

## COLONY AND PROTECTORATE

OF

# KENYA.

# REPORT

### OF THE

# LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMISSION

### - 1927.

## VOL. II.

THE SETTLED AREAS. GRANT OF MAGISTERIAL POWERS TO SELECTED JUSTICES OF THE PEACE.

AUTHORITY FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT PURPOSES,

ISHED FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF KENYA COLONY BY THE CROWN AGENTS FOR THE COLONIES, +, MILLBANK, LONDON, S.W. I.

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#### REPORT ON CENTRAL AUTHORITY FOR LOCAL GOVERN-MENT PURPOSES—ORGANIZATION.

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### SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS.

P. 64-66.

There are three principal reasons in favour of establishing for Rural Areas Authorities which have real executive power of their own, viz. (1) Administrative-certain kinds of work which especially affect local residents will be better done. if left to local bodies with direct interests in getting them well done, than by the Central Government which often of necessity moves slowly; (2) Financial-districts as they develop all make increased demands on the common resources which cannot all be satisfied; local contributions would form a basis for fixing Government's contributions towards increased services; (3) Political –as a preparation for the acceptance of larger responsibilities in the sphere of national affairs. For these reasons, the Commission recommends that local bodies, to be called "District Councils," mainly composed of non-official elected members, and endowed with executive authority in some branches of local administration, should be established in certain of the Settled Areas. The system of Local Government in Rural Areas should be elastic and admit of the gradual development of responsibilities which, at the outset, will be limited and should be so framed as to enable a reduction to be made in establishment by the Central Government in proportion as functions are handed over to District Councils. In the initial stages, District Councils will be concerned principally with Roads. The Commission proposes a classification of roads into (1) Main Trunk Roads, (2) District Roads, including Main and Minor District roads, and (3) Roads of Access. Main Trunk Roads are defined as "roads which are of importance as a means of through communication from one territory to another and roads which are primarily of importance for strategic or administrative purposes"; for these responsibility should rest with the Central Government, which may, however, employ a District Council to undertake work on such roads within its own area. All other public roads should be classed as district roads and controlled by District Councils, which, as regards Roads of Access. should be appointed Road Boards for purposes of the Public Travel and Access Roads Ordinance. Councils must employ qualified Engineers, whose appointments should be subject to Government approval, and foremen. At the outset, grants on the basis of the 1927 Estimates for the maintenance and improvement of roads and bridges (other than main trunk roads and bridges) should be made to Councils for road maintenance, plus 25 per cent. for overhead P.W.D. charges, which will be saved. Under the Commission's proposed

P. 67.

Roads. P. 70.

P. 71.

P. 70. P. 71.

P. 96.

P. 71.

P. 98.

classification of Roads, the sum available for District Roads in 1927 estimates is £28,987, plus 25 per cent. for P.W.D. overhead charges saved, equals  $f_{36,234}$ ; and for Main Trunk Roads, £15,380, plus 25 per cent., equals £19,225, or a total of  $f_{55,459}$  if Councils are employed on the latter. The Nairobi and Uasin-Gishu District Councils would on this basis receive a total grant of  $f_{7,819}$ , or  $f_{12,834}$  and  $f_{7,976}$ or  $f_{11,771}$  respectively, and the remaining 5 areas an average grant of £4,088 or £6,171.

