

RECORD OF THE MEETING OF THE COMMISSION OF INQUIRY INTO THE FISHING INDUSTRY HELD AT THE RECREATION CENTRE, LILONGWE ON THE 21ST AND 22ND AUGUST, 1956.¹

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.

The meeting opened at 9 a.m. on Tuesday, the 21st August.

Derek James Bradfield, being duly sworn, stated:

I am the Senior Agricultural Supervisor, Mzimba District, and I live in Mzimba.

In the Mzimba African market approximately two to three baskets of fish, of about 100 lbs. each, are on sale weekly. It is local fish from the Rukuru River, and rather less frequently fish is brought from Kota Kota District. Occasionally fish is brought from Fort Johnston, but not very often. The fish from Kota Kota is brought mainly between December and February. Mzimba is 100 miles away from Kota Kota, and 360 miles from Fort Johnston. The fish is all dried, and is brought by bicycle boys.

The approximate price for the dried chambo from Kota Kota is 9d for a fish about the size of my hand. At the time I visited the market last week, one man from Kota Kota brought fish by carrier to Katete and then by bus. It cost him approximately £9 to get 200 lbs. of fish to Mzimba. When I spoke to him he had sold about 150 lbs., since I was informed of the Commission sitting there have been no supplies of fish in the market, so I have been unable to investigate exactly what the normal situation is. There was no one else there beside this man, and he had been there 2 days. He expected to sell the rest of his fish the day I spoke to him. There was not a great demand for his fish. I think he had small ones, nsipa and mlamba, and generally there is not so much demand for that as there is for the larger chambo.

The fish that comes from Rukuru is mainly nsipa. It goes fairly quickly, a normal basket is sold in a morning. The main complaints from the Africans are that the fish is rather expensive, but that is possibly due to the majority of people in Mzimba township who are keen to buy fish are

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.

probably people from the Lake shore or Zomba or Lilongwe who are used to fish in their diet normally.

In 5 years there has been no fresh fish sold in the market, not even from Rukuru. No fish comes from Nkata Bay. It is 110 miles to Nkata Bay by road, possibly about 40 – 50 by village path. There is a regular bus service, and also lorries come through regularly. Being the port, majority of heavy supplies come through Nkata Bay for Mzuzu and Mzimba.

Regarding the attitude of the ordinary villager to fish, I think in the past there has been the general Ngonia prejudice against fish, which I think now is changing. I would say that meat is plentiful and easily obtained than in most other districts, and as a result there is not the same need for fish. They themselves do not feel the same need for it, but from personal experience I would say that their diet at the moment is not sufficiently high in protein either of meat or fish.

In the larger villages where there are trading centres, such as Loudon and Ekwendeni, and consequently a concentration of the population, one would expect the demand for fish to be great, but fish is very rarely seen in these markets.

The European population of Mzimba is 40 adults, and approximately 10 – 20 children, depending on the school holidays.

We have started importing from Lake Victoria chambo, filleted and frozen, flown from Mbeya to Mzimba. It is approximately 5/- a lb, with 6-8 fillets to the lb. Previously we were obtaining fish from Lilongwe from the local stores which was imported from the U.K. that was just under 5/- a lb. We found it compared in price with Chambo from Lake Nyasa at 1/- a fish. When filleted there was little to choose between them. In addition to that, just recently London and Blantyre have also been importing Cape Haddock and Scotch Kippers. That is presumably outside the scope of the fresh fish aspect. It is 3/6 a lb, and I believe it come from the Cold Storage Commission in Lusaka.

The demand in Mzimba is mostly from those living in the township, although there are villagers who come in to sell their produce, and having sold it buy fish to take home with them.

From December to February there is quite a lot of dried fish on the market, but this is the bad time of year.

W.N.L.A have a depot in Mzimba, and they have had some unfortunate experiences with getting dried fish in bulk for their staff and recruits, and as a result they say they take no interest in the supply of fish at all. Some time ago they arranged for weekly supplies, about 40 lbs. from Fort Johnson or Salima through Dowa. When the fish arrived in Mzimba some of it was maggotty and some was rotten, and they decided not to continue with the supply. I think it was dried fish. It came up from Dowa by W.N.L.A lorry. The representative there made arrangements: the Mzimba representative knew that he was getting fish from the Dowa head office, and he did not know really how it was obtained. I do not know how long ago that is. I think the objection was that it had not been properly smoked or dried and it was still a little bit green, as it were, and had not survived the travelling.

The Cape haddock and Scotch kippers are eaten by Europeans very largely, probably 95%, but it is only in the experimental stage. It has been coming in for 3 weeks only, and will probably take a little time to get going. I can only make a conjecture only, but some of the Africans might be interested in it at its present price. However, it is something new, and they are rather

conservative and somewhat intractable as to what they will take. I don't think the price would put them off. The haddock is slightly salted.

I think that if the supplies of chambo were increased people would be prepared to still pay 9d, even though they think at the moment that that price is high, but I think that for the smaller type of fish the market is pretty well saturated.

Mzimba is the largest market in the district, apart from Mzuzu, which is probably somewhat similar. I should say that the position in Mzimba and Mzuzu is very similar, but probably slightly better supply in Mzuzu. It is much closer to Nkata Bay. Normally fresh fish is not on sale. Some Europeans go down and fish themselves or have friends in Nkata Bay who get fresh fish for them. There are a few fishermen who might do it as a trading business, but not to the extent that the fishermen do at Salima and Kota Kota and Fort Johnston.

People normally buy 1 lb. a week of the chambo fillets at 5/- a lb. Not everyone is taking it. Bachelors who are frequently out and those who have no refrigerator do not take it.

I think W.N.L.A. would take fish if they could receive it in good condition, and I think Mtandizi would do the same. Between them they would probably take 40 lbs. a week of dried or 60 lbs. of fresh fish.

The price of meat in Mzimba is 9d a lb. It is plentiful except during the rainy season. What happens is that the owner brings in his beast for slaughter. If it is raining heavily he does not bring it, and we are rather stumped then, and rely on poultry. Quite a number of people get a weekly joint from Naperi, Blantyre or from Lilongwe Butchery by air as a safeguard. The Africans in Mzimba eat quite a large amount of meat, but the demand in the district will increase as the economic position improves as people get higher purchasing power.

I do not think anyone has tried to market any fish from fish ponds.

Mbowe has not got a dam, but there is one 25 miles south of Mzuzu which has been stocked with fish. We are building dams to help conserve village water supplies, and we hope to be able to stock these. It would be purely conjecture to say what affect they will have on the fish supply.

Reading through the minutes of the Natural Resources Board for the Northern Province of the meeting in June last year it would appear that the fish ponds which have been established have been successful. Purely as a personal opinion, an extension of them might help a great deal in improving the fish position in the Northern Province. I give you an extract:

“Mr. Griffkins said that the first problem that he had had to solve was whether tilapia would live at Nchenachena and, secondly, if they did, would they grow and reproduce. He said that this had been proved and that now, a year after he had put in 152 chambo, he had over 10,000. He emphasised, however, that this was entirely due to constant supervision and that unless adequate supervision was available the result would be not a fish farm but merely a dam with some fish in it.”

