

1932.

Kenya

No. 18070.

SUBJECT

C.O 533/421

*Scheme for the amalgamation of  
The King's African Rifles of The Kenya Police*

Previous

*Gen 56295/22. K.A.R.  
Kenya*

Subsequent

*3256/32*

1 For Kenya — 12. Conf. — 2/12/22

An extract from a report of the Select Committee on Estimates, 1922, recommending the appointment of a Committee to examine, for reasons of economy, a scheme for the amalgamation of the K.A.F. & Kenya Police. Encloses drawn by the I. G. K.A.F., & feels that it would be ~~worth~~ of time to appoint such a Committee unless Co. Officers & those of O.D.C. have been ascertained.

It seems unnecessary to do more than to consider whether the arguments against this proposal as contained in the despatch of 7<sup>th</sup> Nov 1922 (see 46212/1922) apply with equal force today.

2. They appear ~~to~~ to be equally cogent, except as regards the point concerning a European Defence Force ~~which~~ but the ~~constitute~~ of such a Force does not fact that a Defence Force has since been constituted cannot make any great difference.

3. It will be observed that the ~~estimated~~ <sup>announced</sup> cost of the Constabulary Force in 1924 was £237,634 - the military section costing £97,000 plus pay help of the H.Q. Supervisors say £21,000 = a total of £118,000.

4. The present cost of the military, as shown in the 1922 Estimate is £90,000 net

1. Mr. Kenya — 12. Conf. — 28/1/52 2  
 An extract from a report of the Select Committee on Estimates, 1952, recommending the appointment of a Committee to examine, for reasons of economy, a scheme for the amalgamation of the K.A.R. & Kenya Police. Encloses views by the I.G., K.A.R., & feels that it would be waste of time to appoint such a Committee until Co. Officers & those of O.D.C. have been ascertained.

It seems unnecessary to do more than to consider whether the arguments against the proposal as contained in the despatch of 9<sup>th</sup> Nov 1922 (SSA - 46212/1922)

1. apply with equal force today.
2. They appear ~~to~~ to be equally cogent, & especially in regard to the point concerning European Defence Force which led to the ~~constituted~~ of such a force does not fact that a Defence Force has since been constituted ~~cannot make~~ any great difference.
3. It will be observed that the estimated <sup>annual</sup> cost of the Constabulary Force in 1924 was £237,634 - the military section costing £97,000 plus say half of the H.Q. expenses say £21,000 = a total of £118,000.
4. The present cost of the military as shown in the 1932 Estimates is £90,000 net

from which falls to be deducted  
some £10,000 in respect of the further  
economies suggested by the I.G.  
which the S. of S. has recently  
approved.

5. It seems doubtful ∴ if any scheme  
of amalgamation would produce the  
savings which the Selecta members  
anticipate and it would undoubtedly  
be less efficient.
6. On the point is that it cannot  
be said that the local situation compares  
so favourably with that in 1922 that  
the ~~defence force~~ as to warrant  
for the reduction of the defence force  
- certainly not in so far as  
the Northern Rhodesia Province is  
concerned.

7. And finally, as has recently  
emphasised in a circular, a colony  
of the importance of Kenya owes  
a little to the Home Govt. and it  
can hardly be maintained that an  
expenditure of some £80,000 in 1900  
on defence out of a total expenditure  
of £2,240,260 ~~and~~ that mainly  
on the colony's own immediate  
interests is either undue or unfair.

8. The views of the O.C. may be  
in what is these proposals.

M.S. P. 18/11/22  
26/1/22

Major Cole  
Mr. Seal  
Mr. Claxton

We should be glad of your views  
P. S. 27/1

The I.G.'s observations on this proposal are attached to  
the Governor's despatch and no comments from me are  
therefore required. It will be seen that the I.G. con-  
siders that the arguments against the proposal given in  
the S. of S.'s despatch of 9th Nov. 1922 hold good just as  
much today as they did then.

As a personal opinion, I am quite convinced that the  
roles of a policeman, and a soldier, are distinct and  
should be kept separate. This I think was clearly brought  
out as a result of recent experiences in Nigeria and  
Palestine. It has always seemed to me that one could  
not see the progress of the development of a country by  
the decrease in police armament ~~and~~ the ideal  
to be attained was a 'baton policeman'. Amalgamation  
of police and soldiers into a hybrid protective force  
certainly means a lessening of the efficiency of the  
military element and a very doubtful advantage for the  
police element.

