

1916

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for
Boaring 147

1916

6 Arch

Situation in Subaland

Sends letter from Ag. Prov. Council, with further memo summarizing the events of past week. Confirms let. 1 Arch giving details of composition & distribution of troops

subsequent Paper

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See on 20 8-60

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EAST AFRICA PROTECTORATE
No. 147

GOVERNMENT HOUSE,
NAIROBI,
BRITISH EAST AFRICA

325

March 6th, 1916.

Sir,

*See
15432*

In continuation of my despatch No. 136 of the 29th ultimo, I have the honour to transmit herewith copies of two letters just received from the Acting Provincial Commissioner, Jubaland, together with a copy of a further memorandum summarizing the events of the past week.

From P.C.
Jubaland
25. 2. 16

2. I think that from the information contained in Mr. Power's letters the situation in Jubaland may reasonably be regarded as having improved, and I trust that the precautions which have been taken will obviate the occurrence of any further untoward incident.

From P.C.
Jubaland
25. 2. 16
Memorandum

3. I have thought it advisable to inform you accordingly by telegraph at once.

4. I

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE
ANDREW BONAR LAW, P.C., M.P.,
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES,
DOWNING STREET,
LONDON, S.W.

4. I take this opportunity of confirming the following telegram which I have despatched to you on the matter on the 1st instant:-

"Telegram to Colonial Office, No.54

Your telegram February 29th.

(i) Before the attack on Serenli disposition and composition of troops (a) in Jubaland was as follows:-

Gobwen	2 British Officers, 85 rank and file King's African Rifles and 12 Police.
Yonte	2 British Officers, 165 rank and file King's African Rifles and 4 Police.
Serenli	1 British Officer, 110 Armed Constabulary.
Wajheir	40 Armed Constabulary.
Kismayu	54 Police.
Alexandra	20 Police.

(b) In Tanaland 78 Police of whom 28 were at Lema and 52 on the Tana River, 20 being near Sankuri.

(c) In Northern Frontier District

Moyali	1 British Officer, 46 rank and file King's African Rifles and 25 Armed Constabulary.
Garreh	35 Armed Constabulary.
Marasbit	24 Armed Constabulary.
Archer's Post	20 Armed Constabulary and 50 men of Police Service Company with 1 British Officer.

(ii) Since attack on Serenli Arab Rifles consisting of 2 British Officers, 1 Indian Officer,

237 rank and file have arrived at Kisumu while Police from Yante and Gobwen have been moved to Kisumu. In Tanaland Provincial Commissioner has been authorized to recruit 200 irregular police and arms and ammunition are being supplied. In the Northern Frontier District two Police Service Companies comprising 7 officers and 200 men have been sent to Marti on the Uaso Nyiro where they will be joined by 50 men from Archer's Post mentioned above.

(iii) On the arrival of the Marti force the 40 Armed Constabulary from Wajheir are to proceed to Moyali. No further movements of troops proposed at present. Bowring*.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your humble, obedient servant,



GOVERNOR'S DEPUTY

KIAMAYU,

23rd February 1916.

SITUATION IN JUBALAND.

Sir,

I have the honour that owing to lack of reliable information, I am not yet in a position to submit a fully detailed report on the situation in Northern Jubaland. Until I have interviewed the survivors of Serenli, who are now on their way down, I can add no further authentic information to what I have already reported concerning Mr. Elliott's death and the raid on Serenli.

I have wired you on several occasions, asking urgently for troops for Kiamayu for the following reasons:-

1. The young men in the interior, especially those of Aulihan and Marehan tribes have got the idea in their heads that the Germans are badly beaten, as in East Africa and that no troops could possibly be spared for Jubaland, these rumours have no doubt been spread by German agents working

from.

THE HON'BLE,

THE CHIEF SECRETARY,

NAIROBI.

(2)

from Abyssinia. The arrival of troops at Kismayu would dispel this idea.

2. The Indian and Arab merchants are nervous concerning their lives and property, one Indian merchant has already lost 40,000 rupees at Serenli, and are daily pressing for information as to when troops will arrive.

3. As you are aware, Kismayu is an extremely difficult place to defend and with the police force at my disposal, it would be impossible to do so.

The political situation in Jubaland at the present is as follows:-

If the Aulihan are not assisted by other tribes, they are comparatively harmless - they are not a fighting race like their neighbours the Marehan, and are considered to be cowardly by the other Somalis. They have, however at their head in Abdurehman Marsal a very capable leader.

The question therefore to be considered is - what tribes are likely to join them.

1. The Marehan would do so only under great pressure from the Abyssinian Aulihan, assisted by Abyssinian soldiers; otherwise I consider the Marehan to be perfectly safe.