I understand that the position is that courses were being started for fish farmers, but at the moment the Fish Ranger is not Nchenachena, and it is not quite certain when the courses will start.

I was in the Central Province from the end of 1948 to the end of November, 1955, stationed at Nambuna. Fish used to reach the market there mainly during the tobacco marketing season

when there was a considerable amount of cash available, and then there were supplies from Mid-May until mid-September. During the rest of the year not a great deal of fish produced for sale. Mainly dried fish. There was only a small community at Nambuna, mostly employees of stores, and during the tobacco off-season the villagers were not prepared to spend money on fish. Normally they used up most of their cash fairly soon after the marketing was finished and then they lived at a subsistence level for the rest of the year.

Keeness to buy fresh fish is increasing. In the last year local African bought small trucks and lorries and did from time to time run in loads of fresh fish, which sold very quickly. The supply was nothing like up to the demand. It was very irregular. If there was a regular supply on a known day more people would turn up and there would be no difficulty in disposing of a larger amount.

The majority of the fish in the market during the tobacco season was dried, brought by people from either Fort Johnston or Salima who carry fish up to the Dedza area and then probably get a bus as far as Lilongwe and walk or cycle from there. The fish is in baskets, and the prices vary from 3d for a small fish about the size of my hand to 1/- for one as big as two hands. During the season there were always people selling dried fish. Usually up to 20 people selling, and they would take an average of 1 or 2 days to sell. It depended on what kind of a year it was for the tobacco growers. If it was not a good year they would not be keen on buying fish.

There was a considerable amount of meat available at the market. Notwithstanding that, the fish sold. Meat was 8d a lb. An average of 3 – 4 beasts killed a day for about 3 months.

During June and July about 1,500 people daily came to the market, and for the next 2 months between 800 – 1,000 daily. The same person would visit the market once a week. Later on in the season, when the bulk of the tobacco was sold, they would come in more frequently. They wait until they have sold most of their tobacco before spending any great amount of money. I would not like to say anything more definite that that when they came to the market they bought wither meat or fish. The average price for fresh fish was 1/- to 1/3.

I would say that Nambuna market was typical of the larger markets, but I have not had much experience of other markets.

Regarding Rukuru, there have been some attempts made to interest villagers there in fishing, but without any great success. Also Lake Kazuni, and the report did mention that people were not very interested at the moment. Whether interest can be fostered or not is unpredictable. The Ngoni are not traditionally fishing people, and I do not think that they have any great interest in it at present.

I would say that in Mzimba township there would be an interest in fresh fish at possibly 3/6 a lb filleted weight, from many Africans as well, particularly among African Government employees.

Edison Chikondano Yesaya Khonje was sworn as interpreter.

Peter Steer Masanche, being duly sworn, stated:

I am a fisherman and I come from Kota Kota. I get chambo, kampango, mlamba, catfish. I use Nylon net, 200 yds. cost me £24. Another one is made of flax which I bought for £6.10s. I have

another one which I bought for £47.10s I have 3 workmen who are paid £2, £1 and 15/-. My nets are gill nets and seine net. I have no box body or any other form of transport.

I take my fish in a canoe from Chia to Kota Kota, and from there I put them on a lorry to Lilongwe. Dried fish. I only do fishing.

This year I have sent fish to Lilongwe 3 times. I sell them at Visanza. Last year I brought to Lilongwe once. The first time I sent 800 dried fish, second time 1,000, third time 1,500. The first consignment I took up before the marketing season began and it took me 2 weeks to sell them. The second consignment I took up in May, and it took me one week. The last time I was only there 3 days.

The prices range from 7d to 1/3 for chambo. Kampango 1/- to 2/6. Mpanga and panda 1/- to 2/-. Before the season the prices were from 6d to 1/-, and during the season those given already. If a person wanted to buy and said, for example, that he had not 9d to buy a fish for which I was charging 9d, then I would reduce the price. I did not reduce until somebody complained.

During January, February and March I did not bring to the market because there was too much rain and I could not dry the fish. I sold the fish locally, and also to people from the hill areas. There as a scarcity of fire wood and we could not dry the fish. The prices were chambo 4d to 5d, kampango 9d to 2/-. We waited for the hill people to come and ask us to get fish for them. We did not set the nets unless someone came to buy.

I bought my nets from Horace Hickling last year. One of the nets was damaged by a crocodile and was beyond repair. But the other one is still all right. That is the gill net. I have for some money already with which I want to buy nets from Horace Hickling. The net I have is 9 months old. The nylon nets last one year, flax 2 months.

I used to keep accounts of my expenditure, but not very often. I started my business last September. I have a record of how much I have spent since then but I have not brought it with me. Nor have I brought with me the amount of money I have obtained from the sale of fish. I think I made about £90 profit. I shall have to take £30 out of the £90 to spend on the new nets.

Mr. Sharmy is the other fisherman at Chia who makes a business of it. There are a lot of other people who fish for themselves and sell if they get more than they want.

There is no price control locally, the price is agreed upon between the seller and the buyer. No order have been issued by the chief in our area regarding price control: I cannot say for other areas.

During July I sold some fresh fish at Kota Kota.

My first trip to Lilongwe this year was at a loss, also the second one, but the third one was at a profit, during the marketing season. In future I shall only bring fish in Marketing season. I put fish on Northern Charterland lorry. I come to Lilongwe myself, and my labour keeps on fishing while I am away.

I set nets according to the weather. If there is a storm we do not fish, and if there is no storm then we fish. I cannot say how many times. If the buyers are there, although there may be a storm we still set out nets and catch fish to sell them. But if the buyers are not there and the weather is good we still do not set the nets. When the Lake is quiet and we think that we can sell

fish we catch them. When there is a heavy storm a lot of fish can be caught. We get the best catches from September to November and from the middle of February to March.

In February and March there is too much rain so that it is difficult for us to keep fish, and the buyers from the hills do not come often because they are busy. September to November is when we have a lot of customers. The Africans prefer fresh fish to dried.

If there was a cold storage place in Lilongwe the buyers would be pleased to buy, but as far as I am concerned I would not be pleased because I have no means of bringing fresh fish here. It takes me a day to take dried fish to Kota Kota, and a day from there to Lilongwe. I know the days when the North Charterland lorries reach Kota Kota and I leave a day earlier from Chia so as to catch the lorry. I could not do that with fresh fish and bring them still fresh to Lilongwe.

I do not know if the people here would pay more for fresh fish than they would for dried fish.

I think it would pay me to sell fish the whole year round if I had my own transport and could get to places which are not touched by the North Charterland lorry, but not otherwise. As far as I am concerned it would not pay to have a refrigerated store here.

Before I started fishing I was in the Government medical service and I retired. After I retired I decided not just to sit but to find some means of making money, and this was the way. I was in Tanganyika from 1924 – 1947.