#### PUBLIC HEALTH, HOSPITALS, EDUCATION.

As regards other functions, recommendations are made as to Public Health, Hospitals and Education. It is proposed that District Councils should, at first, be advisory only and should not automatically become "local public health authorities " but should have power to raise money for public health purposes, more especially for the services of medical officers of health and sanitary inspectors; and that the Governor should be empowered to create them "local public health authorities" on their application; whereupon they would appoint their own staff, possibly in conjunction with one or more other Councils, subject to Government approval and payment by Government of half the salaries of Medical Officers of Health and Sanitary Inspectors. The need for increased hospital facilities is urgent and a change in Government policy is desirable. The Commission received evidence in some districts that local contributions would be willingly given, and in a memorandum quoted fully in the Report the Acting Director of Medical and Sanitary Services outlined a scheme under which Government and District Councils could co-operate in building and maintaining hospitals. The Commission proposes that District Councils should be legally empowered to carry out such schemes, which would be worked out in detail by them and the Medical Department in consultation with the Central Local Government organisation (see below), and should provide for the selection of a suitable site, erection of buildings, appointment of staff, financial contributions by Government and District Councils, for the levying of a local rate by the District Council, for hospital charges both to employed and unemployed natives and for arrangements (financial and other) to accommodate European and Asiatic patients. There must obviously be guarantees for the operation of such schemes for definite periods and the Commission proposes that these be taken by way of regulations with binding effect both on Government and on the District Council, which would become the Hospital Authority. In the sphere of Education there is little scope for District Councils beyond raising money to Education. assist in the building and maintenance of primary schools and

Public Health. ·P. 72.

Hospitals. P. 74.

P. 74-79.

P. 79.

P. 80.

in the cost of educating children of indigent parents in their areas. Powers to raise money for these purposes should be exercised subject to the sanction of the Governor in Council.

Seven Local Government areas are proposed, viz.: Nairobi, Naivasha, Nakuru, Laikipia-North Nyeri, Uasin-Gishu, Trans-Nzoia and Kisumu-Londiani. Their boundaries are depicted on Plates 4—9, and the reasons for such modifications of existing administrative districts as are proposed are given in Chapter VIII. Kericho and Machakos Settled Areas are not considered at present to be suitable for Local Government. The question of the separate administration of "White" and "Black" areas is discussed. Native Reserves are necessarily excluded from the proposed areas by the Commission's terms of reference and the future position of "Mixed" districts, upon the introduction of Local Government, is not dealt with; but a recommendation is made that Local Government areas should be grouped in

"Mixed" districts, upon the introduction of Local Government, is not dealt with; but a recommendation is made that Local Government areas should be grouped in Provinces with Native Reserves under Senior Commissioners, in order to provide a link between District and Native Councils and to ensure that questions of mutual interest to the Reserves and to the Local Government areas are dealt with satisfactorily, with due regard to all interests involved. In this event, the inter-relationship between Senior Commissioners and the Chief Native Commissioner will require consideration.

#### TAXATION.

Taxation.

P. 90.

Areas.

P. 82.

P. 89.

The question of local taxation was thoroughly discussed during the Commission's tour of the Settled Areas. Opposition was based on political and fiscal grounds and on inability to pay. The political ground of objection, viz., that no system of local taxation should be introduced until constitutional changes had been made giving an unofficial majority in the Legislative Council, was outside the Commission's scope and is therefore not discussed. The Commission considers that there is no reason why the introduction of local taxation should necessarily await a revision of the Colony's fiscal system. In several districts willingness to pay was evinced. The introduction of Local Government necessarily implies some provision for local taxation if irresponsibility and extravagance are to be avoided, and this point is emphasized by an extract taken from the Report of the South African Financial Relations Commission of 1912. It is recommended that revenue raising powers should be given to Councils, but, as a temporary expedient in the existing circumstances of the Colony at the initial stages and to enable the new system to take root, it is proposed that annual grants should be made to District Councils by Government, so that works undertaken