Is it not the fact that N. Rhodesia is now taking steps  
to separate its military and police branches and to  
constitute the ~~force~~ as a purely military body?

The strength of the K.A.R., after the reduction  
approved, of the equivalent of one battalion, is, in the  
I.G.'s opinion, at the minimum permissible in regard to  
internal security, and any decrease in the military  
efficiency of the small force available which I think  
would result from the proposed amalgamation - then must  
be a situation of danger which I do not think  
can be justified by the possible further saving in money.  
The cuts in military expenditure in E. Africa have about  
reached the limit of possibility at the present time.

There is a moral obligation on the part of all colonies  
that they should contribute something towards the  
defence requirements of the Empire, either by the main-  
tenance of military forces, or in cash. I do not think  
that a military-police force, which would be difficult  
to expand in time of need - is a very satisfactory con-  
tribution, but I do not suppose that the proposers of  
this scheme pay any attention to this aspect of the  
question. The best form of contribution is undoubtedly  
a highly trained military force, capable of expanding  
itself into a larger military organisation. The less  
military efficiency available in a Colony, the greater  
the responsibility thrown on the British Army -  
already small enough - and the British tax-payer.

P. S. 27/1

It will be seen on 13781/32 that  
the Gov. of Tanganyika is submitting  
a memorandum containing proposals  
similar to this to the extent that  
he thinks that internal security  
can be transferred wholly to the  
Police.

While, therefore, I agree very  
largely with Major Cole, it seems  
clear that it will be desirable  
to consider the two sets of proposals  
together, and, in all probability,  
to take both to the O.D.C. Under  
assumption I have previously  
suggested interim action on 13781/32.  
When it reaches on that matter  
having gone, pp should receive. Some  
with the N. Rhodesia papers, so  
it can be prepared, the  
Kenya side of the necessary brief.

J.S. Seal  
2.3.32

In immediate answer to the  
committee, answer to the Resolution  
is the fact that N. Rhodesia are  
at the very moment taking steps  
to put an end to the army which  
the Elected Members regard as  
an improvement on the system  
which N. Rhodesia are now adopting.

You will find a good deal of wisdom on  
the subject of hybrid forces in the 4  
pages about the Air Ministry's  
desire to replace the Military Gari-  
son of Palestine by a 'Gendarmerie'.  
Everybody (except the Air Ministry)  
agrees that the proposal is a rotten  
one.

G. S. K. Cameron

The Para. 4 of the draft sup on 13781 KGR will  
serve as an interim reply. (A copy of this sup. is sent  
to Kenya, shd. be attached to this paper)

Director  
K/3/32

Now attached  
as No. 2.  
WCh

The answer to the Elected Members  
proposal appears to be -  
The arguments in 293 of  
the Duke of Devonshire's despatch  
of 9/11/22 (in file 46212/1922) about  
the need for professionally efficient  
Regular Officers, and about having  
a similar organization for the whole  
of the K. A. R.  
2. The failure of similar, previous  
experiments - Somaliland, Trans-  
Jordan and now Northern Rhodesia  
3. The obligation on the part  
of Colonial Governments to contribute  
towards defence of the Empire.

The point of view of the Elected  
Members is not difficult to understand.  
They observe, as I have observed during

my recent tour through the  
B. East African Dependencies, the  
very military character of the  
Police Forces. Police are armed  
and equipped as soldiers; they  
drill; they are trained in musketry  
and even in bayonet fighting;  
they mount guards with sentries  
and buglers to sound salutes and  
other calls; and to all outward  
appearances they appear, in addition  
to being policemen, to be an efficient  
military force.

It is easy to  
realize, therefore, that to outward  
appearances two military forces exist  
side by side - the Police and the  
K. A. R. - and since the strength  
of these Police and their ability  
to carry out police as well as  
military duties, renders them the  
more suitable force to retain, it  
is argued that the K. A. R. should  
be abolished or amalgamated with  
the Police.