After I had sold my first consignment I had about £18 in my hands when I left Lilongwe. As well as my labour to be paid, my fare from Kota Kota to Visanza and back was 14/8: 2/- a day for food: 8/9 for the transporting of the fish. I do not remember how long it took us to collect the 800 fish, because we dols some and then dried some until we had a consignment ready.

I have a small garden, but I cannot find a place to have a larger one.

When I was in partnership with Mr. Sharmy he sent fish to me at Dedza, about 3 baskets, which I sold. I do not remember how long it took me to sell them. May be about a week.

Willem Wentzel Shirz Schelk Toffer Van Loggerenberg, being duly sworn, stated:

I am the Health Inspector and stand-in for the Town Manager at the moment. My duties take me into the fish market. I have been in this post for 8 months. There is not much fresh fish coming in now, it stopped at the beginning of the winter. Regularly coming in every day before that, mostly from Fort Johnston, according to the traders. I have condemned a good deal of fish coming in to the market from Fort Johnston, and I have also condemned some dried fish, as it was not properly dried.

Four to five months ago fresh fish did not come in so plentifully because there was plenty of dried fish, and in the rains fresh fish not even twice a week.

I never heard of anybody bringing fish from Salima.

There is a great demand for fresh fish here; 60 – 70 dozen brought in about 6 o'clock and sold by 12.

I have suggested something like a cold storage to the Council and the matter is under consideration now.

I think it strange that Fort Johnston should send fish to Salima is only 93 miles away. Why come all the way from Fort Johnston?

There is a big demand for fresh fish. A 2lb. fish costs 1/-. If the supply could be kept up that price would continue.

A cold storage would not be used much for fish when it is plentiful and is sold almost immediately, but I wanted one so that a surplus could be carried over from the good season and a supply guaranteed for the cold weather.

I have 2 African Health Inspectors, and they inspect the fish.

I do not know how many people are fishing commercially at Salima.

I condemn fish on arrival, and it is seized and destroyed. The sellers take my word for it, although there is a dispute sometimes, but I know when fish is bad and I condemn it. It is quite possible that you will have as witnesses some people whose fish I have condemned.

I have not made any inquiries as yet as to why fish is not brought from Salima. There is always a supply of dried fish, all year round, even in wet weather. Europeans do not buy dried fish. At the end of the day there are always some sellers who have some dried fish to carry over until the next day.

There are 3 stalls for fresh fish, and some days all 3 are occupied, with varying quantities. 60 dozen is a fairly representative quantity. It arrives mostly in small box bodies. If the supply was unlimited I think all of it would sell, for there is a big demand among Europeans and also the Africans. 5 tons a day could be disposed of. According to the last census there are 300 Europeans in Lilongwe.

I sometimes condemn dried fish. Dried fish is mostly brought by boys in big baskets. Sometimes it is all right and sometimes not, depending on how well it is dried. I condemn fresh fish mostly during the summer months, and dried fish in less quantities. I do not condemn a whole basketful.

I think the Asian community is about 350.

The price of fresh fish remains stable, 1/- for a 2lb fish, a chambo. There is no price control. The sellers never try to vary the price, except that smaller fish may be 9d each. I don not know if they reduce the price later on in the day.

I never have to go back to the market at, say, 11 o'clock and condemn fish which was good at 8 o'clock, and the sellers have no reason to drop the price to get rid of the fish because it is going bad. I have actually gone back and seen that the fish was still sounds. It is mostly sold by 12 o'clock, and the few that are left are in good condition.

The lorries are here when the market opens at 6 o'clock. The lorries are run by traders, 1 Portuguese, 1 Indian and several Africans.

Mafuta Malilo, being duly sworn, stated:

I am a fish trader, and I buy my fish from Fort Johnston. I sell it in Lilongwe. It is dried fish.

I buy the fish fresh and dry it myself. Then I load it on to trucks which come through to collect fresh fish. Sometimes we have to pay £10, sometimes £12 or even £20. This time of the year, in July, we pay 7d for fish at the Lake. For transport we pay £1, £1 10s or £2. The drivers charge us various prices for £10 worth of fish.

In Lilongwe we sell the fish 4d to ½. The ½ size is about as big as 2 hands. To sell £10 worth of fish sometimes takes 4 days, 1 week, 2 weeks, depending on the number of people. At the end of the month we have good business. 1 – 2 weeks is the usual time taken to sell £10 worth of fish.

I bring fish during the wet season also, and then I pay 6d for it, sometimes 5d. I sell these at 6d to 10d, depending on the size. At that time of the year sometimes it takes me 4 days, 1 week or 2 weeks to sell my fish.

It takes about 4 days to cure the fish at Fort Johnston after having bought them fresh. If many fish are caught, I can buy the whole £10 worth in 1 day.

I have been doing this work of fish selling for several years.

For £10 worth of fish there is sometimes a profit of £4 to £6. We do not count the expense incurred for transport a person pays £1.2.6 to get here.

I have been buying fish in Fort Johnston and bringing it to Lilongwe since 1953.

My fish is always in good condition when it arrives here, and I have never had any of it condemned. The fish that get damaged are those which have been cured only for 1 day and piled in a basket: they are damaged because they are not completely dried.

I have never tried to trade with fresh fish, because I am afraid they may get damaged.

I live at Fort Johnston, but I come from Chrzadzulu District.

I don not intend to buy a lorry to transport my fish.

It is difficult to cure fish during the rainy season, but we use our own houses, so that we manage to always to cure some.

Mwenyebabu, Tewa Tempa village, being duly sworn, stated:

I am a fisherman, and I grow rice as well. I have come here to give evidence as a fisherman and also as a representative of the Chiefs' Council.

My house is at Somani, 3 miles north of Kota Kota. I catch fish to sell locally.

My nets are made of twine which I extract from tyres which I buy from Mr. Popper at Kota Kota.

I fish 4 times a month. Not many people come to buy my fish, but when they know it the villagers come to buy. I can sell the fish at any price I like. I have sold my fish in Kota Kota market. 3 years ago there was price control there, but there is none now. When the price control was on it prevented people from fishing. The sellers were discouraged because of that order and they did not catch fish in large quantities. The price for chambo and nchila was 6d, mtamba, the small ones, before control 7d and 8d and for nchila 9d. Chief put down to 6d.

The chief asked me to tell you three things. The first is that, as the people have to buy a ticket for 1s, they request that there should be no price control. The second thing is that the chief has been approached by people who complained to him that the number of canoes allowed by the Government was so few. As there are a number of people who would like to do some fishing, he would ask that Government allow him to cut down more trees in a year to be made into canoes. The third thing is that the chief's area has got a Government market, and there are various employees there, such as those working for the Rice Society and Government servants, and he would like that fish from his area should not be sold in any other areas but should be sold there until these people had enough for themselves. It should not be allowed to be sent elsewhere.

Denham Kachala, Village Headman, Chief Kanyenda, being duly sworn, stated:

The chief has asked me to come here.

