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Boaring 1157

1917
20 Aug

Last previous Paper.
Gov
44040

SOMALI UNREST IN NORTHERN TERRITORIES

The copy of memo summarising events to August 4th

See Bottom by J.W. Dittler

sent or
separately
see

Gov. 49936

That dispatch

covers the period of which
this paper contains a summary
I have suggested sending a
copy of this to you in 6 days
produced on 49936

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Gov 49936
Copy No-19 Oct 17

17.10.17
27/10/17

JAB.

Next subsequent Paper.
Gov
54744

at
10/17

AFRICA PROTECTORATE
No. 487.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE,
NAIROBI.
BRITISH EAST AFRICA.

August 20th, 1917.

Sir,

4/22
44040

Memorandum

In continuation of my despatch No. 419 of the 17th ultimo, I have the honour to transmit herewith a copy of a further Memorandum for the period July 7th to Saturday August 4th, summarising the events in connection with the Somali unrest in the Northern territories of the Protectorate.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your humble, obedient servant,

[Signature]
ACTING GOVERNOR.

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

WALTER LONG, P.C., M.P.,

SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES,

DOWNING STREET,

LONDON, S. W.

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I. The Details. On the 23rd of July the Secretary of State approved the re-occupation of Serenli by a simultaneous movement of Lt. Col. Barrett's force from the North and of a force from the Coast. No report has yet been received from Lt. Col. Barrett that he has re-occupied Serenli. His force is approximately 138 mounted men and 188 infantry with 3 machine guns and 250 men are being moved from Gebwen to Serenli to co-operate with him from the South. The Army Council have expressed their desire that, after the re-occupation communications with Serenli by road and wireless should be established and maintained.

(II) A report dated June 23rd has now been received from Mr. Butler in application of his telegram of the same date respecting the situation at Wajheir, vide Precis for period ending July 7th .I (iii). He states that for the past 7 or 8 weeks the Northern Aulihan have had their villages in the Gerillish area i.e. 20 miles W.N.W. of Ribba (x-d) while the Wajheir Camel-owning tribes have been located in the country near Wajheir Ber (x-e) and Ribba; thus the Aulihan and the Wajheir tribe have been in close touch.

The Wajheir tribes have of late years been accustomed to go to this district for grazing at this season and as far therefore as their presence there is concerned the situation is not unusual, but the fact that among them were members of the Mohamed Subair and Near Suliman, both of which tribes are professedly at enmity with the Aulihan, and that no friction took place but rather constant ^{intercourse} in the course, appeared to Mr. Butler to indicate the existence of more friendly relations.

As regards the Bartiri, Maghabal, and Sheik Al, who were also there, there appears no reason to doubt that their relations with the Aulihan were friendly, though prompted possibly by fear.

Moreover, the Mohamed Zubeir have, since the 24th of April, refused in concert to supply any meat or baggage animals as ordered by the Officer in Charge and Mr. Butler is unwilling to punish them for this action at present in case the tribe might thus be driven to make common cause with the Aulihan.

Mr. Llewellyn, who was at Nairobi when the report arrived, thinks that the attitude of Mohamed Zubeir is the direct result of the delay in re-occupying Serenli. There is no doubt that when Lt. Col. Barrett left Wajheir for Lugh early in April all the tribes expected matters speedily to come to a head and they cannot understand the delay. Abdurrahman Mursaal, taking advantage of it, has probably approached the Mohamed Zubeir with the object of settling the numerous claims for blood money which that tribe has against the Aulihan and the young men especially are doubtless willing to accept his offers. Mr. Llewellyn does not believe that the elders are supporting the young men in this attitude and thinks that the re-occupation of Serenli will have a steadying effect particularly if measures can be taken against the Aulihan immediately afterwards.

This was the situation when on June 19th a body of some 300 Aulihan, led by Abdurrahman Mursaal with Sheik Ahmedah of the Sheik Al, the present holy man of the tribe, left their villages at Dundua Adka in the Gerillah district and came down to Arbagrusee (x-c) some six hours from Wajheir, passing on their way through some 40 miles of country occupied by the Mohamed Zubeir and other Wajheir tribes.

On the way to Ribba and Aulihan, Rer Ali, accidentally shot himself in the village of a Mohamed Zubeir, Samantar Khalaf, whereupon his brother shot and killed a Mohamed Zubeir, Samantar Khalaf. At Arbagruse the Aulihan were visited in their camp by a party of Mohamed Zubeir headed by Ali Sheikh Abdi of the Deshek Wana who held a long and apparently friendly conversation with Abdurrahman Mursaal. A rifle was handed over to him as a 'Sabain' or peace offering and the Aulihan later returned to Ribba. The Aulihan offered to pay blood money of 100 camels to the Mohamed Zubeir for the murdered man within 3 days of reaching Ribba.

The alleged intention of the Aulihan in coming to Arbagruse was to proceed to Wajheir and attack the station. If this was so, it is to be presumed that they abandoned the idea because they feared the Mohamed Zubeir in consequence of the above-mentioned murder.

On their part, the Mohamed Zubeir profess the intention of defending the station and wish it to be understood that it was owing to their intervention that the attack was not made. Mr. Butler considers the position most unsatisfactory as no effective steps to improve matters can be taken until the Northern Aulihan have been properly dealt with.

