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BY. SIR. R.

NAIROBI TOWN PLANNING.

1920

March.

Previous Paper.

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Agrees almost entirely with Prof. Simpson's ideals. Discusses 2 main points (1) Extension of free transfer area and (2) type alteration of the neutral zone.

Sir R. Read

Professor Simpson's ideas in 5345  
well as doubt come up for comment at  
an early meeting of the C<sup>ll</sup>, and we  
had better distribute copies of this  
rejoinder. ~~later on we will discuss~~

Professor Simpson will not like  
his ideas being called ideal &  
a utopia, but I think that we  
must abandon any thought of  
utopian land acquisition schemes  
therefore, we must support the C<sup>ll</sup>.

W.C. 22.3.20

at once  
to J. R.

22/3/20

Sir E. Northey has agreed to the alteration

I have  
suggested some  
of the alterations  
which you  
might see  
fit. Northey  
has agreed to  
the alteration.

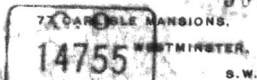
Subsequent Paper.

54378

E.A.P. Nairobi Town Planning

The  
309

18<sup>th</sup> March 1920.



Sir, I have the honor to acknowledge receipt of your letter N<sup>o</sup> 5345/1920 of 13<sup>th</sup> inst forwarding memorandum by Professor W. J. Simpson on the subject of Town Planning.

2. There are two points at issue - firstly, the Extension of free Transfer Area; and secondly, the alteration of the Neutral Zone. Both refer to Nairobi. Nakuru is settled.

3. The acceptance, or otherwise, of the General Principles, laid down by the Professor, as to segregation of Races, remains yet to be decided by Lord Milner after I have discussed these matters with him.

4. Professor Simpson's ideals are splendid, and I agree with him almost entirely: I believe that we should work to get as near as we can to such ideals: in planning new Townships they can be ~~laid~~ <sup>built</sup> up to: but in adapting his principles to already existing towns, we can only strive to get as near to perfection as ways and means will allow.

5. I will now discuss his two main points affecting Nairobi in detail. Firstly, Extension of free transfer area. It will be observed from a study of the Map that a great part of the eastern side, which is not still Crown land, is

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77, CARLISLE MANSIONS,

WESTMINSTER.

is already in the possession of Asiatics: S.W.  
 The Indian Recreation ground is also situated  
 in that area. The main Indian Commercial  
 Area in Nairobi is opposite this extension,  
 North of Duke Street. The permission for free  
 transfer will certainly not cause the Indians  
 to leave River Road for some more remote  
 locality — in fact I regard it as inevitable  
 that the River Road area will remain  
 an Indian Commercial area permanently.

The Extension of Free Transfer Southwards,  
 to permit access to the Railway Station and  
 godowns appears to me to be a progressive  
 measure necessary for the accommodation of Indian  
 commercial interests. I do not anticipate  
 that the area between Victoria Road and  
 the Nairobi River will ever develop into a  
 European Commercial area: I say this from  
 personal knowledge and opinion on the spot,  
 and I urge that ~~state~~ my opinion on this matter,  
 backed up as it is by the Municipal Council  
 and Local Office, after years of study of these  
 problems at first hand, ~~is of some practical~~  
 value in coming to a ~~final~~ <sup>practical</sup> decision,  
 that that of the Professor who superimposes  
 a beautiful imaginary picture of an ideal  
 plan on to the existing ~~map~~ <sup>map</sup> of the town.  
 (Should be <sup>accepted</sup> accepted)

5. a. continued

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WESTMINSTER.

If the European Commercial area expands to such an extent as to cover the area now occupied by the Railway Subordinate Staff Quarters, it seems obvious that the natural direction for further expansion is westwards, towards the present European residential quarters. S.W.

- (6) The alteration of the Neutral Zone.
- This small alteration for the ~~proposed~~ Neutral Zone has been made because the cost of expropriation of the land in question was too high, even if the revenue from land sold elsewhere were misappropriated for such purpose. Nor was it fair to continue to prevent the owners from making normal use of their land. Great pressure was brought by the Africans for a decision on this long outstanding question, and I considered that decision could no longer be deferred: we either had to buy them out which we could not, or let them develop, which we did. The modification which I allowed was the only just and equitable method of settling the matter and I am not emphatically of opinion that the decision does not affect the risk of future trouble in Nairobi as regards epidemics, or the sanitary condition of the Town.

77, CARLISLE MANSIONS,

WESTMINSTER, S.W.

Professor Simpson's argument that the narrowing down of this bottom end of the so-called Neutral Zone for 300 yards to the width of a road will cause gradual permeation of the Asiatic into the Parkland Eastern area, is difficult to understand for it is not a much greater effort to walk 300 yards than 30 feet, and certainly 300 yards will not make any difference to an Asiatic if he wishes to go across the Neutral Zone or if he wishes to require, or live on, property over the way.

The retention of the large triangular space to the North, on the other hand, is much more important to the health of the Community as a big open space for breathing fresh air, especially as the prevailing wind blows from the North East, towards Parkland.

I trust that my decision in such matters, after the most careful study on the spot, and on the advice of local committees and Government servants, may be upheld (but I undertake always to follow Professor Simpson, ideals of perfection - so far as practical ~~can be~~ ~~allowed~~ ~~allowed~~).