I have a net and I catch fish. In our village we actually do not catch fish for sale in the market because it is very far. We give some to the people helping us pull the nets. We sell a small quantity, not as people in other areas sell them. Our village is 2 days journey from Kota Kota by bicycle.

We mostly catch fish for our own food. We do not get many people coming to buy.

During January and February we get a lot of fish, not with nets but with some sort of trap, and these fish are sold at Mzimba (?), Lobjwe and Sambali.

We no longer import fish from Likoma. When Likoma was in Kota Kota District the dhows used to come and exchange flour for fish, but during the present years I have not seen this.

If there were more buyers coming to Kanyenda's area I think we would catch more fish. In January, February, some take fish for sale to Mzuzu (?).

The chief did not ask me to say anything particular before the Commission as he did not know what actually was going to be said. He only told me to go to Lilongwe where I was wanted.

The nets do not belong to one man only. Sometimes 2 men own a net, sometimes 3 men. We use local material to make the nets, so we do not need money to buy new ones. The people co-operate with each other, and the only way to find money is to grow rice for sale elsewhere. They catch fish just to feed themselves.

We make our nets from fibre made from bwazi. The nets are repaired from time to time, so that I cannot say how long it lasts. If I want to repair quickly I spend money by buying from another person so that I can repair my net in time.

Not many people come to Kanyenda's for the buying of fish, so fish is not sold in large quantities. A few go there.

There was a price control because at first sold at 3 for 1d; when price controlled sold at 2 for 1d because fisherman did not get a great deal of business.

If I have caught plenty of fish and have supplied my own domestic needs I sell to those people who come to buy, and the rest are supplied to the people in the village as well as to those who have helped me with the fishing. There are plenty of fish so, because we are used to that, we do it.

Leslie Theodore Kettle, being duly sworn, stated:

I have a fishing business at Chipoka. I use a gill net mainly, and a ring net occasionally. Usually the ring net is used during the rains when the fish are plentiful. It does not pay to ring net any time other than the rains.

I usually catch Nchila and kampango with gill nets.

My trade is mainly at the beach. There is no other way of getting fish out. Even the dried fish is sold at the beach to basket boys. There is a road to Dedza, but that means through the escarpment, and no lorry will do it, and there is a road to Salima, but I cannot pass the Linthipe; even to-day water is flowing and there is no drift. It is definitely impossible to get the stuff out by road.

Regarding the rail transport, that, unfortunately, does not coincide with the coming in of the fish. It is terribly slow, and would only take the fish as far as Salima. I had not thought that Blantyre and Limbe was my market; Malachias' market and Yiannakis' market.

It would not be possible to get fresh fish by rail to the Southern Province. It takes 12 hours to Blantyre, and there is no unloading organisation at the other end. It would be impossible, because the fish would arrive completely bad. If a road could be made from Salima to Chipoka, and the bridges over the rivers were built, I could get fresh fish to Lilongwe and put it on my own lorries.

I have heard rumours that there is to be a road through Balaka, Sharpe Vale, etc., but I do not know.

I have no difficulty in getting rid of my fish at the beach. The boys do not particularly like salt fish, but it has to be salted to keep it.

The beach market falls off during the rains. Some I dispose of to the missions, not a lot.

When the fishing was good I had no storage space. This year I have expanded. I have been at the experimental stage for a year. I started in November, 1954, and for the first year I more or less kept down to a certain number of nets for experimental purposes. I hope to go on much better now. I have made no contact with firms for contracts for dried because I do not know what quantity I can supply. During July I caught 2,200 dozen. I could increase that during the rains if I had more equipment.

There is a fair competition for the fish I sell on the beach. I cannot satisfy the demand at this time of year. When I started to have good catch I put in good equipment: in consequence I was catching more fish and more boys arrived. The period when I do not sell much is during the rains, when the boys cannot drive in or it is difficult to get through to the villages.

I hope to dry and store the fish this year to a certain extent and then try and dispose of it through outside contracts. I have not made any approaches yet, as I felt that before I attempted to get anyone interested I would have to give some guarantee that I could supply. It would only be dried fish that I could supply, and this could travel by rail.

I charge 6d for an nchila, or 5/- a dozen to basket boys. The price was great deal higher before I came. There were only a few boys fishing there and could demand what prices they liked. I think it must be fairly reasonable or I would have had complaints. So far I have had none.

My buyers prefer nchila and kampanga, but there is not much difficulty to sell Mlamba, except when there is a heavy catch: it is not a general favourite for drying purposes. I may charge 2/- for one, or might come down to 1/6, 1/-.

I visualise the expansion of my business by more boats, more equipment, and finally I am hoping that I can get the fish out by road. I always hoped that I could get it fresh to Lilongwe. If I cannot get it out fresh I will have to dry it. I have not exploited markets for dried fish in quantities.

To get fish to Salima by rail and then by road to Lilongwe would be too slow for fresh fish, and it is not always easy to make the connection. This morning when I left the train was schedule to leave between 4 and 5, and actually left at 4.10. Nobody ever knows when it is going to leave. The journey of 14 miles take 1 hour.

I cannot take my fish by boat to Salima because it is inland. Grand beach is 14 miles from Salima, and is an open beach, very dangerous at times because of the weather. The same applies to Leopard Bay.

If I get the chance of running fish in my own lorries I will certainly put them on. The price of the fish would cover the cost of the one-way traffic and bringing nothing back. I cannot give you the exact quantity, but I should imagine that you would not have any difficulty is disposing of a lorry load, provided it was nchila, kampango and chambo, nothing else.

The idea of a cold storage plant here would appeal to me if I could get fish to it fresh, but the stumbling block is the road from Chipoka to Salima. Assuming I could get my fish here, it would be nice to know there was a cold storage in which to put my surplus. I would encourage. Others to come so that they would not lose all their catch.

I do not know Lilongwe market, and cannot tell you whether demand is being met at this time of the year. My ideas for expanding my business are based on the possibility of a road being made, and then I am sure that I could get fish to Lilongwe and sell it at a cheaper price than that which comes from Fort Johnston. I have been thinking of making representations regarding a road, because the rail link from the top station has now been cut out, and I believe they are going to remove the rails. This should make an ideal road, because the culverts would still be there.

I have never received any orders not to sell fish in the Southern Province.

I do not think it would be easier if there was a refrigerator on the train. If the road was never made my fish would not get through to Salima, and even if it was, for me to do business in Blantyre or Limbe would mean setting up an organisation to handle the fish. This, plus the extra cost of the train refrigeration, would put up the price of fish. Regarding the supplying of places between Salima and Blantyre, Down to Balaka people get fish, because nowhere is very far from the Lake shore, and Fort Johnston supplies Balaka. From there to Blantyre is problematical: I do not know anything about that.

I use two motor boats for my fishing.

The missions to whom I supplied salted fish liked it and asked for more for their Africans. They bought quite a fair number. I have satisfied demand for the time being. When the wet season is past I get ready sales for fresh fish. It is actually during the rains that I need to salt fish.

Although the missions are only 14 miles away from my beach it is still difficult for them to get fresh fish, even from bicycle boys, although these boys do sell some fresh fish, I think: I do not know for certain.

