

EAST AFR PROT

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REC
REF

Gov Conf
Belfield 101

1916

22 August

Last previous Paper

No 16
38834

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

UNOFFICIAL REPRESENTATION

Refers to his despatch of March 1914 for views on subject. Comments on improved relations between Government and the community. I'm fully convinced concession of principle of elective representation would be most beneficial and earnestly advises assurance be given that it will be sanctioned when time arrives for conveniently introducing it.

Requests reply by telegram

Mr. Read.

The question of elective representation for the European Unofficial Members of the Legislative Council was last seriously raised in 1913 (Governor's 32134/13). Various questions arising out of the proposal, such as the representation of the Indian, Arab and native communities, and the number of white adult males in the Protectorate, were still under discussion at the time the Governor, and the Secretary of State had come to no final conclusion, when war broke out.

So far as the white population of the Protectorate is concerned, I am clearly of opinion that it would have an excellent effect if the Governor were now authorised to make some such statement as he suggests, namely that the Secretary of State will be prepared to approve of the adoption of the principle of elective representation when a convenient time arrives for introducing it. The settlers felt so strongly on the subject before the war, that four out

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of the five nominated Unofficial Members, and the four seats, which have since remained unfilled. There is no doubt that the outbreak of patriotic feeling, which has been necessary for undertaking the defence of the Protectorate and the invasion of German East Africa, have improved very markedly the relations between the Government and the white community, previously always rather strained, and the compromise on the subject of land tenure ~~has~~ ^{must have} worked in the same direction. The Governor is able to report the success of his experiment ~~of~~ ^{to} allow the people in the country districts to select their own representatives on the Governor's War Council. The number of male British subjects ^(excluding officials) over 21 years of age was 2,624 in June 1914. It will certainly be very much larger when the country has settled down again on the conclusion of hostilities. Many of those who have been fighting will be attracted by the country and will wish to ~~settle down~~ ^{stay} there.

It is impossible at this stage to go into the vexed questions of the representation of the Indian, Arab, and native communities. The white Unofficial Members are in a minority on the Council, so that the interests of Indians, Arabs, and natives will always be safe in the hands of the official majority. Sir Harry Bellfield had in mind when war broke out a scheme for a separate native administration, headed by a Commissioner for Native Affairs, who would be ex officio an Official Member of the Council and would look after the interests of all the native communities on the Council. He has not yet had the opportunity of fully developing his proposals under this head. I only mention them to show that it may be assumed, in one way or another the interests of all the coloured communities can be fully safeguarded even if it is

ultimately

ultimately decided that the principle of elective representation cannot be extended to them.

Any appearance of spontaneity and promptitude in this matter will no doubt have a very great effect at the present juncture. I ^{would} therefore propose to telegraph in reply that the Secretary of State will be prepared to approve of the adoption of the principle of elective representation for the European Unofficial Members of the Legislative Council when a convenient time arrives for introducing such a system, though it will be impossible for him to decide before the conclusion of the war such questions as the qualifications of electors, electoral areas, and the manner in which the interests of the Indian, Arab, and native communities can best be represented.

The telegram might be confirmed by a despatch ^{stating} ~~showing~~ that the Secretary of State of course understands that it is impossible for the Governor to go into these outstanding questions in any detail at present, but that he will be glad to receive his observations and suggestions on them at the Governor's convenience.

2/13

21/9/16

*I see - It will be seen from
Sir J. Anderson's minute on file 1/13
32134
that he was in favour of a
modified form of election in 1913
& the case for making concessions to
the settlers has been considerably
strengthened since then*

*H. J. R.
P.S. 22/9/16 21/9/16
As. 12. 23. 9.*

CONFIDENTIAL.

45031

22nd August, 1916.

REC'D
REF 20021

Sir,

In consequence of observations which have recently been made to me, on the subject of elective unofficial representation on the Legislative Council of this Protectorate, I have the honour to acquaint you with my conviction that it is most desirable that further consideration should now be given to a question which was ventilated at some length in the year 1913 and which presumably on account of the outbreak of war has remained in abeyance since that date. The Memorial which was presented to your predecessor by the white community of the country in that year was tentatively dealt with in his Confidential despatch of October 1913, and all the facts presented and the arguments adduced will be found in the correspondence connected with that despatch.

2. It is unnecessary that I should reiterate observations which have been recorded in the former correspondence, but it may be well that I should say that during the interval which has elapsed I have found no reason to vary the views expressed in my Confidential despatch of March 6th, 1914.

3.

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

ANDREW BONAR LAW, P.C., M.P.,

SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES,

DOWNING STREET, LONDON, S.W.

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REC^o
REC^o 2.