In my view, apart from all  
other considerations, the maintenance  
of a purely military and entirely  
independent force is essential  
in East Africa as it is in every  
other governed country in the world.  
There must exist behind the  
Government a detached and visible  
power to act as a positive deterrent  
to anything in the nature of a  
general uprising against its  
authority. Police, however well

armed or trained they may be from  
a military point of view, can never  
be regarded by the people in this  
light. It is the function of the  
Police to arrest the wrongdoer and  
bring him before a court of law.  
He is not, consequently, regarded as  
a fighting man who, when called  
upon to do so must use the weapons  
with which he is armed and take  
the law into his own hands in support  
of the Government. He is, moreover,  
scattered all over the country and in  
such small numbers as to destroy the  
effect of a powerful and an irresistible  
force against which it should be  
unthinkable to rise.

For these  
reasons alone I regard a well armed,  
highly trained, strictly disciplined  
and a contented military force as  
essential to the preservation of  
internal security. It  
goes without saying that the strength  
of such a force must be commensurate  
with its role if called upon to act, and  
if, as I think at present, it is  
sufficient, it is for consideration  
whether the very large number of  
police reserved, upon whose military  
training much time and money is  
spent, might not be considerably  
reduced, and their character changed  
from that of a semi-military force  
for which they are neither organized  
nor suited, to a purely police force.

See memo on  
12/7/32

C. Norman

J 25.4.32.

1932

27/9

To ODC. (McKoi) - on 27/9/32 (on 13/11/32)

~~the following~~

Prescott  
White

the answer to No. 3 above

to No. 23 on 13781/32 Mily. Great  
CAR

The result is -

4. To Mrs. Kaya (Christ) - 14 Nov. '32  
(No. 1 animal)

4

KENYA.

Downing Street.

SECRET.

November, 1932.

Sir,

I have the honour to refer to your Confidential despatch No.13 of the 28th January, 1932, relating to a resolution of the Elected Members, contained in the report of the ~~Parliamentary~~ Committee on the Draft Estimates for 1932, urging the consideration of a scheme for providing a combined military and police force in the Colony which would ensure adequate protection with economy in expenditure.

2. I informed you in my despatch King's African Rifles Secret. of the 8th March, that I should deal with this matter in conjunction with a despatch which was expected from Sir Stewart Symes relating to the organization of public security and defence in Tanganyika.

3. Your despatch and that of Sir Stewart Symes were referred to the Oversea Defence Committee for consideration, in a letter of which I enclose a copy. The Governor of Tanganyika also addressed a further despatch to me regarding the suggestion, referred to in my Secret despatch of the 8th March, that the recruitment of natives of Tanganyika should be discontinued, and this was also communicated to the Oversea Defence Committee (vide the enclosed copy of a letter

To Oversea Defence Committee 4 June.

To Oversea Defence Committee 17 June.

GOVERNOR,  
BRIGADIER GENERAL,  
SIR JOSEPH A. BYRNE, K.C.M.G., K.B.E., C.B.,  
etc., etc., etc.



4

KENYA.

SECRET.

Downing Street,

19 November, 1932.

Sir,

I have the honour to refer to your Confidential despatch No.13 of the 28th January, 1932, relating to a resolution of the Elected Members, contained in the report of the Select Committee on the Draft Estimates for 1932, urging the consideration of a scheme for providing a combined military and police force in the Colony which would ensure adequate protection with economy in expenditure.

2. I informed you in my despatch King's African Affairs Secret, of the 8th March, that I should deal with this matter in conjunction with a despatch which was expected from Sir Stewart Symes relating to the organization of public security and defence in Tanganyika.

3. Your despatch and that of Sir Stewart Symes were referred to the Overseas Defence Committee for consideration, in a letter of which I enclose a copy. The Governor of Tanganyika also addressed a further despatch to me regarding the suggestion, referred to in my Secret despatch of the 8th March, that the recruitment of natives of Tanganyika should be discontinued, and this was also communicated to the Overseas Defence Committee (vide the enclosed copy of a letter

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GOVERNOR  
BRIGADIER GENERAL,  
SIR JOSEPH A. BYRNE, K.C.M.G., K.B.E., C.B.,  
etc., etc., etc.

letter dated the 17th June 1932).

Fr. Overton Defence Committee, 31 Oct.  
4. I have now to transmit to you a copy of a letter from the Committee dated the 31st October, enclosing a Memorandum in which their views on the questions at issue are set out at length. You will observe that the despatch from the Governor of Tanganyika referred to in paragraph 2 above is reprinted as Appendix II to the memorandum.