The limitation of my fish sales in the wet weather was the lack of storage space. Had I had more storage I would have fished more. I am not worried about the market of salt fish, it has not concerned me to that extent yet. I probably would be if I filled all the stores. I intend to sell as much as I can. I have not encountered any sales resistance to my salt fish. The people seem to like it, but naturally prefer fresh fish if they can get it. Their next preference would be for smoked fish, and then salted fish.

Barton Wallace Kunsanka was sworn as interpreter.

Albert John Mtalike Banda, being duly sworn, stated:

I have my own business, running a canteen. I buy fish for my own consumption but not for my canteen. I have a wife and 4 children. If the weather is good fish comes in every day and I buy every day almost, although sometimes I buy meat for a change of diet. We prefer fresh fish, but sometimes we cannot get it, for the demand is so great for fresh fish in Lilongwe.

At this time of the year fish is hard to get. We have had none for the last 3 weeks because there is no fishing at the Lake. They started very recently to catch nchila. We are eating dried fish and meat. There is no difficulty to get dried fish, but it is expensive, chambo starts at 1/6 upwards.

I would very much like to serve fish to those who come to my canteen if the fish price was reasonable, but I cannot do it. When fresh fish was in we tried to get some, but the price we sell it to the people makes it very expensive. I do not serve meals at the canteen, only cigarettes and European beers.

I spend about 12s. a week on fish. At a time like this when there is no fresh fish I prefer to buy meat and vegetables rather than dried fish. Meat is always available. My family do not like dried fish, but some people spend a lot on it. My wife bought one or two two days ago.

Meat cost 1/3 lb, fish 1s. In our family when it is all together we have more in meat than in fish. 1 lb meat would feed a bigger family.

If fresh fish could be here regularly at 1/6 each it would be too expensive. I do not think it would go all right in the villages. I think fish should be cheaper and be able to cater for as many people as possible and not only for the few people who can buy it.

If a storage system could be installed at Lilongwe I should think the people would like it, but if the price went I don't think they would. Some people spend more than I do no fish. I have seen them carrying big bundles of fish. When I say there are many people I mean about 100 Africans.

One of the reasons dried fish is dear is that the supply is low and the demand is high. We do not get as much fresh fish here as we would like.

If some improvement could be made in the fishing industry it should be made down at the Lake. The prices at the Lake are too high, and therefore prices here are too high.

Before I opened my canteen I had various employments, Government and commercial firms.

I have not gone into the cost of production with any of the African fishermen. I did try to do a fish business myself in 1951/52. I went to Yiannakis to buy fish and found it was too expensive.

Bruce Robert Dixon Barron, being duly sworn, stated:

I am manager of Mbabzi Estate. I employ labourers on a monthly contract or ticket, during the grading time, the season which is just over, up to 1,000, sometimes 1,300. The grading is finished now, and until April there is only a very small labour force, 100 to 150. It varies according to the work.

We do not purchase fish in bulk to feed the labour. We get the odd case of the Dutch golden smoked herrings. We do not issue these as part of the posho but just as an addition in the form of a gift. This is only form of fish we use at the moment.

The labourers get so much a month, wither with or without posho, which they take in cash or kind, flour, beans, groundnuts, salt. Tenants can do the same, but theirs is an advance against the crops. The bulk of the tenants try to grow sufficient foodstuffs to feed themselves. Normally we only have to feed the newcomers. Whereas the labourer has this posho, either cash or kind, as part of his pay the tenant only gets it as an advance against his crop.

It depends on the season whether the labourers take their posho in cash or in kind. When food is plentiful they prefer the cash, and they can probably get more for the money than we can. The senior ones, such as mechanics, do not get posho but have an incorporated rate of pay.

It would depend on the price whether we were interested in buying fresh fish in bulk for the labour. Regularity of supply would not matter so much, because we certainly would not consider buying fresh fish to give them every week: they would come to look on it as their right. The Dutch herrings are 1/6 lb. I do not think they would be acceptable in stead of what they are receiving now and have received for many years, but they do like them. So far we have only given them out free, but I have the impression that if we were to sell them at 3d, 3 1/2 d, they would sell very well. I do not know the price of the dried fish from the Lake, but unless it undercut that I think people would buy the herrings. The people round us buy fish from the Lake, dried or otherwise, at so much a fish and do not put on a scale to weigh them. If a person has the choice of one of these herrings at 3d and a larger one at a higher price, he will choose the cheaper one.

No one has ever offered to sell us local fish, and we have not made any demand to buy it.

We get the odd basket of fish brought round, but at this time of the year this does not make much difference.

There is a lot of meat about. We have a butchery on the estate and there is an arrangement between ourselves. We put it up and any butcher from trust land who wants to use it can do so. We put it up to stop killing on the ground and to provide reasonable facilities for the slaughter and cutting up of meat. The only term we make is that we keep the price to 10d 1b for anyone using that butchery. All the people on the estate can obtain meat at fixed price. During this time

of year when a considerable quantity of money is changing hands there is a beast killed every week at least. It is sold to our people. An arrangement that a lot of them have is that they pool their posho; one buys meat, another takes food and another will buy something else. We have not considered substituting meat for beans or groundnuts, again because once it was substituted we should run into trouble of keeping up the substitution.

Basket boys come round, but the demand is very seasonal. During the tobacco buying season, when there is a lot of money around, several people with baskets of dried fish come to sell. Once in 10 days we may get some fresh fish. The price is from 1/- to 1/0, sometimes 2/6, depending on the type and size of the fish. If they had any left I do not think they would come back. We have a small market area where a considerable number of people come with 2 or 3 basket loads of dried fish. I would not say I recognised any of them, but I do not think that there are so many trading in our area, and they must be the same people who come back.

Our labourers and tenants are not as interested in fish as in meat, but fish is acceptable to them as an alternative.

My impression is that if the fish sellers came more often they would not sell so much on our estate and would have to go on somewhere else to dispose of it. They might sell a little bit more fresh fish, and more dried fish, but there is not a large demand for it.

I should say that estate owners in the Central Province are feeding their labour in much the same way as we are. At a price, everyone would be willing to take a fair amount of fish depending on the time of year when it was offered, whether it was to be a regular offer or not, but the governing factor would be the price.

I have been managing the estate since 1953. We have tenants, and visiting cultivators come from all over the country. Primarily the tenants come from areas other than Lilongwe and Dowa. People in Lilongwe and Dowa who wish to grow tobacco locally without going away. In other areas there are people who wish to grow a cash crop, and we get these people to earn money.

The meeting adjourned at 3.30 p.m. and reassembled on Wednesday, the 22nd August.

S.M. Bwandamdoko Ndelemani, being duly sworn, stated:

I am head messenger at the District Commissioner's office. My salary is £7.18.11 a month. I have a wife and 2 children and I live near the Boma.

I buy fresh fish 3 times a week if it is of the type I like. I prefer fresh fish to dried. I buy 2 fish each time, and pay 1/- each for fresh fish. I spend about 6/- a week on fish.

