

1933

1933

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KENYA

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Posoning operations in Native Reserves

Previous

Subsequent

Key 271	27/2
Mr. Tomlinson	✓
298	1/2
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M. K. ...	24/2
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3028

FILE A

FORM 20 (1933) REVISED 1934

JULY 3, 1944, D. H. W. B. 2

1. W. L. H. Moss ^{5/} _____ 21st Jan 33²
Gives information regarding certain influential natives
who are involved in poisoning operations in native reserves.

2. To Sir J. Byrne ^{5/} Secret _____ 31st Jan. 33.
(w/ photograph No 1).

*Mr. [unclear]
As to letter to
Mr. [unclear]*

To W. Moss (1 and) etc _____ 14/2/33

4. Sir J. Byrne. (S.O.) Secret..... 14th Feb. 33.
Trans. fr. from the Chr. Native Commr. Nairobi to
Maj. Vells regarding poisoning operations in Native
Reserves.

? Publicly.

*S.J.P?
27.3.33*

(Mr. Justice should see)

*Mr. [unclear]
24/3/33*

The usual sort of story!

[Signature]

*J. L. G. [unclear]
28.3.33*

25

(M)

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Gives information regarding certain influential natives
who are involved in poisoning operations in native reserves.

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(w/ photograph No 1).

*Mr. Gombert
As to letter to }
Mr. Hesse*

To W. Moss (1 and) etc — 4/2/33
5

4. Sir J. Byrne. (s.o.) Secret..... 14th Feb. 33.
Trans. fr. from the Chr. Native Commr., Nairobi to
Maj. Wells regarding poisoning operations in Native
Reserves:

*J.P.?
27.1.33*

*? Publicly
(Mr. Gombert should see)*

*Its possible
24/3/33*

The usual sort of story!

W. H. ...

J. L. ...

25

(M)

GOVERNMENT HOUSE,
KENYA.

EAST AFRICA

14th February, 1933.

SECRET.

My dear Bottomley,

7402
With reference to your Secret and Personal letter of the 31st January, I cannot do better than send you the enclosed,

I must say I rather agree with the remarks of the Chief Native Commissioner contained in the last paragraph of his letter to Major Wells, my Private Secretary.

Yours sincerely,

Sir W.C. Bottomley, K.C.M.G., C.B., C.B.E.
The Colonial Office.
London S.W. 1.

4

P.O. ex 220,
Nairobi.
11th February, 1933.

GOVERNOR'S OFFICE.
Recd. 14/2/33 No. 232.
Dear Sir,
Acad. L. M. G.

The Colonial Secretary handed to me the attached letter and photograph and I asked Elphinstone to make me a précis from the file concerning Chief Njiri. I attach his précis for your information. I do not honestly think that there can be any truth in the story of poisoning operations.

You will see that Njiri has been for years pursued by members of one clan, but that no charge against Njiri has ever been substantiated. On the other hand, members of the clan have been punished for rioting, perjury etc., You will note that on two occasions in 1931 the ringleaders addressed letters to His Excellency. The papers were put before His Excellency and he declined to intervene.

If Mr.

by

2.

by poisoning. I suggest that his proper course is to report to the Police or to the District Commissioner, Port Hall. If his only reason for not doing this is that he would be "involved in considerable risk"

I am afraid that I have no very high opinion of

Mr. B.

Yours sincerely
Adm. Board

CONFIDENTIAL.

The Hon. Chief Native Commissioner,
Nairobi.

Njiri wa Karanja has been Official Headman of No.A3. Location in Fort Hall District for many years and a nominated member of the Fort Hall Local Native Council since the Council was instituted.

2. On the 24.4.1929 a long complaint against him was addressed by six natives to the District Commissioner, Fort Hall, alleging that:

- (i) Njiri was guilty of extorting large sums of money by a system of illegal fines during 1927, 1928 and 1929.
- (ii) Njiri was unpopular and extortionate, because his origin was Masai and not Kikuyu.

3. These petitioners addressed the Chief Native Commissioner in May 1929 stating inter alia,

"Chief Njiri's objectionable actions still continued unchecked and unless he is immediately dethroned, there will be much trouble".

At an interview with these natives on 5/5/1929 you personally informed them that their proper course was to complain to their District Commissioner in the first instance and the District Commissioner, Fort Hall, was instructed to enquire into the specific complaints against Njiri.

4. The District Commissioner's report showed that the trouble was a long standing one between Njiri and the Mattangini clan and started probably owing to a private quarrel between Mureu, sub-headman of the Mattangini clan, and Njiri, which ended in

Mureu's ...

- 2 -

mareu's discharge. Since that date every District Commissioner has had endless complaints brought against Njiri by members of the clan - none of these complaints has been shown to have any foundation of truth and from time to time members of the clan have been fined or imprisoned for rioting, perjury, refusal to obey orders of the Native Tribunal and for bringing false charges.

In the opinion of the District Commissioner the prime movers of the agitation are two men named Kungu Kabocho and Petro Njuguna.

5. In April 1931 these two natives addressed a letter to his Excellency complaining that their wrongs had not been satisfactorily dealt with by the Chief Native Commissioner, Provincial Commissioner or District Commissioner (they stated "we are treated as the wild beasts"), and followed it up with a mass of correspondence relating to a Civil Suit in which Njiri had succeeded in getting an attachment against the property of a man of the Mattangani clan. His Excellency declined to intervene in the matter.

6. The following July the same men addressed a further letter to his Excellency in which they claimed to represent the people of Mathangani (? Mattangani), Gitigini, Kiangurwe and various locations and forwarded a list of complaints (running to 4 foolscap pages of single-spaced typing) against Njiri and various officers of the Administration. His Excellency refused to intervene.