P. 93.

- P. 94. by these Councils can be carried out on the same basis as hitherto without recourse to local taxation. An annual varying allocation of money by Government for distribution or the payment of certain assigned revenues are methods for fixing such grants which the Commission discards in favour of the proposal already recorded of fixing road grants. Α P. 99. District Council may establish a claim to additional grants in any year for the construction of new roads to new railways or to open up new areas for development, for survey and re-alignment of existing roads, and for new permanent bridges or other special works ; but it is recommended that P. 100. increased sums for "maintenance and improvement," as distinct from new construction, should only be given if a proportion of the cost is raised by local taxation. Alternative P. 101-103, methods of land taxation are discussed, and the Commission recommends the use of any of the following :--(1) A rate on P. 104-105. the unimproved value of land, with a maximum of  $\frac{1}{2}$  per cent.; (2) a flat rate per acre with a maximum of 10 cents per acre; (3) a rate per acre graduated according to the character of the land; land to be classified as pastoral and agricultural, and agricultural land to be further classified according to the nature of the crops for which it is suitable; the maximum to be 20 cents per acre; (4) a flat rate per month per head of African labour employed-this would be a suitable form of taxation for hospital purposes, and the limit would vary in each district subject to the approval of the Governor-in-P. 104. Council; (5) a vehicle tax. The Commission prefers an unimproved site value tax to the other two alternative methods of land taxation and discards altogether a penal undeveloped P. 102. land tax. It recommends that Government should give generous assistance in the making of valuation rolls of P. 104. unimproved site values. The following safeguards are proposed to ensure that taxation is not levied against the P. 105-106. wishes of the district :--(1) A notice of a resolution to impose a rate is to be given at a meeting of the District Council; (2) this notice is to be advertised through the district for a period of two months; (3) the resolution must be carried by not less than a two-thirds majority of elected members, nominated and official members not being entitled to a vote. The same procedure should be followed if a different form of taxation is proposed. Where no special purpose is mentioned in the resolution the proceeds of the tax should be available for read, public health and general administration expenses. If the Council wishes to levy taxation for other purposes, these purposes must be stated in the original resolution or in a subsequent resolution with respect to which the above safeguards must also be observed, though only for the first time expenditure for the special purpose is proposed.

#### ADVISORY FUNCTIONS.

Besides executive powers and responsibilities, the District Advisory Functions. Councils should exercise advisory functions in connection with P. 110. such matters as District Committees advise on at present. P. 110. Thus they would be consulted as to the granting of water permits, land alienation, stock routes, quarantine regulations, P. 111. P. 111-112, permit issues for stock movement. In regard to Fencing and Dipping, which might be subjects for applied legislation, and generally speaking where legislation provides for the exercise of local option on questions affecting rural areas, District Councils should, in the Commission's opinion, be the bodies through which such option should be exercised. In regard to P. 113-114. Squatters' cattle, the Commission considers that this question could not be dealt with apart from other questions involved in the application of the Resident Natives Ordinance, cap. 132; but that, if that Ordinance is revised, consideration should be given to the question of conferring on District Councils powers to make byelaws either regulating the number of squatters' cattle to be permitted or providing that no squatters' cattle be allowed in its district. The Commission also suggests that legal provision in the law constituting District Councils might be made enabling a Council to assume P. 114. responsibility for the control and maintenance of outspans in its district if it wishes to do so.

#### CONSTITUTION OF DISTRICT COUNCILS.

District Councils should consist of elected and nominated Constitution. P. 115. members and one official member. Elected members should number from 10 to 15 and will all be Europeans, except in the Kisumu-Londiani district where the Indian agriculturists should have one elected member. The Governor should have power to nominate, at his discretion according to circumstances, either one or two Indian members to any District Council. This recommendation is designed to secure co-operation in the general interests of the areas since (1) Indian traders in townships have an interest in the condition of rural roads; (2) District Councils will have general advisory powers regarding such questions as the administration and sale of lands in townships which have no executive municipal authority of their own; (3) District Councils will have powers to initiate hospital schemes in which Indian needs should be considered; (4) Indian traders in townships may possibly be liable to payment of vehicle taxes imposed by District Councils. Other nominated members will be one member nominated by the Municipal Board of a Municipality in the midst of a District Council's area though not under its jurisdiction, and an Administrative Officer, *i.e.*, the Senior Commissioner or Resident Commissioner according as the Council's area is b-Vol. II.