At this time of year we do not always get fresh fish but from November onwards there is a lot. I buy dried fish at this time of year when fresh fish is not available. I can always get dried fish. The prices vary according to size, 9d, 1/-, 1/3. Because I do not like dried fish as much as fresh fish I do not spend so much, about 2/- or 3/- a week. If I could get fresh fish all the time I would always spend about 6/- a week on it.

If the price were to go up I would buy meat or vegetables, or I would buy a smaller number of fish so that I would not be spending more than 6/- a week. Meat is 1/3 a lb. I spend 5/- on meat each week.

When I said "the fish that I like" I meant the fresh fish which comes October, November, December, January. We do not get any fresh fish these days. If fresh fish came to-day I would not know unless I saw some people carrying it from the market.

I like both meat and fish. If I walked into the market with 2/- to spend and saw fish and meat both for sale, If I took meat yesterday I would take fish to-day.

Lefeyo Mponda, being duly sworn, stated:

I am an office boy in the District Commissioner's office. I have a wife and one child and my salary is £2.13.4. per month.

I buy fish in Lilongwe market. When the fresh fish comes I spend 5/- a week. If the fresh fish does not come I buy dried fish, so that I spend about half my salary each month, all the year round, on fish.

I buy meat, and spend about 4/6 on it each week. I do not have to buy maize meal, as I grow my own, nor do I have to spend anything on other foodstuffs, except beans. I grow my own vegetables and groundnuts. I spend 4/- a month on beans.

My village is somewhere near the aerodrome, and my family stays with me there. That is where I have my garden. It is one mile away.

I prefer fresh fish to dried fish. The fresh fish comes in from August to December, February and March. When the fresh fish comes in to the market sometimes I find that it is all bought before I get there. Sometimes I do the marketing, sometimes my wife. As the fish comes in at 6 I go to the market at 7.30. When I have bought them I take them straight to my wife at home so that they will not deteriorate. I ask permission to take the fish home.

I do not need to live on credit and can pay cash for all the things I buy because I live at my village and grow most of my own food. I also sell some of my produce. My garden is about as big as two football fields.

Keith Taylor Howard, being duly sworn, stated:

I am Fish Ranger, stationed at Nkata Bay.

The Northern Province Association has asked me to speak on their behalf on the question of weirs across rivers. They say that in some rivers it does stop the spawning fish going up and the young fish coming down. It is a good example of the bad fishing done by some of the villagers, and the Association would like something done about it if possible.

The villagers near the rivers set these weirs, and I have seen young fish caught like this near Barna. The weir catches spawning families, and by catching the young fry it cuts-down the fish population for next year. The fish build their nests and have their young upstream, and then

when it is time to come down the young fish come with the adults and they are all caught in this trap which is across the river and the people eat them.

Neither I nor any of my fish wardens have collected evidence to indicate that this practice is in fact depressing the fisheries, but the Northern Province Association believes that this must be so, and I have to put their point of view before the commission. One river I know, the chief of the fishery has forbidden the use of weirs because it impedes the progress of fish to the falls and it is much easier to catch them at the falls.

In my own experience I do not know of a river north of Nkata Bay which does have spawning fish. They might use the river a bit to spawn, but I do not think that the weirs put across really seriously impede their progress. They spawn in the fishery. The main fish is the Usipa, which do not spawn in the river. I have not examined the catches at these weirs. I do not know if any of the people who asked me to represent them have done so: it was all rather vague. I was told to mention this, which I have done.

There is no evidence that I am aware of the because young fish are found in the rivers that spawning is affected by the weirs.

The Association thinks that, if a weir is put across a river, a gap of one quarter of the width of the river should be left open to enable fish to pass up and down the river. Certain fish do go up rivers to spawn, and allowing a gap in a weir is the same as having larger holes in a net. You allow the smaller fish to escape and give them a chance to grow larger. A certain percentage of small fish and adults would go through the gap, down the river and into the Lake. Running up and down rivers is something necessary in the life cycle of fish, although there are some that do not run. It is a question of the different types of fish.

There could be something in the Association's complaint, but I cannot say from my own experience because I have not seen the rivers much in the north. It is the habit of the local fishermen to build quite large barrier across the river without much in the way of gaps. They are breaking the law. It can be put a stop to. I have not actually cited the particular law in question.

The Association also wished me to say that the supply of fish from the Lake Shore further inland is very scarce at the moment, particularly in Mzuzu and Mzimba. It is received from Fort Johnston, but at the moment there is not enough from the Lake Shore to Mzuzu, dried or fresh. This is because the fishermen are purely subsistence fishermen. They catch enough for themselves but not to take as far inland as Mzuzu.

Potential expansion in the fishing at Nkata Bay is likely. In the immediate present Nkata Bay is not fully supplied, and to start with the fish caught would be taken by the Local people at Nkata Bay. And there are a lot of villages round about from which the people come down. I think that the Nkata Bay potential can be absorbed in the immediate radius of Nkata Bay.

It would be desirable to look for markets outside Nkata Bay, but the fishermen can sell all their fish, which is caught off-shore. There is a particular fishery operating at the moment which is about a mile off the shore and it is a handline fishery. That is, it uses a line with 2 hooks, and a particular kind of fish is caught: all these fish are being sold on the beach. People come down as the canoes come in and buy the fish as they are brought off the canoes. There is not really a market at Nkata Bay; they do sell things under a tree, as you might say, but not in an organised market.

The fishing is done anything below 20 fathoms, and the tonnage is very low. If 5 or 6 people were working commercially I still think their catches would be absorbed in Nkata Bay. If 2,000 yds of net were used, instead of 200 yds, then there might be a surplus of fish to export to Mzuzu, and possibly to Mzimba, but there the transport problem comes in.

I think the potential is there to support 3 or 4 African full time fishermen with, say, 1,000 yds of gill net and long lines. Fish from boats with engines 5-10 miles out would support a large fishing concern, but I do not feel that it would be a steady business for 5 or 6 units.

There is one local fisherman I know who has 2 canoes and a gill net 100 yds long and some long lines. He fishes all the time and does not get enough to make a business of it. There is enough for his family and to sell a little, but it is not a business.

My statement that 4 fishermen with about 1,000 yds each, plus deep lines, would about absorb the fish available is based on my own personal observations of the fishing grounds. I do not think, with that quantity of net, you would have to go further afield to get suitable places for fishing. You cannot put the nets anywhere and catch fish, some places are better than others; if you have too many people fishing the grounds would become crowded.

As long as they were limited to within 5-10 miles, 4 fishermen would be the optimum. I am thinking of the 2 bays. There is nothing to stop a fisherman having a base 4 miles down the shore: he could market the fish at Nkata Bay. There are tracks, but no roads in to the fishing villages. Bicycles, or maybe a land rover, could get there but not a heavy bicycle. If someone did establish a fishery further away from Nkata Bay the fishing potential would expand.

