

MINUTES OF MEETING OF CITY COUNCIL'S REPRESENTATIVES ON LAWRENCE COMMITTEE.

(Meeting held Friday, 22nd May, 1942, at 11.0 a.m.)

PRESENT : His Worship the Mayor (Councillor R. Ellis Brown, J.P.- Chairman),  
and Councillors Harris, Kinloch and Shepstone.

Apology was noted for the absence of Councillor Capell.

The meeting had been specially called at the request of the Hon. the Minister for the Interior (Mr. H. G. Lawrence, K.C., M.P.), who was accompanied by the Secretary for Public Health (Dr. P. Allen), the Deputy-Chief Health Officer for the Union (Dr. F. W. P. Cluver), Messrs. Basson, Thomson and Major Stead.

Before proceeding with the formal business of the meeting, the Chairman thanked the Hon. the Minister for the Interior (Mr. H. G. Lawrence, K.C., M.P.) for the opportunity afforded the Council's representatives on the Lawrence Committee to discuss the workings of the Committee with him.

WORKING OF LAWRENCE COMMITTEE.

The Chairman intimated to the Hon. the Minister of the Interior that the Council's representatives on the Lawrence Committee had after mature consideration arrived at the definite conclusion that the Lawrence Committee was unable to achieve any useful results in regulating or controlling the acquisition or occupation by Indians of property within predominantly European areas. Unless the weaknesses of the present constitution of the Committee were eliminated and the Committee given some powers over and above those of persuasion of its members, the Council's representatives on the Committee submitted that it was obvious that little or nothing could be achieved. It was desired that some legislation should be promoted which would provide (with the necessary incidental provisions) that no alienation of any interest in land in Durban between parties of different races (excluding transactions involving Natives) should be valid unless approval thereto had been given by the Lawrence Committee by a suitable majority.

The Chairman then drew the attention of the Minister to a large scale map exhibited in the Committee Room showing the position as it now existed in Durban in so far as Indian owned properties were concerned. The position disclosed was serious indeed for Durban and was causing considerable alarm.

After further discussion had taken place, the Minister stated that he felt a meeting of the Lawrence Committee, with both European and Indian members present, should be held. He was quite prepared for the meeting to be held at any time over the weekend. He felt that no record should be made of the proceedings and that the meeting should be an informal discussion so that he could personally ascertain the attitude of the Indian representatives on the Committee towards the suggestion which had been put forward by the Council.

It was thereupon decided that a full meeting of the Lawrence Committee be held in Committee Room No. 3 on Sunday, 24th May, 1942, at 9.30 a.m.

The Committee adjourned at 12.10 p.m.

CHAIRMAN.