I have no honor to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

Edward Northey  
Governor B.C.A.

Secretary  
to the  
Committee

The reasons for the separation of the Park lands Residential European quarter from that of the Asiatic quarter have I fear not been made clear to His Excellency the Governor by those whom he consulted before consenting to a cutting off a portion of the separation area which will bring the nearest residence in the Park land area only 30 feet away from the shops, bazaar and residences of the Asiatic quarter.

Indeed it would seem presumable that the previous connected papers on the subject could not have been placed before H.E. The Governor. Thus in regard to the statement conveyed in para. 5 of his letter that his opinion is "backed up" by the Municipal Council and Land Office, reference to the Dispatch of H.E. The Governor No. <sup>179</sup> dated <sup>1/11/14</sup> and its enclosure, shows that my suggestions were "carefully considered in conjunction with the medical, municipal, and sanitary authorities" and that "with the exception of the expropriation of the present Indian bazaar", as directed by the Secretary of State, and "the choice of a native location" the proposals had been adopted in principle. The Memorandum which formed the enclosure to the Dispatch showed that the opinion of these authorities (which was accepted by the then Governor) was of a definite nature as to the formation of a "protective zone"; they advised that "a protective zone be established between the Asiatic area and Parklands as shown on Professor Simpson's map. Very little expropriation will be required and exchanges can probably be effected."

2. The only two points of difference which have arisen with reference to the Town planning of Mairchi have been (1) whether Asiatics should occupy the South side of the

river up to Victoria Road or whether this side of the river should be mainly European with only a few of the best class Indian shops; (2) whether the old Indian Bazaar should be taken over to the North side of the river or whether it should be displaced by a new but non-residential bazaar erected on Mr. Grogan's land between Victoria Street and the river; and Mr. Grogan paid £2500 a year rental for some 90 years.

I was able by my memorandum to show that this latter was not a profitable undertaking for either the Government or the Municipality and it will be seen by conclusion 10 that the meeting agreed to abandon the proposal to acquire the Cross Estate and it was further agreed (1) That Professor Simpson's proposed site for the new Indian Bazaar on the North side of the Nairobi River be adopted and its establishment thereon effected gradually as opportunity allows. The details of the scheme to be settled later.

(2) That expropriation of the present bazaar be deferred, in anticipation of the voluntary retirement of many of the present residents to the sites which will become available in the new area. It is hoped that these will prove more attractive and afford better trading facilities than those which they occupy at the present time.

(3) 5 1/2 years later the policy and principles agreed to with reference to the Neutral Zone appear to have been forgotten. It is by no means an ideal scheme that I put forward. The 300 yards was a minimum. It was open to make it wider at any part, if further lung space was considered desirable and could be obtained, and the addition made by His Excellency is, I think, an excellent one. But the contention that a 30 feet road on the North side is as effective a barrier to disease as a 300 wide open space is not in accordance with sanitary experience. It is true

that Asiatics can cross over both with ease, but there is a great difference between their shops and living rooms being 300 yards away from the European residences and only 30 feet away. Apart from different mode of life and customs of Europeans and Asiatics already mentioned in a former memorandum, which for their mutual comfort and freedom necessitate adequate separation, the malaria or filariasis <sup>infected</sup> /mosquitoes living in the houses of the Asiatics can easily enter the European residential houses only 30 feet away, but it would be an exceptional occurrence if they cross the 300 yards and in the latter case they will be few in number at the most whereas in the former instance they may be many and always there. It is the same with the infected rat; it can easily cross the 30 feet road but it has little inducement to go over a space of 300 yards where there are no houses. The same remark applies to flies and fleas. It is the live stock <sup>usual</sup> associates and the conditions of commercial life among the poorer classes of Asiatics which inhabit the portion of the town in question that are a danger to the safety of the Europeans.

(4) In short, the provision of a zone is not solely as the context of His Excellency's para. ( ) would imply) a means of securing unimpeded air movement, but is an important protective measure against insect-borne diseases of the tropics - notably malaria.

His Excellency's remaining arguments deal with the supposed impossibility of providing funds for requisite improvements; but it is reasonable to assume that when the Municipality of Nairobi contemplated the paying of £200 per annum for 90 years for Mr. Grogan's estate, that Body was well aware that that sum would cover the interest and sinking fund of no mean loan with which radical improvements



could be effected. If, at the period referred to, it was possible for the Municipality backed by the local Government regard the financial position as sufficiently sound to deal with such a scheme, it is difficult now to understand why the substitution of a 30 feet zone in lieu of one of the minimum size of 300 yards advised by me is essential for financial reasons.

In stating the case in this way for record and as a protest against similar action being taken for Mombasa & other towns & trade centres. It is far from my intention to endeavor in the slightest degree to lessen His Excellency's authority in these matters in East Africa where there are so many difficulties always arising. I would accordingly suggest a compromise that it should be agreed to that the portions of the Neutral Zone south of the river <sup>only can</sup> be cut off. This would secure <sup>on the north side of the river</sup> the protection required for the Peace Land residents while the European Commercial houses on the south side of the river on the West of the Town which has already <sup>been</sup> agreed to be wholly European in character will prevent the encroachment of Asiatic dwellings or shops close to the residential quarters of the Europeans.

W. Humphreys

April 13<sup>th</sup> - 1920