

Mrs. Campbell and Mr. Grimmer

and incidentally, while on this, I might mention that the Rural Licensing Board always inspect the premises of these people there and insist on a decent store being put up. Fairly decent accommodation exists, involving some small amount of capital.

Do you know anything about the financial side of these shops ?-- No. (Mrs. Campbell : I do not know anything about them; they are all run by Natives.

With your experience of this township, would you say that the establishment of similar townships in other parts of the country would be justified, on more or less the same lines ?-- (Mr. Grimmer): I do think so, because they are developing a civic pride in the township, A lot of Natives from elsewhere want to live there as well. It has almost become a health resort and it has popularised itself for a great number of years. They take a big interest in the affairs of the township and they seem to be very happy there.

Can you give us any idea of the proportion of the residents there who maintain themselves out of the township who render services in the township ?-- We might be able to find out how many of these people are licensed as taxi drivers and how many people hold other licenses.

Most occupations have to be licensed ?-- Yes. I think that would be the best way to get at it. The rest of the people have to come into town to work in shops or as washer-women. As a matter of fact my washerwoman lives there and she complained to me about the cost of getting out there. I think the Municipality of Johannesburg should consider the question of running a bus to help these people getting in and out, -- even a Native tram? even if it did not go right out to the township, because a lot of them come out to town and

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render service to the White residents of Johannesburg. It would help them a lot if some means of transport were provided.

Could we take it that a majority of the people there work in Johannesburg?-- Yes.

CHAIRMAN: There is a point which a Native delegation wanted to raise?-- (Mr. Grimmer): Yes, they are here now. They wanted to point out that I was mistaken in my statement that the Natives were opposed to the suggestion of a system of rating. Perhaps I made an error in that. They are anxious to get an assessment rate fixed, with a view to raising further revenue for the improvement of the township.

This rating system which you consulted Mr. Wilson about, was that on the value of the stands, plus improvements?-- It would have to be on the same basis as that of the Johannesburg rating under the Municipal Ordinance. We would have to arrange for a valuation roll to be prepared and passed, and the value of the stands and improvements shown separately. The provision of rating in the Transvaal is that site values in the townships must be assessed first, and it needs a special resolution afterwards to tax improvements. Since the institution of that, there has been no rating of improvements in the Transvaal.

MR. LUCAS: In some parts of the Transvaal, they still rate improvements?-- I am just talking of the hole of the Reef now, and whether or not we pass special resolutions to tax improvements in addition to the sites, would depend on the requirements of the place.

CHAIRMAN:
Mr. Wilson's scheme did not go into that?-- Mr. Wilson is a valuer who is employed by all the towns. The framing of a roll needs a lot of experience. We merely got him to do the

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preliminary work; the rest devolves on the Health Committee to effect the assessment, based on the valuation shewn in the roll.

MR. LUCAS: Your township was originally laid out as an European township ?-- (Mrs. Campbell): Yes.

And, in 1912, it was decided to sell to Natives ?-- Yes. (Mr. Grimmer): The Natives want to emphasize a point in the statement that they think the time has arrived when Natives should be appointed in the Pass Office and in the Native Affairs Department and their claims should be specially considered.

Is there a pass office in the township ?- No.

At this stage, Messrs. Samuel Wilhelm Meager and Jeremiah Klain Morupe, joined Mrs. Campbell and Mr. Grimmer, as representing Native residents in the Alexandra Township.

CHAIRMAN: There are two points which you wish to speak to, I understand; first of all, the Alexandra Township and the interests of the Natives there, and secondly, the question of trading by Natives in the township ?-- (Mr. Meager) Yes, sir.

Will you take the township question apart from the trading question first ?- In reference to the township residents, I want to say that we want the township to be managed by Natives only. As this township was set out for Native purposes, we thought it was time that the Government should recollect that this township should be given entirely to the Natives, with the inclusion of the present nominees of the Government and the Township Company.

MR. LUCAS: But you have that now, have you not ?-- Yes, but the principal point is that we want the township to

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and Native Witnesses

be declared a corporate body. We cannot hold any fixed property in the township today as we are not recognised as a corporate body.

CHAIRMAN: You want the township to be governed by the Natives and representatives of the Township Company?-- Yes.

In addition to those, at present you have certain officials of the Native Affairs Department, and you object to having them there?-- (Mr. Grimmer): This probably is the result of a Commission appointed by the Government some time ago, to enquire into the question as to whether they should make a change in the management and the Natives strenuously fought against any deprivation of the powers of the Natives themselves to rule themselves, and they asked, if anything, for an extension of these powers. I think the point the witness wants to make is that the withholding by the Government of the right to be a corporate body shews a want of confidence in the Natives there, which they do not think is justified and which they want removed, and they ask that the views of the Government should rather be such as to place more confidence in them and that the Government, if anything, should extend more control to them. (Mr. Meager): The point is this: after two years, we should be able to elect any White man to be ex officio a member of the board. We want to be able to nominate any White man we want. He may be a man from the Native Affairs Department, or anyone else.