7. Since that date I have found no further evidence ...

(86)a of
NST.3/1/2.II

- 3 -

evidence on the files of trouble, but I think it reasonable to infer from past history that Kungu and Petro are at the back of any complaints you may have received personally.

H. H. Williams
10th February, 1933.



makes better



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Arusha, Iringa.

C. O.

For my S. Y.

3
3

4 FEB 1952

Mr.

Mr.

Mr.

Mr. Parkinson.

Mr. Tomlinson.

Sir C. Bottomley.

Sir J. Shackburgh.

Permt. U.S. of S.

Party. U.S. of S.

Secretary of State.

M.F.S.
[Handwritten initials]

DRAFT.

W.L.H. Moss Esq
Nairobi

Dear Moss,

Very many thanks for your letter of the 21st January.

The information that you saw we had been passed to the proper quarter in a manner which will not compromise you or your informant. I am grateful to you for being

grateful to you for being ~~able~~ ^{able} to bring the matter to my notice.

I hope all things go well with you. My committee will be satisfied & strengthened by having a man in your camp.

Yours sincerely,
(Sgd) R.H. Tomlinson

C. O.

10
3

For my S. Y. - 0 34

4 FEB 1952

Mr.

Mr.

Mr.

Mr. Parkinson

Mr. Tomlinson

Sir C. Bottomley

Sir J. Shuckburgh

Parly. U.S. of S.

Parly. U.S. of S.

Secretary of State

W. L. H. Moss

DRAFT.

W. L. H. Moss Esq

New York

Dear Moss,

Very many thanks for
your letter of the 21st January.

The information that you
say we had been passed
to the proper quarter in
a manner which will
not compromise you or
your informant. I am

grateful to you for ~~bringing~~
~~bringing the matter to~~
bringing the matter to
my notice.

Hope all things go well
with you. My connection with
Blackburne is strengthened by having
a son in Blackburne.

Yours sincerely,
(Sgd) R. F. Tomlinson

C. O.

2

Mr. Justice 30/1

Mr.

Mr.

Mr. Parkinson.

X Mr. Tomlinson. 30/1

Ames 12

40 for SEC Bottomley

Air Mail 31 Jan



X Sir C. Bottomley. 30.1/1

Sir J. Shuckburgh

Permt. U.S. of S.

Parly. U.S. of S.

Secretary of State

SECRET

31 JAN 1953

DRAFT

(Crown)

My dear Byre

*Byre: Sir Joseph A Byre
KCOG KBE KC -*

A senior member of the Colonial Office has received an airmail letter from an old schoolfellow now in Kenya, whom I will call Mr. A.

Mr. A. writes that he has had information from a friend (Mr. B) to the effect that certain influential natives are involved in poisoning operations which have resulted in the death of some and the exodus of others from that portion of the native reserve to other portions


*Photograph (in my)
[L] NC, FORT HAMZ*

is other parties where the practice is
not going on." Th. A. encloses a
photograph, on which he has marked
with a red ink cross the native
who, according to Th. B., is largely
concerned; the his name is believed
to be NJIRI KARANJA.

Th. A. says that he cannot pass on this information direct to the Provincial Commissioner

Commissioner of Police without notifying Th. B., who would undoubtedly be involved in considerable risk if it were known that he had given information.

In the circumstances, all that we can do is to pass on the information and the photograph to you without disclosing the identity of Th. A. I must apologise for troubling you, if the whole story turns out to be a mere red herring.

 Yours sincerely

(Signed) W. C. BOTTOMLEY.

W. Freester.

It is for SA. Dept Co
 consider what action shd. be
 taken on the attached. The
 writer was at school with me
 but it must be nearly 60 years
 since I last saw him. I have
 had an previous letter from
 him since I came to the office
 but it was of a purely personal
 nature & I have quite forgotten
 its purpose.

I think Mr. Moss is
 a settler & although he has
 written to my former address

he must know that I am
in the Co.

Perhaps you will also
advise as to the reply that
I should send.

S. J. P.

30.7.33

Mr. Toulson
S. C. Bottomley

As in draft of letter is approved
Mr. Toulson may inform Mr. Das
that the inform is being passed
to the proper quarters?

S. J. P.

30.1.13

30.7.33

he must know that I am
in the C.O.

Perhaps you will also
advise as to the reply that
I should send.

S.J.F.F.

30-1-23

Mr. Tomlinson
Sir - Boston

As in draft: If it is approved,
Mr. Tomlinson may inform Mr. Ples
that the report is being passed
to the proper quarters?

A. H. Hester
30/1

S.J.F.F.

30-1-23

W. H. Hester
30-1-23
am

Harison

21/1/33.

Dear old Tom

Answer 3

I am writing to send you some information in case you think it should be used.

My informant is not likely to have any use to provide as I know that the Gov^t officials have been making efforts to put down the trouble I am going to bring to some extent.

I cannot bring this trouble to the notice of the Permanent Commission or Commissioner of Police myself without implicating my informant who will undoubtedly be involved in considerable risk if it is known that he has given information.

The trouble in this certain influential natives are involved in "Poisoning" operations which have resulted in the death of some of the workers of others from that portion of the natives resort to

other portions where his practice is
not going on -

I enclose a photograph a have marked
with a cross in Red Ink, the native
who my informant says is largely
concerned - (name, I believe, NJIRI KARANJA)

I should go no farther than to suggest
that the information I have given
should be put in the hands of
an authority in position to watch
NJIRI.

I hope you'll forgive my brevity
with this but I am certain that you
in some way will handle it -

I hope the world is healing and will
be our
W. H. Cross.