5. I am not prepared to dispute the views of the Committee, in so far as they relate to the military establishment maintained in Kenya. I have every sympathy with the desire of the Elected Members to effect reduction in military expenditure; but I would point out that since the date of the report quoted in your despatch, further economies (to which you refer in paragraph 3) have now been effected, the machine-gun strength of each battalion having been reduced from one company to one platoon, and the extra subaltern provided for each battalion headquarters having been abolished. It will also be noted from paragraph 3 of the letter sent to the Committee on the 4th June that the organisation in Northern Rhodesia, which the Elected Members suggested should be taken as a model for Kenya, has not been altered, and that, as elsewhere in East Africa, the military force of the Protectorate is now administered separately from the Police. Generally speaking, I would add that the establishment of the King's African Rifles as it emerged from the reorganisation of 1930, has been accepted as affording the minimum strength required for purposes of internal security and defence; and in this connection the

facts

facts mentioned in paragraphs 11 and 12 of the enclosed memorandum are relevant. The reductions effected this year were approved only in view of the gravity of the financial situation, and in the opinion of the military advisers of His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom, they have brought the strength of the Force down to a position which cannot be justified from the point of view of the defence of the East African territories (vide paragraph 11 of the memorandum).

6. In the circumstances I am forced to associate myself with the view expressed in paragraph 22 of the memorandum, that proposals for further changes cannot for the present be entertained. I further agree as to the inadvisability of attempting any fusion, either of organisation or of functions, between the military and police forces. I assume, from the final paragraph of your despatch under reference, that you will not yourself dispute the Committee's arguments; and if the question is again raised by the Elected Members, you will no doubt point to the further economies effected this year, and express the view that no further changes can be effected without undermining the whole of the arrangements for maintaining security in East Africa.

To Gov. Tanganyika  
19 Nov.

7. I enclose for your information, a copy of a Secret despatch which I am addressing to the Governor of Tanganyika. Copies of the correspondence are also being communicated to the Acting Governors of Uganda and Nyasaland.

I have the honour to be,  
Sir,  
Your most obedient,  
humble servant,

(Sgd.) P. CUNLIFFE-LISTER.

28  
Giv. on 13781/32 Military Secy

K. A. H. Y. A.

DOUBING STREET,

KING'S AFRICAN RIFLES.

8 March, 1932.

SECRET.

Sir,

With reference to the telegram No. 5 of the 17th July last, from the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies to the Secretary of the Governors' Conference, Nairobi, and subsequent telegraphic correspondence, I have the honour to transmit to you, for your information, copies of Oversea Defence Committee papers (Nos. 621-II and 627-II) on the subject of the reduction of military expenditure in East Africa by further adjustments of the establishment of the King's African Rifles.

You will observe that the Oversea Defence Committee were first invited to consider, as a means of securing economy, a proposal that one of the two reserve battalions at present maintained should be disbanded. This proposal was submitted to and approved by His Majesty's Government, but it was subsequently represented that the disbandment of one of the reserve battalions would not only break up the organisation of the King's African Rifles, but would render expansion, when required, a slow and difficult process. It was suggested that a saving equivalent to that expected from the abolition of

one

GOVERNOR,

BRIGADIER-GENERAL,

SIR JOSEPH A. DYER, K.C.M.G., K.B.E., C.B.,

etc., etc., etc.

O.D.O. 621-II  
" 627-II

one battalion might be effected by some alternative method less objectionable from the defence point of view.

3. I thought it desirable to ascertain the views of the Inspector General of the King's African Rifles, who was then in Kenya, on this alternative suggestion. The Inspector General made certain definite proposals, which are recorded in the telegram No. 15 sent to yourself on the 20th January. (printed as an Appendix to the memorandum No. 627-H); and these proposals (apart from those relating to band expenditure) have been accepted by His Majesty's Government in substitution for the original proposal to abolish one of the reserve battalions. The decision was communicated to you in my Confidential telegram No. 37 of the 22nd February, and I assume that the other Government concerned have now been informed.

4. I have also to refer to the cypher telegram, dated the 29th February, from the Governor of Tanganyika, which was repeated to you. I understand from this telegram that Sir Stewart Symes is submitting a memorandum on the financial and other aspects of the organisation of public security and defence in Tanganyika, and that he considers that the disbandment of one battalion in Tanganyika is still feasible if the entire responsibility for internal security is entrusted to the police. I will await the receipt of Sir Stewart Symes' memorandum, and in the meantime I refrain from comment, except to say that any proposal further to reduce the numbers of regular troops will require to be carefully examined by the Oversea Defense Committee. I propose

to

to deal with the question raised in your Confidential despatch No.15 of the 20th January in conjunction with Sir Stewart Symes' views when received.