MR. LUCAS: The objection is not to have a White man there, but the question is how he should be chosen?-- Yes.

CHAIRMAN: What is your next point?-- I think Mr. Grimmer expressed it. We want the Municipality to sympathise with us and give us some cheaper transport facilities. All our residents are employed daily in Johannesburg. Most of our

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residents go to Johannesburg, our women have to go and do the washing and they have to go by these private taxis which charge them excessively. We consider that the Municipality should supply us with cheaper transport facilities. We once approached the Railways and asked that they should give us buses, but they found they could not do so. Nowadays, we are very often stuck.

Another point which we want to raise is this. We hope the Commission will recommend to the Government that the Natives who have bought land in the townships should be recognised as being entitled to an exemption pass as landowners. At present, they can only get exemption for 12 months. But the trouble is there is no one to give them special passes if they want to go out at night. The exemption permit which they have is only available for travelling to Johannesburg and not for the rest of the Reef, and that causes considerable hardship.

Another point is this. We appeal to this Commission to see that we shall get a Government school in the township. At present there is only a Coloured Government school, but there is no Government school for the Natives.

MR. LUCAS: Are there any mission schools?-- Yes.
And you want a Government school?-- Yes.

CHAIRMAN: How many mission schools are there?--
There are four mission schools.

Which churches have schools there?-- The Roman Catholic, then the Church of England has a school there, the Wesleyan Church and the Dutch Reformed Church.

There is another question we want to raise. The Industrial Council has drafted some regulations that all shops on the Reef, -- which may include townships as well, should

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control ---- (Mr. Grimmer) They find that the agreements are irksome, because of the times when the shops have to be opened and closed. You see, in these townships, these people come back late from their work and, if the shops have to close early, it is very awkward for these men and these women to make their purchases.

MR. LUCAS: Has the Industrial Council Agreement for Native trading been made to apply to Alexandra Township --- has there been a special proclamation by the Minister that this applies to you?-- (Mr. Meager): No.

Then it will not apply to the Natives and I do not know that there is any proposal that it should?-- (Mr. Grimmer) I have come across several cases of charges having been brought against Natives there under the Shop Hours Act on account of shops being open after six o'clock in the evening. These men come back late from their work and, if they have to buy things, they are now prevented from doing so by the Shop Hours Ordinance

You do not think that the Shop Hours Ordinance applies to the Township?-- No.

What is the distance of Alexandra Township from the Municipal boundary?-- It is about a mile and a quarter.

Yes, then the Shop Hours Ordinance would apply there?-- Yes, we are told that it does.

CHAIRMAN: You do not want the Industrial Council Agreement to apply to you?-- (Mr. Meager): That is so.

What difficulties would you be under if it were applied to you?-- All the transactions of business would be ruled by the Council and there would also be the question of the high wages to be paid to assistants. They are too high for a Native shop to pay; they could not do it.

What do you mean by saying that all the transactions

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of business would be governed by them. Are you referring to the difficulties of having to keep registers and so on?-- Yes. We would find that very difficult. We object to that and if we are to come under the law in that way, the whole business of the storekeepers in the township will have to be transacted by the Secretary of the Township Board. We do not want that and it will make it very difficult for us.

Do you mean that, under the Council Agreement you would have to keep a register as to when a man came on duty and how long he remained on duty and so on?-- Yes, that is so. (Mr. Morupe): Our people come very late from town and, if the shops are closed at six o'clock, it makes it difficult for them. If the shops are closed when they get back, it means that they can get nothing, so we want that our shops should be given extra time to keep open.

Yes, that is the Shop Hours Ordinance, but the other witness said that he objected to the Industrial Council Agreement, because, under that, the control of the businesses there would be in the hands of the Secretary of the Township's Board?-- Yes, we do not want that.

What are the specific things which you object to?-- Well, our shops there are too small for that.

Are they all small shops?-- Yes. The Native starts with £20 to £30, and we are unable to pay wages from £2.10.- to £5.10.- per week.

You mean, the wages are higher than what you can pay?-- Yes, very much higher than we can pay, and we do not want to have anything to do with that sort of thing. That is why we say that we do not want to come under the Agreement.

What wages are paid to shop assistants now in your

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township ?-- We pay £1 per week and £1.10.- Some people have their wives assisting them in their shop.

Yes, but how much do you pay to a man who is hired ?-- £1 to £1.10.-.