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Committee System. within or outside a Province. District Councils should elect annually their own Chairmen. They should be empowered to entrust some measure of authority to Standing Committees and normally should not themselves meet more than once a quarter. In some districts which are not compact, power should be given, subject to the approval of the Governor-in-Council, to appoint Area Committees empowered to deal with road questions; this would involve the keeping at District Headquarters of separate accounts for road purposes in each area and the levying of rates of different amounts in different areas according to expenditure incurred : in such cases the District Council would remain the responsible authority and the plan should only be adopted in order to prevent an unfair burden being cast upon any considerable section of a district in respect of expenditure from which such section itself received no direct benefit.

Electoral qualifications. Voters' qualifications should be adult suffrage subject to ownership in the area of £100 worth of land or to residence (12 months out of 24 preceding registration) plus either occupation of premises of £36 annual value for Europeans, and £12 for Indians or earnings of £10 per month for Europeans, and £5 per month for Indians. Aliens should be admitted as voters but not as candidates. Candidates' qualifications should be the same as for voters, subject to the same disqualifications as have been proposed for Municipalities in the Report on Nairobi and its environs. The term of office should be three years with annual retirement of one-third, or as near as may be, of elected members.

#### TOWNSHIP PROPOSALS.

All townships should be excluded from the area of jurisdiction of District Councils, which would thus have no executive powers, or powers to levy rates on property, in townships. There should be four stages in the development of a township. (A) In the first stage, it should be administered by the District Commissioner, but the District Council should be recognized as an advisory authority as regards the establishment of new townships and the management of townships in this stage. (B) In the second stage, the District Commissioner should be assisted by a special Township Advisory Committee regarding matters of detailed administration, but the District Council would still retain advisory authority, generally confining itself (C) In the third stage the to matters of general policy. township should become a Municipality with a Municipal Board; and (D) in the fourth stage, the Municipal Board should become a Municipal Council. In each of the last two stages, liaison between District Council and the Municipal Board or Council should be preserved by enabling each to

Townships. P. 123.

P. 125.

nominate one member to the other. Of the 20 existing P. 126. townships in the "Settled Areas," 10 are placed in Grade "A," P. 128–133. 6 in Grade "B," 3 in Grade "C," viz., Nakuru, Eldoret and P. 133-135. Kitale, and the special character of Kisumu is recognized by allotting it a special place in the scheme.

The Constitution proposed for Municipal Boards is a Constitution minimum of II and a maximum of I4 consisting of elected, Municipal nominated and official members. On the minimum basis, Boards. P. 136. there should be 2 official members, I District Council representative, I European nominated member, 5 elected European and 2 elected Indian members. On the maximum basis, there would be, in addition to the above, I European elected, I European nominated and I Indian nominated member. The official members should be the District or P. 137. Resident Commissioner and a Railway representative. The Chairman of the Board should be nominated by the Governor. Electoral qualifications and term of office should be the same, mutatis mutandis, as for District Councils.

The difference between Municipal Boards and Councils is P. 137. explained in the Report on Mombasa and its environs. P. 138-139. The Commission proposes that the same Rating System as is recommended for Nairobi and Mombasa should apply to all Municipalities and that, in Grade "B" townships also, steps should be taken, as soon as possible, to grant long term leases so that rates on the same basis may be levied in them, rates in the meantime being imposed on annual rental values. P. 139. The contributions of Government to Municipal Boards should be decided in accordance with the principles laid down for Nairobi and Mombasa and, where these, together with local P. 140. rates, are insufficient, special assistance should be given by Government as occasion arises to enable the carrying out of permanent works which are essential for the public health and general welfare of the towns, it being recognized thatthey have not benefited in the past as Nairobi and Mombasa have done.