In the meantime I assume that the reductions referred to in the foregoing paragraphs are being carried out as rapidly as possible in both Brigades, in view of the urgent need for economy.

5. I am informing Sir Stewart Symes that I am also anxious that the question raised in paragraph 11 of Overseas Defence Committee paper HC.227-11, as to the cessation of recruitment of Tanganyika natives should receive immediate consideration irrespective of the decision which may be taken on the proposals made in his memorandum. If his view should eventually be accepted, and the abandonment of a battalion acquiesced in, the 6th Battalion, which can at present only be used in the defence of Tanganyika, must clearly be the one to be disbanded. But if, after consideration by His Majesty's Government, it is decided that the number of regular battalions cannot be reduced, the question of ensuring that all these battalions can be employed in any quarter where danger may threaten will remain and, unless the Government of Tanganyika wishes to raise objections, I see no reason why recruitment for the whole of the Southern Brigade should not forthwith be confined to the sources from which the 1st and 2nd Battalions are already composed.

6. I am sending a copy of this despatch to the  
Governor

11

Governor of Uganda for his information; and a similar  
despatch is being addressed to the Governor of  
Tanganyika, with a copy to the Governor of Nyasaland.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient,

humble servant,





- 2 -

copy of his observations is enclosed from which it will be observed that the Inspector General is of opinion that the reasons formerly adduced for the ~~disapproval~~ or Sir Edward Northey's scheme are as cogent today as they were in 1922, vide the Duke of Devonshire's Confidential despatch of the 9th November, 1922.

*4621/27  
KPK  
2/11/27*

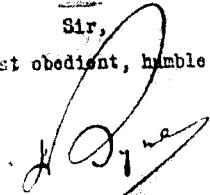
In view therefore of the previous decision and of the Inspector General's advice, I feel it would be a waste of time to proceed with the appointment of a local Committee until your views, and possibly those of the Oversea Defence Committee have been ascertained.

5. I would add that I personally am in entire agreement both with the decision given in the past and with the opinion now expressed by the Inspector General. As you are aware, proposals for effecting economies in military expenditure are already under consideration.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient, humble servant,



Brigadier-General,  
GOVERNOR.

14

INSPECTOR GENERAL'S OBSERVATIONS ON PROPOSED SCHEME FOR  
THE AMALGAMATION OF THE KING'S AFRICAN RIFLES IN KENYA  
COLONY AND THE KENYA POLICE.

Apart from the fact that the reasons put forward in the Duke of Devonshire's despatch for retaining the King's African Rifles hold good just as much to-day as they did in 1922, I am in a position to know that in the event of war the commitments of troops at the disposal of the Imperial Government are such that no provision can be made for rendering military aid to African Colonies. Responsibility for defence devolves therefore on the Colonies themselves. For this reason alone the retention of a force, organized, armed and equipped on purely military lines and capable of expansion to meet the contingency of war against similarly organized and trained troops is regarded as essential.

In my view it is equally essential to retain an independent military force whose armament, loyalty and discipline render it an utterly irresistible in the eyes of the people and produce a steadying effect throughout the population as a whole, and a definitely deterrent effect on the minds of groups of individuals who might otherwise be disposed to resist or defy the authority of the Government. In the event of failure to achieve this result, troops should be in sufficient strength and sufficiently mobile promptly to restore order at the outset and before an uprising has had time to spread and get out of hand. History has always shown the value of independent and purely military forces in these two respects, and I offer the opinion that the withdrawal of troops altogether would be a danger to the peace and security of the country.

With regard to the proposal by the Select Committee that the Government be asked to appoint a Committee to examine the question of providing a "combined Military and Police Colonial Force", I feel sure that any recommendation

favourable

favourable to such amalgamation would not meet with the approval of the Secretary of State.

(Signed) G.C. Norman.

Brig.

L.G. - K.A.R.

19.1.32.

favourable to such amalgamation would not meet with the approval of the Secretary of State.

(Signed) C.C. Norman.

Brig.

T.G. - K.A.R.

19.1.32.

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