It would not have to be too far away, however, because there would be the additional transport costs, having to run his engine or employ someone to paddle the fish to market. Further north the coast line goes down like the side of a house, and there are few places in which to set gill nets. He could use other types of nets, but it would be increasingly difficult to get the fish out.

The fish is there to catch. It is just a matter of making the effort to catch it, which is very hard to put over. At the moment I am operating a fishing programme which covers about 5 miles of coast. I have set nets in an area of 5 miles. I do not know north of Florence Bay. I have not seen the coast up there, nor have I fished round Florence Bay.

Regarding the price, the fishermen, when they have been catching fish, have been more or less following the example which was set by Fisheries Research Organisation of selling fish at 4d lb, by weight. There were a lot of complaints about the price. Complaints from inland. The District Council fixed a price by size; small, medium and large. Fish which look rather like whitebait sell at 2d for a certain size bowl. The order was actually made. If anyone was going along the beach and the fisherman did ask a high price the fisherman would be reported to the N.A. The Council had fixed the prices of oranges, lemons and other things, and they decided to fox the price of fish. I do not know under what authority the law is made, but the District Commissioner knows all about it.

I attended a District Council meeting 2 weeks ago and I took along some fish to show the sizes, and I marked them with the length and weight. I proposed that fish should remain at 4d lb., because I am starting an administrative fishery and think that the controlled price by size is uneconomic, but the council rejected my proposal. A rough estimate of the controlled price as applied by weight works out at 1 1/2 d or 2d per lb. I think it is about a year ago that the price was controlled.

This administrative fishery is a model fishery and training scheme for African fishermen, and at the moment I am building smoke houses and all the installation necessary to running a small fishery. I am building my own boats and I intend to operate the fishery with African fishermen as trainees to give them an idea how to market their fish and how to run a small business. I will demonstrate what they could do.

It must as near as possible pay its own way, and I got the District Council to agree that I should sell my fish at 4d lb. The object of the exercise is to produce African fishermen who will be able to fish competently on a sound economic basis. I tried to put over to the District Council that they could not operate economically at 2d lb, but they would not see it. There are about 4 whole time fishermen with canoes. They usually refuse to sell their fish because the price is too low. It means that they will stop catching some fish and will continue to catch usipe, because they have agreed that the controlled price should be 2d or 3d a bowl. This is an economic price.

The argument put forward for the controlled price was that in Nkata Bay itself there were Government employees who are earning higher wages than the people in the villages, and all the N.As. said that the villagers could not afford to pay 4d a lb. As the greater part of the district is many miles away from Nkata Bay they said they could not possibly adopt this proposed price. I feel that inevitably they people will get no fish at all. If somebody wants fish they will have to go and fish themselves. A great deal of people do fish for themselves and their families. They have not all got canoes to do it with. If a man does fish he probably does not bother to buy any.

Owing to communications not many people come from far to buy fish at the moment because there is not the fish to buy. What is caught is sold on the beach. The fishermen are not what I call really whole time fishermen. They have not got the equipment.

The price control applies in respect of everybody. There is no attempt to distinguish between what is for local consumption.

I said that I would address the District Council in 6 months' time and tell them how my fishery was going on. I would try and demonstrate to them the fact that, if they want African fishermen to start as whole time fishermen and increase the supply of fish in the area, they must realise that the men must have a reasonable price for their fish, for they have to buy petrol, boat, engine, and have a boy to help with the nets. I want to try and put it over to them that it is desirable to increase the price; a whole time fisherman cannot possibly continue with the control which is in force now. The position is subject to review in 6 months' time on my representation. No conditions have been attached to my selling the fish at 4d. I am selling the fish without difficulty at that price, and not only to employed people. It is surprising the number of people who come to buy the fish who are unemployed. A fish which weighs 6 lbs. would cost 2/- and it could be cut into 5 fillets. That is mbuvu. Chambo is about 4d a fish.

Africans are taking very kindly to the training scheme. I have had quite a lot of support from fishermen in the area, and further down the coast from Nkata Bay I have got 3 or 5 fishermen to agree to come along. I am hoping that we can start a small African Co-operative Fishery further down the coast.

I consider that, with a bit of energy and organisation, the Nkata Bay Lake Shore can feed the Nkata Bay and Mzuzu area. The whole thing is to get them to do it. So many times have I visited the villages and they just don't fish because they don't feel like fishing that particular day.

I do not think that if the price went up and they got more money they would stop fishing. I think that with the right people you could maintain a proper level of catching and a proper price.

I have not yet started my fishery, but the men will work as fishermen and will get paid so much to work for me as trainees and as fishermen, and it remains to be seen how long they go on doing it.

I have been 18 months in Nyasaland.

The heaviest catches are between January and March. The price was 4d. and all the fish was sold. There were times when there were so many people it was a worry to see them trying to buy fish.

During the season, when gill net catches do fall off, we shall have to fish with long lines and hand lines to keep up the supply of fish in the fishery.

Before I came to Africa I was engaged with the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries in England, and I have had some experience with herring fisheries in the North Sea. Regarding the herrings which are being imported into this country, the Danish method is unlike that of the British methods of fishing. The British trawlers use a drift net, which is a net set in the water and the fish are gilled in the net. The Danish method is by mid-water trawl, a trawl net which is like a very large bag, and it is drawn through a shoal of fish which is located and identified by an echosounder on board ship. There is a mother ship from which 4 or 5 trawlers work, and they keep out for several weeks at a time, whereas our driftsmen only stay out one or two nights. It is known that this particular fishery by this particular method of catching fish is catching a lot of young fish, which is damaging the stock. In my local paper from Lowestoft I see that everybody is complaining about this Danish fishery damaging the stock. The Danes did agree at the International Conference to observe a mesh regulation, but they have not done so. They have made a terrific business of catching and exporting the herrings. The members of Parliament for Aberdeen, South Shields and Lowestoft have raised this question in Parliament.

Of course, the whole thing is that, as it is pointed out, it won't last. It is being built on quicksand. It is going to hit our herring fisheries very hard. I know lots of driftermen, and they say these Danish ships plough in and out of our drift nets catching fish and it is pretty bad at sea now. They get as far as throwing coal at each other, causing a great deal of ill-feeling. Our fishermen must realise that fishing at this level and catching all these young fish is not doing the stocks any good. There is an international organisation, which controls the mesh of nets, fishery production, ships, etc. The 3 miles limit is still observed by Britain, but the limits have been extended by other countries, Russia and Greenland. When I worked for the Ministry of Fisheries I used to go on board and measure the mesh sizes and the catches. The Danes have for a similar organisation and they are supposed to measure their meshes. I doubt if they do, because I sued to see these foreign ships brought into port sometimes because they were within the 3 miles limit, and they used a small mesh.

I went this morning to the fish market here, but I did not see any fresh fish because it had all been sold. There had been some fresh chambo, I do not know how many. I was told that the fish was sold by 8.30. There was plenty of dried fish from Lake Chilwa, utipe from Grand Beach and Cape Maclear and chambo from Fort Johnston. They seemed to be doing a bit of trade, lots of women seemed to be buying.