(III) An armed Hertli Somali was captured near the Mackenzie River (v-b) in the Mara district by Mr. Cooke, Assistant District Commissioner, and states that 20 villages of the Southern Aulihan were fraternising with the Abd Wak near Sankuri on the Tana River. They possessed a number of Serenli rifles and an agent of Abdurrahman Mursaal was present.

(IV) On July 20th a telegram was received from Mr. Kittermaster stating that Mr. Butler on July 3rd reported the situation at Wajheir to be unchanged and wished

to call special attention to the danger of deferring action against the Aulihan. If the Mohamed Zubeir joined, it would mean that all the other Ogaden in the vicinity of Wajheir and the Deshak Wana, also the Bartiri Dagedia, and probably sections of the Ajuran, would also revolt.

(V) On July 21st a letter dated Marsabit June 30th was received from Mr. Kittermaster describing the situation at Wajheir as serious and ascribing the cause to the delay in re-occupying Serenli and to the religious propaganda of Sheikh Mohamed Yusuf, vide Precie ending June 16th I (1).

(VI) On July 24th a telegram was received from Mr. Kittermaster at Archer's Post reporting that he had heard from Bulesa, South of the Sirra plateau (vi-f) that on July 4th a party of 300 Aulihan arrived at Gene Taka 10 miles S.W. of Arredima (viii-f), the intention being to make an attack on the Beran on the Uase Nyire river simultaneously with an attack by the Northern Aulihan on Wajheir. The plan was not carried out owing to the withdrawal of the Northern Aulihan. The Beran were warned by the Aulihan Her Abukr. Also that Mr. Butler reports an attack made by the Aulihan on two Herti Somali on the Kisumu-Wajheir road and Lt. Col. Barrett states that the Marchan are becoming suspicious owing to his long-continued inactivity. Mr. Kittermaster concludes by saying that the situation is worse than last year and that it is impossible to lay too much stress on the danger of further delay in re-occupying Serenli.

(VII) On July 27th a further report dated Wajheir July 4th was received from Mr. Butler. He gave the following details regarding the various tribes

(a) Northern Aulihan. The villages are still in the Gerillah area but some of them appear to be moving to the Southern end of the Dida Gutchi.

(b) Mohamed Zubeir. The man mentioned above as having been killed appears now not to have been a Sabuntari Khalaf but a Herti, Warsengelah, and his death would naturally not excite such keen resentment among the Mohamed Zubeir. Ali Burreh, chief of the Ugas Guled section, states that the existing trouble with the camel-owning Mohamed Zubeir is the result of a pre-arranged plan to resist Government orders and that the Aulihan visited Arbagruse in the belief that they would obtain their assistance. He is sure that the cattle owners on the Deshek Waha are opposed to the attitude of the camel-owners of Wajheir except in the case of one Hussein Mwitain whom Mr. Butler has constantly heard of as being an apostle of unrest.

(c) Habr Suliman. This tribe continues to make common cause with the Mohamed Zubeir.

(d) Maghbul. The Habr Eli Section of this tribe in the Wajheir area are very friendly disposed towards the Aulihan and constantly entertain them in their villages. 28 of them are said to have accompanied the Aulihan to Arbagruse.

(e) Hartiri. These people have killed a Habr Suliman, and the Mohamed Zubeir, Bagadia (Fai), and Habr Suliman young men have made the murder the excuse for looting a Hartiri village. The Hartiri have been constantly moving into closer touch with the Aulihan and deserve scant consideration.

(VIII)

Mr. Butler states that without doubt Emisarica from Sheikh Mohamed Yusuf (vide (V) above) are in the Wajheir area since frequent communication takes place

between the Mohammedans at Wajheir and those in Abyssinian or Italian territory. He also knows that Sheikh Ali Nairobi (Precis June 16th (I (iv) is corresponding with natives at Wajheir.

(I) On July 19th a telegram dated Kisumu July 17th was received from Mr. Power stating that according to native sources two Mohamed Zubeir had been killed by Bartiri who had joined the Aulihan.

(X) On the 2nd of August a letter dated Kisumu July 14th was received from Mr. Power stating that reports from all quarters show that the Aulihan tried to persuade the Abd Wak, Abdullah, and Mohamed Zubeir camel owners to join them and attack Wajheir. The Abd Wak and Abdullah appear to have been quite willing to join, which Mr. Power thinks helped to restrain the Mohamed Zubeir as there is a long standing feud between them and the other two tribes.

(This appears to agree with Mr. Butler's reports and (III) above) Mr. Power urges an immediate move on Serenli and against the Aulihan and states that if this is not done he is certain that further trouble will arise in the interior.

(XI) On the 19th of July Mr. Power reported from Kisumu that certain sections of the Maghabul had joined the Aulihan. He is sending the Sultan of the Mohamed Zubeir together with two paid chiefs to Wajheir to assist Haji Hassan in keeping order.

(XII) Mr. Llewellyn thinks that Abdurrahman Mursaal's following at the present time probably does not exceed 600, about half of whom are armed with rifles. The numbers of Bartiri and the Maghabul sections reported to have joined him ^{are} is probably inconsiderable.