2. If the Southern Aulihan join they would certainly bring in the Abd Wak who are too weak to stand out.

3. The Mohamed Sabair Chiefs, in my opinion, are quite loyal but have very little control over their young men.

I, however, do not anticipate that any large

number

(3)

number of the Mohamed Zubeir would attach themselves to the Aulihan as it would be distasteful to them to serve under Abdurrahman Marsal.

4. The Herti, of course have lost too many of their men and too much property ^{to} have any thing to do with the Aulihan for some time to come.

If none of the above tribes join the Aulihan the matter should not prove difficult. Once our troops got started at Sereali the Marsalan would certainly assist us both on account of the hope of loot and of revenge as they have not forgotten the attitude of the Aulihan towards them during the Marsalan expedition.

The Mohamed Zubeir being Ogaden would not render us much assistance.

The Herti would certainly join us with three or four hundred men as they have been badly hit.

I am trying to get into touch with the Marsalan by the assistance of the Italian authorities but up to the present have not been successful, when I do so I shall be able to let you know what is their attitude towards Government.

Italian side

Two villages on the Italian side North of Bidi have been burnt down and stock taken.

Bidi itself has been closed and Resident and his police have gone to Jelib which has been re-secured

(4)

re-inforced by 80 men.

Bardera has a force of 250 men and are getting more from Meqadissie.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

S. Power

AG. PROVINCIA, COMMISSIONER.

No. 308/622.

PROVINCIAL COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE,

KISMAYU,

29th

February

1916.

Sir,

REPORT ON UNREST IN JUBALAND.

The following Sereali survivors left Bardera on the 12th February and arrived at Gebwen on the 28th February, 83 ascaries, the Interpreter, Kasi, Geanese Clerk, and 41 others. - They have not yet arrived at Kismayu.

2. H.M.S. "Laconia" under command of Captain Wills arrived here on the 27th. I do not know why she was sent as I do not require a transport and being an 18000 ton ship she cannot get anywhere near Kismayu. It takes 3½ hours to get off to her.

3. Captain Hure with his Arab rifles arrived here on the 28th by s.s. "Issmah". I consider the arrival of these troops will have the effect of stopping the young men of the Mohamed Suheir from joining the Aulihan.

It is

HON'BLE,

THE CHIEF SECRETARY,

NAIROBI.

-2-

It is reported that a certain number of Mohamed Subair joined in the attack on Serenli. Abdurrahman Kursal obtained their support to attack the Marchan and on their arrival at Serenli he got a certain number to join his forces against Mr. Elliott. The majority refused, but this matter I will go into on arrival of the survivors.

4. Mr. Rayne is of the opinion that it would be advisable for him with 100 men to rush up on the Italian side and retake Serenli. I am very much opposed to the idea.

In my opinion nothing under a force of seven or eight hundred men with maxims should attempt this.

5. Harti. These people can be trusted and are willing to give Government all the assistance they can.

6. Mohamed Subair. The chiefs I think are quite loyal but the young men are not. The arrival of troops will have a very good effect on them.

7. Abdullah. I get no news about these people at all.

8. Marchan. As these people have started raiding the Aulihan it is obvious that ^{they} are

not

-3-

not likely to assist the Aulihan against the Government.

9. Serenli Aulihan. This tribe is now at Hagahabli and near Salagli.

10. On the day before he was killed Mr. Elliott appears to have been warned by the Italians at Bardera and his own men that he would most likely be attacked but refused to believe it and consequently no military precautions were taken.

11. The maxim taken by the Aulihans is out of action and the majority of the ammunition has been fired off into the air in volleys.

12. Sheikh Ali Nairobi is on the Italian side opposite the Aulihan. It is reported that he will have nothing to do with the Aulihan.

13. Alexandria. 60 of "H" Company from Yante and 20 police are at Alexandria. I consider the situation there quite safe. Jebir on the opposite side has over 100 rifles.

14. FUTURE ACTION.

I entirely agree with Mr. Payne as to moving up to Serenli if we had more troops, but with the number of men at our disposal at present it appears to me that it would be

counting

"4"

counting disaster to go into the Aulihan country. This view is shared by the Italian Military Officers. - Colonel Graham's opinion on the matter would be most valuable, as he knows the country and Aulihan so well.

It is also a question whether the Italian Authorities would sanction our troops passing through their territory. I have already written to the Resident of Giubbe to request him to wire to his Acting Governor on the subject but have not yet received reply.

15. Northern Somaliland. It is rumoured that there are Turks with Mahomed Abdulla - the so-called Mad Mullah of Somaliland - but I can get no confirmation on this report.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

E. POWELL

AD' PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT

PROGHS FOR THE EVENING SATURDAY MARCH 4th.I. THE DETAILS.