Dunstan Banda, being duly sworn, stated:

I am teacher at the White Fathers Mission, about 2 ½ miles from Nkata Bay. I live at Nkata Bay.

I think that most of what I can say is already in your hands as a memorandum from Mr. Chiume, and he said I should refer to that.

As Mr. Howard said, fish at home is very scarce indeed, and also in Mzuzu. I do not know about Mzimba, but I think it is also scarce, unless it comes from other places. Rumpi and Livingstonia, there is no fish in all these places. Even in the schools at home I remember the managers of schools and headmasters trying to find fish. I know how they failed to obtain fish for the boys. I cannot say what the reason is for not catching much fish there. I do not know whether there is much fish or not, but it just happens that we do not find fish to buy. As Mr. Chiume said in the memorandum, I think we really need support from other people to improve the local fishermen.

I think Mr. Howard's training scheme for fishermen is a good idea. I would also suggest on that point that if the Commissioner for Co-operative Societies could try and encourage the fishermen to form co-operative societies it would help.

I think the best way of distributing fish would be by boat. We have not got many bicycles, and the boat could go to other places where the fish could be more easily taken to the road.

I think that the price control is very impracticable because the demand is very much for fish and supplies very limited, so that, although the price has been limited, it is very difficult to buy fish and fishermen do not like to sell their fish at Nkata Bay. When I was coming here I saw dried fish 2 for 1d at Nkata and 3d each at Mzuzu. In connection with usipe, it is very difficult to buy usipe because the fishermen prefer to sell at Mzuzu where they can fix their own prices.

Fixing the price is taking fish out of Nkata Bay and is killing trade there, because there is no difference whether a trader buys fish from a fisherman to sell 15 miles away. He cannot make any profit at all.

I agree with Mr. Chiume that there is not enough fish to go round.

Fresh fish could be brought by motor boat from 20 miles away to Nkata Bay, although it would put up the price of fish.

I think when Mr. Chiume says in his memorandum that an increase in the quantity of fish would reduce the price he has in mind that the supply would be greater in Mzuzu and the price would fall down a bit. With the present supply it would not be cheaper if it was carried by lorries unless the supply was improved from the Lake. At the moment the supply is extremely hopeless. I cannot say that, if the amount of fish was doubled, the price would decrease.

There are no fishermen on the Council. It consists of chiefs and people who are consumers. The chiefs only fish for family use, not for sale.

I think that the trader should be allowed to make some profit. If he carries fish from here to there he ought to be able to charge something for the service

I have nothing more to say for myself, but I would repeat that we need some help from the Co-operative officers and the Fisheries Department. I think what Mr. Howard said is very good, because he is trying to teach the fishermen, and if these people can be trained then they will run on their own. They might also get the District Council to fix proper prices. I think that when the supplies come in the proper supply and demand will fix a reasonable price for the fish without the District Council having to interfere.

Fenela, s/o Suwieda Mbaiko, being duly sworn, stated:

I am a fisherman at Maganga's, near where Lake Nyasa Hotel used to be.

I have about 300 yds of net. We get thread from old tyres and make them. I cannot say what sort of net it is. All the nets are made from old tyres. We sometimes pay 15/-, £1 for a tyre. Do not really know what the net costs. Sometimes we know, because we buy from somebody who sells for £15. We inherited the net, and go on repairing it. If we sold to another fisherman we would charge £2-.

We cast 4 times a week. If I cast it to-day, to-morrow it needs repairing. We do not count the fish we catch. The average value is about £1. People from the hills come to buy the fish. They dry them at the Lake shore. They sell them at Lilongwe.

There is a good beach where we catch out fish. Sometimes the Lake gets rough so that for a week we are unable to catch any fish.

We have 6 people pulling each side of the net, and the money we pay them depends on the amount of fish caught.

Sometimes we have a sort of company. By that I mean that a relative or brother may contribute so much money towards the cost of the net so that it belongs to both of us. I have not got a partner. Four of us go out in the canoe because I alone cannot do it. After 3 months we count how much money has been made on the catches, and I give the other 3 people some money and the balance is mine. We only cast our nets twice per year, and if we have caught enough fish we pay the people that time we have used them.

At this time of year we are only making arrangements, but during the 2 months ahead that is when we used to cast the nets and that is the time when I cast 4 times a week.

I pay my labour as casual workers. The 3 men in the canoe are different from the 12 people who help me pull the net. The 3 men in the canoe accompany me all the time. The 12 people are the people who come to buy fish. When they go 12 more come. They get fish and no money. We pay them some fish as a token so that they use it for relish at the Lake. They do not buy any fish for such purpose.

The fish that I give my labourers, the people pulling the nets, is extra to the £1 worth of fish in the catch. Some people come to buy in small quantities, 1/-, 2/-, and so on.

There is no profit from selling the fish, as the Chief Maganga has fixed the price at 1d for 1 fish. The present chief has said 2d for 1 fish, but we have not yet started fishing.

I have been fishing since childhood because my father was fisherman. I have been fishing and selling from 1941. I have no other business except fishing.

If I do not find any money at all in fishing I go to the Boma and get passport, then go to Rhodesia for work.

There is no other thing at home we can do except fishing.

We do not think we would make a profit even if we sell at 2d, because the work that is involved is much more than the value of what we get.

At this time I lose money because I have got to buy some more tyres and hire some labour, who are about 1/9, 1/9 and so on.

We do not count the fish very much because they are landed on the shore and we tell the boy to put them together and we got to repair the net. I think we catch 240 fish at a time. When the fish is 2d we may get £2, but sometimes we give fish to those people helping with the nets, which means that 12 fish are given away, which is losing a shilling.

I cannot say how much we would charge for fish if we fixed the price ourselves. It would require all those people who have nets to fix the price. To sell at a profit I would suggest 4d or 6d.

The only complaint we have is the price of fish, but we agree with the chief because we are his people.

We always have plenty of people to buy the fish.

The types of fish for which we use nets ourselves are only 2 and these 2 types are only to be found next month and October. We only fish a little in January and February, because we are busy with hoeing.

Kukhongo, being duly sworn, stated:

I am village headman at Salima, Chief Maganga's.

I fish myself, and I have my own canoe. I have one net, which is the size of my friend's net. I bought it, and it is made from china grass. I cannot say how long it lasts, but it is repaired soon after it has been used. It does not cost anything for repair.

I cast 4 times a week, during 2 months, September and October. For the rest of the year I live by hoeing. I have a garden, and I grow cotton as well.

I do not find any profit from fishing because they are sold at 1d. The chief has controlled the price. We cannot stop fishing because it is part of our habit.

Three people go out in the canoe with me. We divide the money we get from the fish we sell. If I had made £5 at the end of my fishing, I would pay the men 10s each and keep the rest for myself, which will be used to buy tyres to repair the net. I own the canoe. I paid for it because I had people to help me make it, and when they had finished I paid them 10s.

I do not know if Makanjere and other chiefs have made a rule controlling the price of fish.

The meeting concluded at 11.30 a.m.