12 noon and sell what I have paid 1d for at the lake for 2d, if later on I drop the price I drop it to 1d, the same as I paid for it.

Lake Chilwa is near Zomba. There are some people who bring fish from Fort Johnston, as much as 100 dozen each person, which makes our business of selling fish very difficult.

Another African fish trader supplies the African Hospital as I do, but he delivers on Wednesday.

Present at the meeting were Daudi James, William Makawa and another African, all trades in fresh fish on Zomba market. The Chairman asked if they were in agreement with evidence they had heard the two witnesses give. They all said they were.

The next witnesses were employees in Government and spoke from the consumers' point of view. There were 3 clerks and 1 messenger, and Mr. Mwenifuma spoke on behalf of the clerks.

Being duly sworn, Mr. Mwenifumba stated:

I am Abraham Linga Mwenifuma, and I am a clerk at the Public Works Department, Zomba, My salary is £336 a year, I come from Karonga, and I am fond of fish. I have a wife and 5 children with me here in Zomba. I am accustomed to buying fish and I prefer it fresh, as do the rest of my family. My wife does the shopping. We prefer fish from Fort Johnston rather than from Lake Chilwa. If Fort Johnston fish does not arrive we are prepared to buy Lake Chilwa fish or to buy dried fish. Sometimes we manage to get enough fish.

Some months it is difficult to get fish, roughly from May to October, even from Lake Chilwa.

My wife buys fish 3 times a week and pays 2/6 to 3/6 each time. It is chambo, but I do not know how many. Sometimes the fish from Fort Johnston comes in very good condition, sometimes it is bad. I have no comments about the fish from Lake Chilwa. If some better arrangements were made that the fish arrived in good condition always, even if it meant that my wife had to spend 3/6 to 4/- a day I would be willing to pay it.

Sometimes when my wife goes to the market the fish has not come, so she goes home and returns to the market later on. We prefer fresh fish to dried fish.

We buy 3 times a week, and also buy meat, beans and vegetables. We eat more fish than meat. We are uncomfortable when we cannot find fish.

When my wife goes to market to buy fish, sometimes it has gone off a little by standing in the market.

I prefer Fort Johnston fish for various reasons. They are bigger, and, being a Lake shore man, I like the taste better. We buy fish because we like it. Even when there is meat we still like fish. There are days for meat and days for fish. Even if the price went down we would not buy any more fish.

James Rodney Maunga, clerk in the Public Works Department, Zomba, agreed with what Mr. Mwenifumba said. His salary is £336, and he has a wife and 7 children.

G.B. Magwero, cleark in the District Commissioner's Office, did not agree with everything Mr. Mwenifumba said. He was duly sworn, and stated:

I am Garrison Boatman Magwero, and I am a tax clerk in the District Commissioner's office. My salary is £216 a year, and I have a wife and 4 children. I like fresh fish, but I also like dried fish. I buy approximately 2 or 3 times a week. What I spend depends on the market. If fish is plentiful I

do not spend much, if it is scarce I spend more. Sometimes I buy 2/6, and sometimes only 2/-. I always buy Chilwa fish. I get 5 of Chilwa ones.

I sometimes buy dried fish for a week perhaps once or twice, but we eat it right away because we are afraid of flies. I buy dried fish even when there is fresh fish because I like the change of taste.

I prefer Fort Johnston fish.

My home is in Mlanje, and we did not get fish from the Lower Shire when I was there. If I wanted fish there I would buy at the nearest market, at Chonde. The fish came from Fort Johnston by lorry and some from Lake Chilwa. I never buy fish from Malombe, because several times I have bought it but have had to throw it away because the taste was not good.

There are times of the year when it is colder and we cannot get fish.

Duncan Fletcher, being duly sworn, stated:

I am a messenger in the District Commissioner's Office, and I get \$48 a year. I have a wife and 4 children. My home is Ulumba, Zomba district. I do not eat much fish. I buy it twice a week. Three of my children are with me, one is married. I spend 2/- each time I buy fish, which buys three Fort Johnston fish. Sometimes I buy Chilwa fish. Most times I prefer fresh fish, and I prefer Fort Johnston fish to that from Chilwa. I only buy twice a week because I do not have sufficient money. If I had more money I would buy more fish more days a week. When I do not get fish I sometimes eat vegetables and sometimes beans. I cannot afford meat, so do not buy it. If my wife went to the market and there was a choice of Fort Johnston fish and Chilwa fish, I think she would buy Fort Johnston fish, because the size is good and also the taste is nice. If the Fort Johnston fish is not there she would buy from Chilwa.

That concluded the evidence for the Zomba meeting. It was decided to hold the next meeting at Fort Johnston on the 8th June. Summonses were to be issued to Mr. Sanson, Fisheries Officer; Sinclair Bros.; G.H. Khan, Amos Charles; Phillip Guedella. AN advertisement was to be inserted in the "Nyasaland Times", "Bwalo" and "Msimbi".

The meeting ended at 5 30 p.m.