(i) It now appears that on February 6th Mr. Llewellyn wrote to Mr. Chamier at Sankuri saying that he had been obliged to postpone his journey there until March.

(ii) From a private source it is learnt that Lieutenant Elliot's body was unutilated.

(iii) In a letter dated February 23rd, the Acting Provincial Commissioner, Jubaland, summarizes the political situation as follows:-

If the Aulihan are not assisted by other tribes, they are comparatively harmless. They are not a fighting race like the Marehan, and are in fact considered cowardly by the other Somali. They have, however, a very capable leader in Abdurrahman Mursaal.

The question is, therefore, what tribes would be likely to join them.

(a) The Marehan would only do so under great pressure from the Abyssinian Aulihan, assisted by Abyssinian soldiers. Otherwise they may be regarded as perfectly safe, and would assist our troops for the sake of revenge, as they have not forgotten the attitude of the Aulihan to them during the Marehan Expedition.

Mr. Power is trying to get into touch with them through the Italian authorities.

(b) If the Southern Aulihan join, they would certainly bring ⁱⁿ the Abd Wak, who are too weak to stand out.

N.B.- In this connection Mr. Beck has reported that all was quiet at Wajheir up to February 16th.

- (c) The chiefs of the Mohamed Zubeir are loyal, but have very little control over their young men. It is however unlikely that a large number of them would attach themselves to the Anlihan as it would be distasteful to them to serve under Abdurrahman Mursaal. On the other hand being Ogaden they would not help us to any great extent
- (d) The Herti have lost too many men and too much property to have anything to do with the Anlihan for some time to come. They would certainly assist us with 300 or 400 men.

250 Italian troops are at Bardera and reinforcements are being sent from Magadiscio.

(iv) In a further letter dated February 29th Mr. Power reports the arrival at Gebwen of 83 askaris, the interpreter, the Kathi, a Gannese clerk and 41 others from Sereñli.

Captain Mure with the Arab rifles arrived at Kismayu on the 28th and the Acting Provincial Commissioner considers that the presence of these troops will have the effect of restraining the young men of the Mohamed Zubeir (vide sub-para iii (c) above)

H.M.S. "Laconia", an auxiliary cruiser, arrived at Kismayu on the 27th. She was to be relieved by H.M.S. "Talisman".

A certain number of Mohamed Zubeir are reported to have joined in the attack on Sereñli. Abdurrahman Mursaal obtained their support to raid the Marchan and on their arrival at Sereñli he managed to persuade a certain number to join his forces against Mr. Elliot. The Acting Provincial Commissioner is investigating the

the matter.

The Maŕcha have commenced raiding the Aulihan. They may therefore be regarded as fairly safe.

On the day before he was killed Mr. Elliot is said to have been warned by the Italian authorities and his own men that he would, very probably be attacked, but he appears to have refused to believe it and to have taken no special military precautions.

The maxim captured at Sereali is out of action and the greater portion of the ammunition has been fired in to the air in volleys.

Sheikh Ali Nairobi is in Italian territory and it is reported that he will have nothing to do with the Aulihan. This information is later than that given in paragraph I (x) of last week's precis.

At Alexandria there are 60 K.A.R. from Youti and 20 police.

Jebir on the opposite side has over 100 rifles. The position there is considered quite safe.

It is rumoured that there are Turks with Mohamed Abdullah, the so-called Mad Hullah, but no confirmation of this report is forthcoming.

(v) A large number of Somali, including some aulihan, brought down stock to sell at last week's stock sale at Naivasha.

DISPOSITION OF OFFICERS.

Mr. Llewellyn is probably now at Merti with Mr. Turner. Captain Mure had not left Ewasyo when last heard of. Otherwise no change from last week's precis.

DISPOSITION OF SOMALI TRIBES.

The Sereali Aulihan are now at HAGAABALI and near SALAGLI.

Otherwise no change from last week's precis.

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IV. DECISIONS ARRIVED AT AND ACTION TAKEN.

25 magazine rifles with ammunition are being sent to the Provincial Commissioner, Lamu.

The military authorities have issued orders for the arrest under Martial Law of all Aulihan Somali in the settled areas of the Protectorate on Monday March 6th and the proceeds of the sale of ^{their} stock at Naivasha will ~~not~~ be paid over to them for the time being but will be held by Government to their credit.

Otherwise no reports have been received during the week on which action has been required.

V. GENERAL.

All quiet in Tanaland and the Wajheir District, so far as is known.

airobi.

March, 6th, 1918.

(Sd) T. S. THOMAS