P. 141. The Commission was not prepared, on the information before it, to make any recommendations as to the future of townships, in "Mixed " districts, which are actually in Native Reserves. At present all land revenue derived from these townships goes into the Native Trust Fund and, while they present a problem which will increase in difficulty as they develop, the provision to be made for their development forms part of a larger question affecting generally the future control of land in Native Reserves. It appears to the Commission that the creation of an independent body of trustees, which would have general authority to deal with questions affecting the control and development of land in Native Reserves, would open the path to a settlement of these township difficulties.

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of

Central Roads Boards. P. 146.

Central Organization for Road Work Supervision.-The establishment of a Central Roads Board is recommended, composed of :---

The Colonial Secretary, Chairman,

The Commissioner of Lands, Deputy Chairman,

The Chief Native Commissioner,

The Director of Public Works.

The Commissioner for Local Government,

Three unofficial members,

P. 147-148. whose functions would be (1) to advise as to the classification of roads; (2) to supervise the work of District Councils in connection with the location and survey of roads and the construction and maintenance of roads; (3) to advise as to approval by the Governor of appointments of engineers made by District Councils; (4) to advise as to grants from central funds to be made to District Councils and to Municipal Authorities for road purposes; and (5) to control any plant which may be placed at the Board's disposal for the purpose of hire to District Councils or Municipal Authorities. Members of the Staff of the Public Works Department should be available to carry out inspections on behalf of the Board.

#### CENTRAL AUTHORITY FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT.

As regards general supervision of Local Government Authorities, the adoption of the Transvaal system of control and audit is recommended both for rural and urban authorities. Supervising authority will be vested in (1) the Governorin-Council and (2) the Governor. The Governor-in-Council's sanction should be required for the more important financial proposals, *i.e.*, loans, special rates, rates exceeding the maximum limits; for making any special grants not provided for by legislation and any grants for road purposes. Supervision of the financial policy of Municipal Boards and the powers of reducing or withdrawing the proposed statutory Government contributions in lieu of rates should also be vested in the Governor-in-Council. It is important, however, to relieve the Governor-in-Council as far as possible, and it is therefore recommended that the Governor should be empowered to approve bye-laws, appointments, charges for municipal services and certain works and services.

Departmental machinery.

Supervising

Authority.

The departmental machinery proposed is a Local Government Branch of the Secretariat whose administrative head P. 173-176, would be a Commissioner for Local Government who would, under the Colonial Secretary, be responsible for corresponding with all Local Government bodies and dealing with all matters which have to be referred by them to the Central Government. He would undertake in his office all the secretarial work both of the Standing Departmental Committee (see below) and of the Central Roads Board, would administer road grants to Municipal bodies and District Councils and maintain a close touch with all local authorities. There should be attached to the Branch (1) a Local Government Inspector who would be responsible for the audit of the accounts of all local authorities, for the inspection of the financial side of their administrative work, and for advising from the financial point of view on proposals which they submit for Government sanction ; and (2) a Municipal and Town Planning Engineer who would be qualified to advise as to the exercise of powers of supervision over the technical side of municipal engineering activities, inspect engineering work carried out by local authorities and assist and advise municipal authorities in the preparation of town planning schemes and schemes for important municipal works such as sewerage, drainage and water supply schemes. The Commission considers that the appointment of these three officers is necessary in order to establish a Local Government system on sound lines and to enable it to work efficiently.

P. 178. P. 175. Standing Departmental Committee.

P. 173.

P. 174.

The Commission also recommends the establishment of a Standing Departmental Committee on Local Government to advise the Governor and Governor-in-Council on all matters which require their sanction. This Committee would consist of :--

The Colonial Secretary, Chairman.

The Commissioner of Lands, Deputy Chairman.

The Director of Medical and Sanitary Services.

The Deputy Director of Sanitary Services.

The Commissioner for Local Government.

The Municipal and Town Planning Engineer.