3. Much has taken place during the last two years to engender a better understanding between the Government and the community. The people have evinced an increasing confidence in official action, and much of the suspicion with which the proceedings of Government were formerly viewed has for the present been dissipated. As you are aware, all classes have loyally co-operated with and assisted the Government in organising and maintaining defensive measures when the Protectorate was in imminent danger of invasion, and I have no hesitation in saying that a more complete understanding now exists than has ever been apparent before. It is therefore, in my opinion, of the utmost importance that these improved relations should be fostered and maintained, and that no effort on our part should be spared to preclude the possibility of reversion to the former attitude of hostility and distrust.

4. Notwithstanding the fact that the war has temporarily diverted the attention of the community in other directions, a very strong and consistent public opinion exists on the subject of elective representation. It is beyond question that any intimation of a determination not to accede to the public request would be most seriously and deeply resented and would dispel every vestige of that growing friendliness which has been so pleasant a feature of the last two years. The people rightly consider that the part they have played in the defence of the Protectorate and the maintenance of its commercial stability under trying conditions

gives

gives them an even stronger claim to sympathetic treatment than was the case when their Memorial was presented three years ago, and they look for a favourable reply to their petition with a confidence which would be rudely shaken if they were disappointed.

5. The question has now been resuscitated in connection with the appointment of unofficial members. I have been given to understand by gentlemen who are in a position to voice the views of the community that nomination to the existing vacancies would be readily accepted if it is understood that the arrangement is to be temporary only and will be followed at a convenient time by concession of the principle of election.

6. You are aware that at the time that the Governor's War Council was in process of formation, I authorised the people in the country districts to select their own representatives. This concession was universally appreciated and was productive of the best results. The gentlemen selected have done excellent work, their presence has ensured popular confidence in the proceedings of the Council, and the arrangement has been a principal cause of the increase of good feeling which I have referred to above.

7. With the result of this experiment before me, I am fully convinced that concession of the principle of elective representation in the Legislative Council would be most beneficial. The public will then feel that, whether their views are accepted or not, they have been expressed and enforced by their own chosen mouthpieces, and that they have thus indirectly been given opportunity

of voicing their opinions and criticisms in the proper place in respect of matters with which the community as a whole is usually concerned.

8. It is not suggested or expected that the change should be brought immediately into operation. Many details regarding the status and qualifications of voters, the division of the country into electoral areas, and similar preliminary questions will have to be settled before a change of existing procedure can be effected. Deliberation of such matters can, however, be postponed until hostilities are ended and the country has again settled down. All that is now asked is that you will be pleased to assure me of your willingness to sanction the adoption of the principle of elective representation when the time arrives for conveniently introducing it. Intimately acquainted as I am with the feeling of the people, and earnestly desirous as I am of promoting the best interests of the country, I foresee in the grant of this assurance a germ which will develop a spreading growth of confidence and goodwill, while I am equally satisfied that determination to adhere to existing conditions can be attended with nothing but disunion and disaster.

9. I therefore most earnestly advise that the assurance asked for be given, and would request that your decision may be communicated to me by telegram. I shall then be in a position to reassure the gentlemen who have conferred with me and to submit for His Majesty's approval the names of those whom I desire to nominate to existing vacancies

vacancies during the period which must elapse before effect can be given to the alternative arrangement.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your humble, obedient servant,

A. Lawry Bejard.

) GOVERNOR.

Gov. EAP
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27 Sept 1916

Sent out
6.55pm 27.9

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Your des. of 22 August

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despatch follows by

Jew EAP
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29 Sept. 1916

Sir,

I have the honour to acknowledge the

receipt of your confidential despatch

No 101 of the 22nd of thy, and to inform

you, in confirmation of my telegram

of the 27th of Sept. that I shall be

prepared to oppose of the adoption of the

principle of elective representation for the

European Unofficial Members of the

Legislative Council when a convenient

time arrives for introducing such a

DRAFT.

PP

Confidential
Belfield
MINUTE.

Mr. Jewell 27/9/16

Mr. Bottomley 27

Mr. Butler 27

Mr. Girling 27

Mr. Lambert.

Mr. Read.

Mr. Fish.

Mr. Steel-Maitland

Mr. Bonar Law.

S.R. to hold

2 drafts

In ~~will~~, however, readily understand
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impossible ~~from~~ to decide, before
the conclusion of the war, such
questions as the qualification of
electors, electoral areas, and the
manner in which the interests of

the Indian, Arab, and native communities
can best be represented.

2. I am, of course, aware
I understand, of course, that it
is ^{impracticable} impossible for you to go into these
outstanding questions in any detail at
present, but I shall be glad to receive

Your observations and suggestions at them
at your convenience.