

EAST AFR. PROT
1747 1/17

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REC.
REC. 9 JAN 17

For
Morning 777

*Delay in clearing of import & export
Cargo.*

1916

7 Dec.

Submits report. Shows that delay is due chiefly to
labour difficulty on account of high wages demanded as
the result of competition amongst interested Companies.
is made for approval of measures adopted by registration
of labour, & formation of bureau on lines indicated,
the cost being borne by local firms.

Last previous Paper
See 545:2
76

Mr. Butler.

The Gov. attributes the congestion
to the competition for labour among
private firms, which has sent up
wages and so made the labourer disinclined
to work regularly.

This agrees with what I was told
some months ago by Messrs. Keggell, but
he blamed the Govt. for not enforcing
at least some the compulsory provisions
as to labour under the 1915 laws and
for allowing (for a long time) the
Germans to remain
unmolested.

The arrangements made involve
the registration of all labour at the
port, so that every man will get their
fair share at fixed rates. We

Ans of case 18419

Subsequent Paper
See 14041

have not yet any particulars as to
the rates in the order for the
working of the Bureau, as the Gazette
containing them comes within the
period of the mails sent in the
S.S. "Arabia" & the library tell me
they have not received duplicates.

Col. Reg. 264 concerns the
position of the District Court in
working the Bureau on a separate
account. It provides that money
received by an official shall be paid
into the Treasury. I do not think
that this matters.

I approve generally of the
arrangements made, but say that
the Gazettes returned x x x have
not been received and ask for copies
to be sent.

There are no complaints on which
action is now required - I shall no
doubt shortly send a copy to the
Director of the Bureau.

6 Oct. 1897

W. Read

As a witness experiment
the situation described in the despatch
is striking evidence of the disposition

that the payment of high wages
which labourer desire. It can be
seen will not work so continuously.

as a Col. Reg. 264 I doubt whether
he present he said a employers is
public work which he receiving of
the regulation. Even if the
arrangement is a perfectly satisfactory
one should be allowed

Jan?

at once.
H. J. R.

13/1/17

W. Butler

The missing Gazettes are now here
- the rules etc are on pp. 828-830 of
the issue of Sept. 20 which I have
put at the top.

W. Butler. 6 Oct. 27. 17

Tab

27 7
at once

EAST AFRICA PROTECTORATE

No. 777.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE,
NAIROBI.

BRITISH EAST AFRICA.

1747

December 7th, 1916.

REC.
REC. 9 JAN 17

Sir,

With reference to the various complaints made to you by firms trading in this country and Uganda in respect of delay in clearing their import and export cargo from the Coast and the Lake, I have the honour to inform you that I called a Conference to discuss the subject which was held in Nairobi on the 2nd of June.

2. The members of the Conference were the Chief Secretary, the Attorney General, the General Manager, Uganda Railway, the Provincial Commissioner, Mombasa, the Chief of Customs, the Port Officer, the Assistant Adjutant General, General Headquarters, the Assistant Adjutant General, Lines of Communication and the Director of Military Labour.

AS

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

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

SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES,

DOWNING STREET,

LONDON, S. W.

2. As the result of a very full discussion I was forced to the conclusion that the chief cause of delay and the only one that could be remedied at the present time was the difficulty of procuring sufficient labour at Mombasa Harbour to handle the import and export cargo - due, not to a diminished labour supply of the kind necessary for the work in question nor to an increase in the cargo that it was possible, with the craning facilities at the Mombasa Customs Wharf, to handle, but to the fact that recent competition among the landing and shipping Companies and the Mombasa Merchants had made it possible for the hamall labourers to combine and demand higher wages which **and they actually achieved**, the wages rising to such an extent that these men were able to earn in a day or two as much as they previously obtained in a week. The consequence was that they refused to work unless it suited them, the cranes were not employed to anything like their full capacity, the Customs go-downs became congested, loaded lighters lay off the wharf for days at a time, and the ships in harbour were unduly delayed.

3. Having arrived at this conclusion I instructed the Provincial Commissioner,

Mombasa,

3.

Mombasa, the Chief of Customs, and the Port Officer to enquire as to the propriety of the craning and landing work at Mombasa being taken over by the Government for such time as the Port of Kilindini continued to be utilised by the Military and looked upon as a purely Military Port.

This Official Committee formulated certain proposals which I instructed them to lay before the Mombasa Member of Commerce, who themselves appointed a Committee to discuss them, ultimately formulating recommendations which were practically the same as those of the Official Committee appointed by me.

4. These proposals, summarised shortly, were to this effect:-

(a) All labour required for handling cargo at the Mombasa Wharves and Customs go-downs should be registered by Government, and only labour so registered should be allowed on the Customs premises and on board lighters and ships.

(b) Labourers employed on ships and lighters should, as heretofore, receive a fixed daily wage, while labour employed on shore should be paid at rates provided for in a Tariff drawn up for the purpose of fixing prices.

This tariff will be found on pages 828-830.

of

of the Official Gazette of 1916.

(c) All labour should be paid at the stipulated rates by the employers, daily, in the presence of a Government Official in a Government Office.

5. As the Rules of 1st October 1910 under Section 162 of the Customs Ordinance 1910 give the Chief of Customs power to control the admission of labour to the Customs Premises, the proposed system of registration would appear to be the best method of effecting the desired control and I have agreed to the formation of a labour bureau on the proposed lines.

The rules governing the working of this bureau will be found on page 828 of the current year's Official Gazette.

6. To carry on the work certain expenditure must be incurred, e.g. the rent of an office, pay of additional clerical assistance, cost of printing, and purchase of badges.

This expenditure cannot be considered a legitimate charge against either War Expenses or Protectorate Funds and I have agreed to a proposal made by the leading firms in Mombasa whereby an account will be opened in this

connection with one of the Banks, to be operated on by the District Commissioner. The Employers of labour will pay in to this account a percentage on the wages paid by them and the proceeds will be utilised to pay the necessary expenses incurred by the bureau. The percentage will be adjusted from time to time as the amounts paid in are found to be either insufficient to meet the expenditure or are in excess of requirements.

Two of the leading firms have guaranteed the District Commissioner against all financial risk in the undertaking.

7. I am aware that this procedure is contrary to the spirit of Colonial Office Regulation 264, but, in the circumstances, I am of opinion that it is a legitimate war measure, and trust that my action in approving it will receive your sanction.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your humble, obedient servant,



Draft approved by
THE GOVERNOR