The existence of this body should ensure that questions P. 174. raised by local authorities which require consultation with other departments are promptly dealt with and that the representatives of the Departments concerned have regular opportunities of consulting together so as to assist Government in preserving a far-seeing and consistent policy in matters generally affecting Local Government. This Committee should also take over from the Central Board of Health its present responsibilities for the sanctioning of Public P. 176. Health Bye-laws; it should take over the functions of the P. 176. present Townships Board of advising Government regarding the layout and use of Crown land for township purposes; and should be created as the Board of Health under the Public Health (Building) Ordinance, Cap. 125 (for this P. 177. purpose it might have one or more unofficial members added to it). In this latter connection the Municipal and Town Planning Engineer should act as its adviser. The Commission also P. 178. proposes that the Ordinance (Cap. 125) should be amended (I) so as to be of general application outside municipal areas P. 177.

and existing townships, (2) so as to make 20 acres (instead of 3 acres) the limit for sub-divisions over which control should be exercised (3) so as to give wider powers as to conditions to be imposed, and (4) so as to enable the Board to prohibit sub-division where it thinks further residential development is not required.

The Commission considers that the creation of a Local Loans Fund on the lines of that provided for in a recent Local Loans Act in the Union of South Africa would be of great assistance in enabling Government to finance the capital expenditure of local authorities on a satisfactory basis. Attention is drawn to certain points in which the present Municipal Corporations Ordinance requires amplification and revision in order to provide a satisfactory municipal code for Kenya.

#### THE GRANT OF MAGISTERIAL POWERS TO SELECTED JUSTICES OF THE PEACE.

P. 152.

P. 172.

P. 178.

P. 179.

The Commission recommends that jurisdiction to deal with minor criminal offences and also with matters of a criminal and civil character arising under the Employment of Natives Ordinance should be conferred on selected Justices of the Peace to be exercised at such outstations as circumstances require. It suggests that the powers of punishment should be limited in the first instance, at any rate, to (I) a fine not exceeding  $f_{10}$ ; (2) imprisonment of either description for a period not exceeding one month, or confinement in a detention camp where the law allows it for a corresponding period; (3) whipping in the case of juveniles for offences under the Employment of Natives Ordinance (that Ordinance authorizes corporal punishment of up to 16 stripes with a light cane for male persons under 16 instead of any other punishment). It bases its recommendation on the fact that at present for reasons of distance and intervals between the holding of a Court, many minor cases, especially of theft, are never brought to Court and also that it is desirable to secure the association of the non-official residents of the Colony with the administration of justice to a greater extent than at present.

The Commission is satisfied that men will be found to do this work, that the language difficulty is not great and that if a wise selection is made the men appointed will preserve impartiality as successfully as men of the same type do elsewhere. The following further recommendations are made :--

P. 150.

P. 150.

P. 150.

P. 151.

(1) Additional Native interpreters should be appointed to the local magistrate's Court who would be available for attendance when required at the Courts of Justices of the Peace.

P. 149.

P. 151.	(2) A short manual should be prepared for Special Justices and they should attend the local magistrate's Court for instruction occasionally.
P. 152.	(3) Jurisdiction should be exercised by single justices and not by a bench.
P. 152.	(4) Suitable inexpensive Court accommodation should be provided.
P. 152.	(5) Courts should be established, as far as possible, in the vicinity of Police Posts and, where these do not exist, Courts should be held on days coinciding with visits of Police Patrols.
P. 153.	(6) All judgments of Special Justices should be sent for revision to the District or Resident Commissioner
P. 153.	(7) Special Justices might be empowered to hold inquests.
P. 153.	(8) Legislation should be introduced on the lines of the Special Justices of the Peace Act, 1918, of the Union of South Africa.
P. 153.	The Commission also suggests, without making a specific recommendation, that a moderate allowance in return for time and services might be made to Special Justices of the Peace.

N.B.—This summary was prepared by the Secretary after the submission of the Commission's Reports.

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