Is the £1 for a beginner -- is that what you pay to a piccanin ?-- We usually have boys of about 20 years of age.

Do they get any food ?-- Yes, those who work for £1 get food.

They get their food from their employer ?-- Yes.

And is the best wage £1.10.- per week ?-- Yes.

And you object to having to pay higher wages ?-- Yes.

Are there any other points in the agreement which you find impossible in your case ?-- We have Native eating houses there and those eating houses should be allowed to sell on Sundays, just as in town. And butcheries, too. The eating houses should be given extended time until 11 o'clock at night.

Have not the eating houses got the right today to be open on Sundays ?-- Yes, they are allowed to open on Sundays but they have to close at 7.30 in the evening, and we want to get an extension until about 11 o'clock at night.

CHAIRMAN: Now, the keeping of a shop hours' register has been mentioned. Have you any difficulty about the shop hours' register ?-- (Mr. Grimmer): I think this agreement generally provides for holidays and such things, which, of course, are inconsistent with a Native township. They feel that agreements of this sort, if you have them at all, should be considered specially for the township and they feel that special clauses should be put in. It follows that conditions applying to Johannesburg shops and shop assistants would not apply to a little township like that, both as regards hours

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and wages, and also as regards holidays. In fact, almost everything. Hardly any point brought up in these agreements could apply equally to Natives in the same way as it would apply to the town.

CHAIRMAN: It seems that the whole of the Shop Hours Ordinance would have to be amended for a place like that?-- Yes, I think they would have to have special legislation for such townships. These townships should be considered quite apart.

MR. LUCAS: In any event, Natives are not considered at all in these agreements?-- No, their conditions are quite different and they are just swung into it. (Mr. Maruke): I want to complain of the prices which the Native trader has to pay for the commodities which he has to stock for his business.

Do you say that you have to pay more than the European has to pay?-- Yes, sir, that is so.

Why should that be so?-- Well, we buy in small quantities, because we have not got the money to buy in large quantities.

But does not the same thing apply to the small European shopkeepers?-- No, this is entirely for Native trade. The intrinsic value of these things is much less than we are compelled to pay in buying.

Why is that, and how can we stop it?-- (Mr. Grimmer) The complaint is that the wholesalers do not give them the consideration and do not give them the same rebate that they give to the White traders. That is a serious grievance with them. (Mr. Maruke): If you go to an European or an Indian store and you buy these articles there, you pay less for them than I can possibly sell them for.

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CHAIRMAN: That is one of the drawbacks of trying to trade without capital ?-- Yes, it is.

MR. LUCAS: Are the traders in Alexandra Township able to get credit, or are they obliged to pay cash for their stock ?-- No, sir, they have to pay cash.

CHAIRMAN:
Where do the Alexandra traders get their supplies from; do they get them from the wholesalers or from the retail shops

?-- They get them from the wholesalers.

MR. LUCAS:
And do you pay cash?-- Yes.

Then you should get lower prices than the people who buy on credit ?-- It comes to the same thing. They collect their money every week and they do not give you a chance to sell your stock.

Have the traders in Alexandra tried joining together and buying a larger quantity of stuff and, in that way, get lower prices ?-- We had a meeting on that question, but we did not come to any agreement. A very important point, of course, is that our people are very poor. Our Native traders have very great difficulties and they are struggling to make a living and the result is that a trader is compelled to buy goods which are inferior. I have a number of articles here which I should like to shew to the Commission. (Witness produces articles of groceries, etc.) A loaf of bread, which is consumed by a person, -- that is, a loaf made from this flour, does not benefit the person as much as the loaf made from a better flour. The Natives have many difficulties to get over.

CHAIRMAN: Do you buy your bread from the bakers in Johannesburg ?-- Yes, we do.

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Do they deliver bread out at Alexandra Township ?--
Yes, they come right out.

That loaf of bread which you have there is a one
pound loaf ?-- Yes, sir.

What does that cost you delivered in Alexandra Town-
ship ?-- It costs us 2/- a dozen. But the Europeans can sell
cheaper than that.

MR. LUCAS: There is a difference in the prices
charged by different bakers. Perhaps you buy from a baker
who sells more expensively ?-- No, sir. The Europeans sell
this bread for 2d a loaf, and we must do the same.

You pay 2d for it, too ?-- Yes, we pay 2d a loaf
when we buy it, -m2/- a dozen, and there is no profit on it.

And these other articles which you have there ?--
The profit is very small for the same reason. In some cases
there is hardly any profit at all.

DR. ROBERTS: What about are your takings ?-- From
about £2 to £3 a day.

Would that be the average ?-- Yes, sir. Sometimes
it is less.

And sometimes more ?-- Yes, sometimes a little more,
but not much.

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